

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

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 8, 2018

*The House met at 1:30 p.m.*

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

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**Madam Speaker:** Introduction of bills?

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs Fourth Report

**Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Chairperson):** Madam Speaker, I wish to present the Fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

*Your Standing Committee on LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS presents the following as its Fourth Report.*

#### Meetings

*Your Committee met on the following occasions in the Legislative Building*

*July 30, 2018*

*October 30, 2018*

#### Matters under Consideration

- *Reappointment of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator*

#### Committee Membership

*Committee Membership for the July 30, 2018 meeting:*

- *HON. MR. CULLEN*
- *MR. EWASKO*
- *MS. FONTAINE*
- *HON. MR. GERRARD*
- *MR. ISLEIFSON*
- *MRS. MAYER*
- *MS. MORLEY-LECOMTE*
- *HON. MR. PEDERSEN*
- *MRS. SMITH (Point Douglas)*

- *HON. MR. STEFANSON*

- *MR. WIEBE*

*Your Committee elected Mr. ISLEIFSON as the Chairperson at the July 30, 2018 meeting.*

*Your Committee elected Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE as the Vice-Chairperson at the July 30, 2018 meeting.*

*Committee Membership for the October 30, 2018 meeting:*

- *MR. ALLUM*
- *HON. MR. CULLEN*
- *MR. EWASKO*
- *MRS. GUILLEMARD (Chairperson)*
- *MS. FONTAINE*
- *MR. LAMONT*
- *MR. ISLEIFSON*
- *HON. MRS. MAYER*
- *MS. MORLEY-LECOMTE*
- *HON. MR. PEDERSEN*
- *MRS. SMITH (Point Douglas)*

*Your Committee elected Mr. Isleifson as the Chairperson at the October 30, 2018 meeting.*

#### Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record

*Non-Committee Members speaking on the record at the July 30, 2018 meeting:*

- *HON. MR. FLETCHER*
- *MR. LAMONT*

#### Motions agreed to at the October 30, 2018 Standing Committee meeting:

- *THAT the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs recommends to the President of Executive Council that Jeffrey Schnoor be reappointed as the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and the Information and Privacy Adjudicator for a term not to exceed three years from date of commencement.*

**Mrs. Guillemard:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Johnson), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education and Training):** I wish to table the Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner, the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act, A Report on its Implementation and Effectiveness, January 2015 to December 2017.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### National Aboriginal Veterans Day

**Hon. Eileen Clarke (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations):** I rise today to recognize National Aboriginal Veterans Day. Today is our opportunity as Manitobans to acknowledge and honour the many indigenous men and women who have served our country in times of war, conflict and peace.

Manitoba was the first province to recognize National Aboriginal Veterans Day in 1994. This important day has since grown to become recognized all across Canada, and every year in various parts of the country you will find commemorations and ceremonies to honour indigenous people who have served in the First World War, Second World War and Korean War.

It is estimated that roughly 12,000 indigenous people joined the Canadian military to serve in these global conflicts. They served with honour and distinction in all branches of the Armed Forces, and their bravery and sacrifice are written within the pages of history.

Many of these men and women had to endure additional challenges such as cultural 'differenches' and language barriers. Despite these challenges, the valuable skills they brought that stemmed from their traditions made them excellent sailors, pilots and soldiers.

For those of us here in Manitoba, we are proud to honour local heroes such as Sergeant Tommy Prince, a veteran of the Second World War and Military Medal and Silver Star recipient. Sergeant Prince was an Ojibway from Manitoba who volunteered and served valiantly in the Second World War with the 1st Special Service Force, known as the Devil's Brigade. He later re-enlisted to serve within the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in the Korean War with United Nations forces.

Throughout the three years, indigenous women also made important and valuable contributions to

Canada's military. Indigenous women contributed overseas, often as nurses, while the women at home would support in war efforts by helping raise money and by aiding in the manufacturing of key materials and supplies required by the Canadian troops.

Earlier this week, I had the opportunity to spend time with some of the—Manitoba's indigenous veterans. It was truly a privilege to sit amongst heroes and listen to the stories of courage and determination. And I spent this morning at their services.

Just as I will never forget the time we spent together, I ask my colleagues and all Manitobans to never forget the many indigenous men and women who have sacrificed their lives so that Canadians might live a life of peace and inherit freedom, to never forget those who have served our country and who have come home in need of comfort and support, and to never forget those who still serve in our country, so that we as Canadians can remain strong and free.

To the six amazing individuals who sat with me this week and shared their stories and the thousands of indigenous men and women who so selflessly served and continue to serve our country, thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** And I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings had been provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** Today we commemorate the invaluable contribution Aboriginal veterans made to protect our country. More than 12,000 First Nations peoples served in the first and second wars and the Korean War.

In the First World War, the 114th Battalion, or Brock's Rangers, and the 107th Timber Wolf Battalion, a Winnipeg unit, were composed almost solely of Aboriginal soldiers. But unlike in Canadian society at that time, Aboriginal soldiers were not segregated and mainly served in units alongside non-indigenous soldiers. While they were enlisted, Aboriginal soldiers were accepted and treated as equals. Many defined themselves for their bravery and skills.

During the First World War, Canada could claim eight of the best snipers, at least five of which were of Aboriginal descent. Corporal Francis "Peggy" Pegahmagabow, from Parry Island Indian reserve in Ontario, was one of those snipers, credited with 378 kills during his four years.

Many Aboriginal soldiers received commendations for their bravery in action in the wars. Manitoba's own Tommy Prince from Brokenhead Ojibway Nation received 11 medals for his courage and duty during the Second World War and the Korean War, becoming the most decorated Aboriginal veteran.

Despite their valour, it is sad that the fact Aboriginal veterans who put their lives on the line for our country returned to Canada and were denied the same rights as their non-Aboriginal counterparts. As wards of the state, they faced marginalization and economic inequality.

That is why we celebrate Aboriginal Veterans Day, to remember the contributions and sacrifices Aboriginal veterans made to protect our country.

I would like to extend a thank you to all those First Nations, Inuit and Metis veterans that fought for our country. Your sacrifices will always be remembered.

**Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook):** Madam Speaker, I'm honoured to speak today to Aboriginal Veterans Day to honour and respect my people who have fought for Canada over many years.

This includes our great Sergeant Tommy Prince of Brokenhead First Nation. A great-great-grandson of Chief Peguis, Tommy Prince received numerous awards for his service in both World War II and the Korean War for his courage and exceptional skills. His story also reminds us of that—of what we need, always to be there to support our veterans when they return from their service.

More than 12,000 First Nations, Inuit and Metis Canadians have served within the Canadian Forces at home and overseas.

Many of my people gave up their lives so that we can enjoy the many freedoms we now take for granted. But many were also forced to give up their status rights and lost the benefits as First Nations people. In some cases, indigenous veterans were denied the services and support offered to not their—non-Aboriginal veterans, including land and education and voting benefits.

I want to say thank you to all our Aboriginal veterans on behalf of the Liberal caucus. I want to say thank you for your service and for the future it has given us. Megwetch.

**Madam Speaker:** Further ministerial statements?

The honourable First Minister, and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable First Minister please proceed with his statement.

### First World War Commemoration

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Madam Speaker, oftentimes ordinary people are called upon to do extraordinary things. These individuals don't think of themselves as extraordinary. Indeed, they often downplay their own role, no matter how valiant. But it is a testament to all that's good and right in the world when good people raise their hands, volunteer to serve and take great risks to ensure the freedom and survival of all.

When we speak of remembrance, we often simply state that our veterans gave us our freedom. There's no doubt about this, though it goes much deeper than that. In Canada, our veterans, both past and present, have not only given us our freedoms, they have helped shape the very country we live in. And to this day, Canada, still a young country, continues to be shaped by the men and women who have served, are serving and will serve. They give shape to the Canadian spirit: ideals of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

\*(13:40)

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War and today also marks National Aboriginal Veterans Day, and we are reminded, in particular, of the tremendous service that First Nations, Inuit, Metis, and all indigenous Canadians—and we thank them for their sacrifice and dedication, as we thank all our veterans.

Madam Speaker, when Canada joined her Commonwealth allies in battle in 1914, our population was less than eight million people in Canada, and it is astounding that 650,000 brave and mainly young Canadians joined in the defence of freedom in Europe and, by extension, freedom here at home. The casualties of that war were startling: over 68,000 would not return, another 170,000 suffered injuries that changed their lives forever. Almost 40 per cent of those who served suffered injury or died in battle.

General David Watson stated: It need hardly be a matter of surprise that the Canadians, by this time, had the reputation of being the best shock troops in

the Allied army. The Canadian superiority was proven beyond question.

It's my distinct honour today to profile the courage and resilience of Manitoba's own Stan Butterworth, who served in the Second World War and who I had the great honour of breaking bread with just a few minutes ago. He is joined today by Lieutenant-Colonel Rod Klinck, former commanding officer of the Fort Garry Horse. In the midst of active service abroad, he also had to deal with the death of his brother, Fred, but Stan demonstrated a stoicism that was reflective of many in the service and perhaps of his generation. He said: I was a member of a crew. The war was not over. We had to go on from there.

To Mr. Butterworth: The people of our province and our country salute you, and we are honoured to have you with us today.

Let us all commit, as proud Manitobans and Canadians, to refocusing our minds and hearts toward the ultimate sacrifice made by our people. They have contributed to the cause of a safer world and a more secure future here at home.

I thank and we all thank our veterans. We thank you for your selfless courage. We thank you for your belief in Canada. We thank you for your willingness to stand and to offer your lives for your country. You have done more than any leader, any theory or any policy could ever achieve. You have given life to the Canadian dream and we are the fortunate inheritors of your sacrifice and your commitment.

On behalf of a grateful people, I say God bless our veterans.

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Madam Speaker, as I begin, I would like to thank all the veterans who are in attendance today in the gallery and, certainly, reconfirm the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) words of thanks and gratitude for the sacrifice and contributions that you have made to this great country to protecting our freedoms and standing up for our democracy.

It is a tremendous honour for me to be able to rise today and pay tribute to those Canadians who served in World War I. Many people say that the First World War was the birth of our nation, and this weekend, as we mark Remembrance Day in Winnipeg this year, we will also be commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. We will remember those brave Canadians who served

and helped to lead the Allied forces to victory in that Great War.

Now it should be noted, towards the end of World War I, between August 8th and November 11th, 1918, in what would become Canada's Hundred Days, our soldiers launched a series of surprise attacks and breached the Hindenburg Line which made up the German defences.

Now, that is significant in the contribution that our forces made, because our Canadian soldiers had a reputation for being among the best attacking soldiers participating on the Western Front. Now, as a result of that battle, victory would be soon met by the Allied forces. Canadian soldiers certainly played an important role, being the vanguard for those attacks.

Now, the reputation of these troops was so awesome that their movements had to be kept secret, because if the Germans became aware that Canadian troops were on the move, they would know that an attack was imminent.

During this conflict, more than 60,000 Canadian soldiers lost their lives, and more than 170,000 were injured. And that hundred days, Canada's Hundred Days, saw 6,800 of those sacrifices.

It can truly be said that it is during the First World War when the terror of modern warfare became apparent on the world stage. It saw the introduction of many technologies which rendered warfare more efficient. It saw the brutal stalemate of trench warfare, and, of course, today we have a growing recognition of the impact of post-traumatic stress on our soldiers. But, unfortunately, too many generations of soldiers from this world war suffered with that without proper recognition and supports.

So later today we'll be asking everybody in the House to stand together and send a message to our federal government that if you stand up in this country and you pick up a helmet and you pick up a gun to defend our flag, then this nation owes you a debt of gratitude and ought to properly take care of you for the rest of your life.

Canada's accomplishments in World War I helped us to become an independent nation on the world stage. I do want to acknowledge the many Manitobans who were part of this victory. Most came from modest backgrounds; they were farmers, labourers, recent immigrants, indigenous people.

One of my personal heroes, Francis Pegahmagabow, as we well know, was one of the most effective snipers in the First World War.

I also want to pay tribute to the many women who contributed to the war effort of Canada during World War I, serving as nurses overseas but also in rallying home defence. There were women in this country who put on uniforms, who trained, who learned how to shoot rifles in defence of our homeland right here on Canadian territory.

On a personal level, I would like to salute my mom's grandpa, my maternal great-grandfather, Grandpa Bill Avery, who served in World War I and who was gassed.

In closing, to all the soldiers of all the wars, but, perhaps, most poignantly on this anniversary, those who served in World War I, we salute you for your sacrifice in this hall of democracy. We can serve here because of the contributions that you made.

Each day we benefit from the peace that you fought for, so I say miigwech, merci and thank you.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise and speak in remembrance as we approach the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War on November 11th, 1918.

It may be difficult now to imagine the sheer horror and destruction of those wars which left so many million dead and so many young lives cut short.

Today is also Aboriginal Veteran's Day, and we should recall the thousands of Aboriginal Canadians who fought and died only to return home and find the rights they fought for for others were denied to them.

Manitobans signed up for service in extraordinary numbers, and tributes to their sacrifice are seen not just outside this Chamber on the Rotunda mural, but down Memorial Boulevard, out the front steps of this Legislature, and in memorials and cenotaphs in every town in Manitoba.

I have many relatives who served in conflicts in combat, non-combat and in civilian support. They were lucky, and I am lucky because they survived, as so many did not.

On my mother's side, my maternal grandfather, Robert Barrett, was born in 1899 and served in both the First and Second World Wars. His older brother,

Alfred Barrett, had moved to Alberta, then enlisted with the Canadian Field Artillery and returned to Europe. He was killed in action at Vimy, but his final resting place is still unknown.

\* (13:50)

Another great-uncle, Jack Clarke, was awarded the George Medal. In 1941, on a training flight, he was shot down by fighters. His plane crashed and he returned to the burning wreckage to pull his instructor and save him.

On my father's side, my great-uncle, Frank Bastin, grew up in Winnipeg. He was part of the Canadian shock troops and fought at the Somme and at Vimy, and he wrote of his experience at the Somme.

He wrote, quote: When our artillery barrage opened at zero hour, the hail of bullets and shrapnel facing us was terrific. It was like facing a blizzard with the constant buzz of machine gun bullets and the crack of those passing close to one's head and the explosions of shrapnel shells adding to the clamour. I trudged steadily forward and gone several hundred yards when I realized that I was all alone. The battalion entered this battle about 900 strong, and we numbered just over 100 when we reached our billets late that night.

He added: I met the finest men I have ever known in the 3rd Battalion. An idea promulgated by pacifists is that good soldiers must be insensitive and brutal, but this is quite wrong. Self-control, intelligence and keen perception are the qualities which make men outstanding in war and in peace.

In late August 1918 Frank was shot in action and a telegram was sent to his family reporting that he was dead. A few weeks later, they received a second, much happier telegram from him, telling them that he was alive.

He lived to a ripe old age, and, as a judge, made a landmark ruling that made an impression on Canadian culture: he ruled that hockey fights are legal.

My uncle and aunt were both in forces in the Second World War, but did not see combat.

But, while we often focus on the First and Second World War, it is critical to remember conflicts like Korea, the first Gulf War, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan.

My sister, Alexandra, was a civilian serving in Kabul, Afghanistan, during the conflict there, for three years, working with the RCMP, training Afghan police.

At the end of his life, my great-uncle Frank Bastin was on his deathbed and he was repeating the same thing over and over again. It took a while for our family to make it out, but he was saying: I just want to do my duty and not be afraid.

My paternal grandfather, John "Bud" Lamont, who was a Liberal MLA for Iberville in the late 1930s, also fought in the first war in France and at Mons in Belgium.

And, just after the peace, 100 years ago, the armistice that we are marking, he wrote a letter home to his family from Belgium. The war had just ended, and he passed the body of an enemy soldier who had been killed in the last hours of the war. A few hours later, he passed the body again, and the boots had been stolen, and it was raining. He looked at the bare feet of his dead foe in the rain and thought how easily it could've been him.

In the midst of the horror of war, we need to recall the common humanity we all share. We remember, on November 11th, to recognize the sacrifice of those who fought and died. We owe it to them and to ourselves to ensure that those who fought and died did not fight and die in vain, but for a better world. It is up to us to honour them by building that better world.

We need to stand up to fight when it matters and be willing to beat our swords into ploughshares when the battle is done.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Pallister:** I wonder if I could ask for leave to devote a moment of silence following the comments of my colleagues this afternoon, Madam Speaker. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** The—we have one more member indicating they—that he wishes to speak, and then, after that, I would ask is there leave to call a moment of silence in recognition of our veterans? *[Agreed]*

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The first—

**Madam Speaker:** Oh, the honourable member for Assiniboia needs to request leave to speak.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Yes, sure. Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to speak to the ministerial statement.

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

**Mr. Fletcher:** The first battle of Ypres, the Battle of the Somme, the second battle of Ypres, Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, the third battle of Ypres, the Hundred Days of victory, led by the Canadian Expeditionary Force of which the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry were a member; we think of Sir Arthur Currie or Sir Sam Steele and other great Canadians. We reflect that a third of the eligible people of Aboriginal descent, a third of the adult population, volunteered. Madam Speaker, 650,000 Canadians volunteered; 172,000 came back wounded, 65,000 didn't come back—gone forever. These were future businessmen, family men, prime ministers, MLAs, farmers—potential that we'll never see. But their sacrifice of their potential allows people today to reach their full potential. We have a legacy and a future.

The three members, residents on Pine Street, didn't know each other, but all ended up with the Victoria Cross, the highest award for bravery. That's Pine Street in Winnipeg, now called Valour Road. And that's just an example of what every single one of those souls did for our country.

We can't go to any community on the Prairies—to big towns or small towns—without seeing the cenotaphs in the heart of each community that list the names of those who did not make it back, perhaps they list the names of those who served. It doesn't list the names of those people who were never born or the accomplishments that never happened because of the sacrifice of so many.

John McCrae, in his poem Flanders Fields, says it very well. We have the torch now.

But the—perhaps the most poignant poet is Wilfred Owen. And Mr. Owen died, but his words live on as, hopefully, the legacy of those who died lives on, through us and through our descendants.

Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak, and I'd like to thank everyone for allowing the opportunity. We live in the best country in the world, the best time in human history to be alive and there isn't a day that goes by that any of us don't thank God that we are Canadian.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Please rise for a moment of silence.

*A moment of silence was observed.*



## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Remembrance Day

**Mr. Jon Reyes (St. Norbert):** First of all, I want to thank members who've already participated in Remembrance Day ceremonies. And I also want to thank members in advance who will be participating at services this weekend. Our veterans here in the gallery and veterans around our nation truly appreciate it.

Many schoolchildren will be lining up for school Remembrance Day services, walking down the halls, in line with other kids in class, and heading towards the school gym, sitting down in orderly fashion, then listening to Flanders Fields, the Last Post and the Lament. I urge parents, especially new Canadians, to attend a service this weekend to remember the reason why you live in this great country, Canada.

For me, Madam Speaker, I would join the service right after high school. I would go on to serve 10 years in both the reserves and the regular force. When I served, I just did my job. I wasn't expecting anything—didn't need to be told thanks for what I did. I just did my job.

\* (14:00)

My job was to serve my country, and I was proud to do so. When I left the service, what I missed the most about it was the camaraderie and the places I went to around the world. I would travel a lot naturally, with the Royal Canadian Navy, being posted on the HMCS Winnipeg. I was fortunate not to be on active duty in the areas of conflict or deployed to war-torn countries. However, like veterans we have here today, I had an obligation. We had an obligation to serve our country even if it meant sacrificing our lives. We all made that commitment to Queen and country.

Some of you went to war, and we know some of them went and, unfortunately, never came back. Some of us would serve together, some of us would start our careers together, and if we were lucky we would see each other again during the time we served. Sometimes it would be after our time in the forces ended. In the case of my good friend Master Warrant Officer, Retired, Jon Hawtin—Jon, who would have known we'd be reunited again this past summer in Virden? It only took the Virden Indoor Rodeo to see each other again, thanks to the member from Arthur-Virden.

The camaraderie will never go away, and continue to thank each other and every one of these veterans, and the men and women who continue to serve should never be taken for granted.

So today, again and again, I can never thank you enough. We can never thank you enough.

So today and on Remembrance Day and every day, I will always thank each and every one of you; thank you, thank you for your service.

Madam Speaker, I wish to have the guests, my guest veterans recorded into Hansard, their names, please.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to record the names of the guests in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

*Veterans: Steven Andrushko, Wright Eruebi, Jon Hawtin, Michel Latouche.*

### Matthew Shorting and Jonathan Meikle

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** When duty calls how will you respond?

Well, Matthew Shorting and Jonathan "Johnny" Meikle know the answer.

At 12 a.m. on Sunday morning they saw an intoxicated man harassing an innocent bystander on a bus here in Winnipeg, peppering him with racial slurs. Now, when the intoxicated man pulled out a knife about to stab this innocent bystander, Matthew jumped up to intervene and then Johnny Spartan kicked this guy backwards. Seeing young children on the bus, the two of them wrestled this intoxicated person off and onto the street.

Now, Johnny was stabbed in the grappling match that ensued. They held the man until police arrived to arrest him.

Now, in the abstract, Madam Speaker, of course we don't want people to put their lives at risk to intervene in violent situations, but in the real world these two men clearly saved lives in our city.

Now, Matthew works with educators and with young people, talking about his own experience coming out of the child-welfare system and going to become a man who is empowered and in charge of his own destiny today.

Johnny is a veteran of the Afghan war who recently marked one year of sobriety. He says, and I quote: This is just one example of the way my life is

shifting for the better. I was able to do what was right. End quote.

Now, given their own journeys, they still feel compassion for this man that they had to intervene against recently. Matthew says, quote: Can you imagine if he received the same love and attention that we are getting now? End quote.

So I wanted to take time today in front of all our colleagues to thank these two young men, to say *miigwech* for being heroes, *miigwech* for answering the call of duty and *miigwech* for never forgetting that true warriors are guided by love for every single person in our community.

I would ask the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and all of our colleagues today to rise and pay tribute to these fine young men.

### St-Labre 200

**Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye):** Today I rise in this House to congratulate the St-Labre 200 on celebrating their 10th anniversary. What started out to be a friendly competition between members of the Grenier family has turned into a major fundraising event for southeastern Manitoba.

The St-Labre 200 is a go-cart race, where on day one you build a go-cart with parts like a motor, clutch, brakes and tires that are supplied by the committee and the rest of the cart you fabricate on site. On day two you get to race your cart in a grueling 200-lap race on a dirt track.

Madam Speaker, the great part of this event, that there's—is that there is no charge for admission. It includes free camping, a display of fireworks and entertainment for all who attend. All the committee asks is that you bring a non-perishable food item or a cash donation for a local Helping Hands food bank.

Madam Speaker, the best part is that in their 10 years as an organization, they have donated close to \$90,000 to local charities, collected thousands of pounds of food for local food banks, and the event continues to grow: 1,500-plus spectators come out and enjoy this weekend.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate the committee and volunteers for all the hard work they do to make this event possible. The participants and the spectators that enjoy a good race and this small-town atmosphere makes the St-Labre 200 so much fun.

I would ask all members to go online and check out the St-Labre 200 and maybe next year be a participant or at least a spectator.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### Diwali Celebration

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Yesterday, November 27th–November 7th, sorry—was this year's official celebration of Diwali. So today I stand to speak about why this festival is celebrated all over the world.

Diwali marks the end of harvest season and is celebrated on the third day coinciding with the darkest night of the lunar month. It's a joyous occasion filled with sweets and dancing. And it is also known as the Festival of Lights.

Now, this Festival of Lights includes fireworks and firecrackers being set off all night long. Children love it and families hang up lights and set out candles all over their homes.

The reason for all the lights and candles are to pay tribute to and to guide the goddess Lakshmi into their homes.

Madam Speaker, these lights are also a reminder of the importance of knowledge and self-improvement. Diwali symbolizes good overruling evil. It's about doing right over wrong and light overcoming darkness.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Hindu Society of Manitoba for hosting an annual Diwali Mela event this past Saturday.

And I hope that everyone had a happy Diwali. Thank you.

### Manitoba's Oil Industry

**Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Arthur-Virden):** Madam Speaker, I rise here in this House today to give due diligence to those who spend their lives and dedication—dedicate their time and commitment to the Manitoba oil industry. Whether you are a CEO of an oil company or a worker on an oil rig, these men and women commit countless hours of their lives working in one of the—Manitoba's greatest hidden treasures.

Manitoba is home to two potential areas of oil and gas production, the southwest Manitoba and the Hudson Bay Lowlands. Oil was discovered in Manitoba and has been produced since 1951.

Manitoba's current oil production is in the southwest Manitoba along the northern flank of the Williston Basin, which also occupies portions of Saskatchewan, North Dakota and Montana.

The oldest producing oil well was drilled back in 1951. Manitoba's most productive oil well in northern part of Manitoba was—produces 2.03 million barrels of oil since 1955. Both locations are in the constituency of Arthur-Virden.

While 80 per cent of the oil rights are owned by private individuals or companies, the remaining 20 per cent is owned by the Province of Manitoba as Crown land. Last year over 240 new wells were drilled as a total of 6,100 producing wells in the province.

The total oil industry expenditures in Manitoba is two—in 2017 were approximately \$750 million. This equates to a total spinoff of approximately \$1.5 billion to our province's economy.

As you can see by these stats, Manitoba's oil industry has been an important part of life for both oilfield families and business community in Arthur-Virden. To all the hard-working individuals in the oil patch, we commend you for the time and dedication you have committed to making our oil industry one of the safest and with one of the highest environmental standards in the country.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, we have a number of guests in our galleries that I would like to introduce to you.

Seated in the Speaker's Gallery, we have with us today Mr. Stan Butterworth and Lieutenant-Colonel Rod Klinck, who are the guests of the honourable First Minister.

\* (14:10)

And also in the Speaker's Gallery we have with us today Mr. John Hawtin, Mr. Michel Latouche and Mr. Scott Stroh, who are the guests of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes).

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

We also have guests here as guests of the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith), and they are here from Yoruba, Nigeria, and other parts of the world. They're here to celebrate ASA Day 2018, a

cultural day to celebrate indigenous diversity, language, beliefs, values and culture. We have with us Joel Olaniyi Oyatoye, a Yatniy Communication International host; His Royal Highness Adegunle Asamu; Queen Agnes Oyeyemi; Chief Ms. Toyin Adegbola; Ms. Rukayat Lawal; Ms. Bose Akinola; Ms. Lizzy Anjorin; and Mr. Lanre.

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

And seated in the public gallery, from Rosenort School, we have six grade 12 law students under the direction of Arlin Scharfenberg, and this groups is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Morris (Mr. Martin).

Seated also in the public gallery, from Kildonan-East Collegiate, we have 36 grade 9 students under the direction of Luke Klassen, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe).

And also seated in the public gallery we have guests here, former Thompsonites, Gary Domann—of Winnipeg now—and his daughter, Christine Auger of Oshawa, who are the guests of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle).

And we also welcome you to the Manitoba Legislature.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### St. Boniface Hospital NICU Mandatory Overtime Concerns

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Madam Speaker, a nurse is raising the alarm. She's voicing serious concerns about the state of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at St. Boniface Hospital in a letter which I will table now.

Now, this unit cares for the most vulnerable children in our province, children who need the most intensive forms of interventions. Now, this nurse says, and I quote, she's worked in the NICU for more than 30 years, and in those decades she has never seen the amount of voluntary and mandatory overtime that is occurring right now.

Now, what this nurse says quite clearly in the letter is that the Minister of Health is putting misinformation out into the public sphere about the state of affairs at St. Boniface Hospital. Now, we owe it to our most vulnerable patients to get to the bottom of this.

Now, we know that the result of this mandatory overtime is as a result of the cuts and the changes in phase 1 of this Premier's plan for health care.

Why has this government refused to listen to the front-line workers like the nurse who wrote this letter?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Au contraire, Madam Speaker, 30 new nurses have been added to the neonatal unit because we're listening to the front-line nurses who we very much respect and—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** I would like to table a second letter. This one is from the CEO of St. Boniface Hospital, Martine Bouchard, to Réal Cloutier, who is the CEO of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. This letter is dated September 26th of this year.

Now, it's one thing for front-line nurses to raise the alarm, but now senior management has also noticed the effect of this Premier's cuts and closures.

Now, the CEO of St. Boniface writes, and I quote: Mandatory overtime, exhaustion and moral distress currently being experienced as a result of chronically functioning over capacity. The impact of another staff being seconded to NICU leaves other units at risk and creates a domino effect. End quote.

Now, combined with the letter from the nurse who says that the situation is far from good, we are seeing a dramatic impact of the situation at St. Boniface Hospital. And, again, this began in January of 2018, according to the CEO.

Why has this minister misled Manitobans about the situation at St. Boniface Hospital and the NICU at St. Boniface?

**Mr. Pallister:** The member raises a topic of mutual concern, but, unfortunately, chooses to word his preamble in such a manner as to imply that this was not an issue of long-standing concern which, Madam Speaker, is exactly what the letter conveys.

This was an issue of long-standing concern that was unaddressed by the previous NDP government. We're addressing it.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Again, the letter demonstrates that the mandatory overtime situation became crisis beginning in January 2018.

The CEO of St. Boniface Hospital goes on to write, and I quote here: The current clinical and human resource impact to operate a unit over its allotted baseline is unsustainable and puts our newborns at risk with potential mortality and morbidity consequences for the remainder of their lives. End quote. So the current situation at St. Boniface Hospital puts newborns at risk, potentially with impacts that will play out for the rest of their lives. That is the view of the CEO of St. Boniface Hospital, as expressed in that letter. This is the current situation as a result of the staffing changes ordered by this Premier. It is confirmed by the previous letter from that front-line nurse.

Will the Premier acknowledge the impact of the cuts that he is ordering and the staffing changes that he has directed?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, I recognize the member's tendency toward fear mongering, Madam Speaker. Nonetheless, there are 11 new neonatal beds at HSC and, at St. Boniface, 30 new nursing positions.

We're listening to the front-line workers. We're acting. Nurse overtime is not up; it is down over the last two years since we came to government by 29 per cent.

And, again, I would encourage the member that although politically he may be motivated to try to instill fear in people—mothers of children, children themselves—nonetheless, this is counterproductive. And, frankly, using dishonest information in his arguments doesn't help strengthen them; it weakens them.

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

#### **Staffing at St. Boniface Hospital NICU Release of Infant Mortality Rate**

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** The letter from the CEO of the St. Boniface Hospital shows that overtime became a crisis beginning in January of 2018. She writes in this letter, and I quote here: We cannot confirm without a doubt that neonatal deaths (four) were directly related to understaffing issues. End quote. And she makes reference that that conclusion came out of the St. Boniface Hospital's perinatal morbidity and mortality committee.

So, again, the quote from the letter says, quote: We cannot confirm without a doubt that neonatal deaths, four, were directly related to understaffing issues. End quote.

Now, this is certainly a very concerning sentence to read in a letter, Madam Speaker, and I do believe that Manitobans deserve to hear the answers as to what is the situation. Why is somebody pondering a connection between neonatal deaths and understaffing issues?

Will the Premier commit to releasing the report of this committee that is being referenced to in this letter?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Unbelievable, Madam Speaker. The member is raising statistical—pointing out statistics on dead babies—an incredible tragedy and, obviously, one that should be treated with incredible respect and dignity—that occurred between 2009 and 2012. Madam Speaker, that's beneath contempt to try to link the reforms that we're pursuing to improve the systems of health-care delivery in our province with the death of children that occurred while the NDP was in government is specious and morally decrepit. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Again, Madam Speaker, observers will note that I am quoting directly from the letter and citing statistics that are in the—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —report that I tabled for the benefit of the Premier.

And, again, the situation of understaffing at the hospital that is being referred to in the line of questioning today reached a crisis point in January of 2018.

Now, I am mindful of the fact that the Minister of Health made a recent announcement on the staffing level at NICU. But I would point out for the benefit of those watching and those in the Chamber today that this was an announcement made after these letters were signed and sent to the Minister of Health. And so the timing of the minister's announcement certainly raises some questions, and that's why we are asking for the report that was published and released by this committee to

be made public. There are very serious concerns which are being outlined in this letter.

Will the Premier commit to releasing that report?

**Mr. Pallister:** Member has put false allegations on the record. I'd appreciate it and I know all Manitobans interested in facts around health-care reform discussions would appreciate if he withdrew his comments. His allegations are absolutely false.

\* (14:20)

The deaths referred to—that he referred to in his preamble and that he quoted from a letter occurred between 2009 and 2012.

Now, we are acting on the advice we are getting from experts as well as front-line personnel, and we are taking that action with the certain focus that we want to prevent any such future occurrences. But, Madam Speaker, we will not trot out the death of children as an argument to try to fortify our case.

Madam Speaker, \$3.2 million of new funding has been allocated to neonatal by this government because of the concerns the member raises. He should stick to raising those concerns, not cite false statistics around dead babies, because, Madam Speaker, that is deplorable, and again, I would encourage him to apologize for doing so.

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

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

**Mr. Kinew:** I've tabled the letter for the Premier. He can read the facts in that letter onto the record if he likes, Madam Speaker.

I will return to the original letter which was signed by that NICU nurse, because it's quite powerful, Madam Speaker, and I will simply let her words carry the rest of this interaction. She says, and I quote: We care for Manitoba's, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Nunavut and the United States' smallest and most fragile population with a fierce dedication to do our utmost. We are well acquainted with life and death, and we know the difference between good and not good, and this, sir, is not good. We need safe working conditions; lives depend on it. End quote.

Those are the words of the nurse in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at St. Boniface Hospital.

Will this Premier listen to the words of this nurse, will he publish the report that is made

reference to in this letter and will he commit to following up on all the recommendations coming out of St. Boniface NICU?

**Mr. Pallister:** The member has, again, neglected an opportunity, failed to take advantage of an opportunity, to correct the record in respect of his allegations—which were false, Madam Speaker—concerning the death of children as a consequence of health-care reforms in the process of being undertaken.

He's also citing from a letter which was written prior to the allocation of \$3.2 million and the announcement of \$3.2 million towards the very focused area that he is now citing.

So, Madam Speaker, quite frankly, although it's difficult to listen to someone who cites false statistics or who references false situations, which weaken their argument, it is not difficult to listen to front-line workers. That is exactly what we are doing and taking action as a result.

#### **Methamphetamine Crisis Plan of Action Needed**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** The current meth crisis highlights the true colours of the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his ministers. When the children's advocate called the government to provide a concrete plan of action addressing youth mental health and addiction, the Minister of Health didn't rise to the occasion. Instead, he got into a fight, dismissing her expertise, and I quote, as finger pointing.

The Minister of Justice is no better: across-the-board cuts to tools that fight the meth crisis, including the integrated organized task force and initiatives that look to disrupt gang activity.

When will the Premier start treating this meth crisis seriously?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Well, Madam Speaker, we recognize there's an issue affecting our communities across the province, and we're taking steps to address it. And we're working closely with our partners on the criminal justice side. In fact, we're supporting our partners. In fact, today, our government just announced \$200,000 to support blare—Bear Clan Patrol and all the good work the Bear Clan does across the city and actually across Manitoba.

We've announced \$126,000 from the proceeds of crime fund, an additional \$70,000 from the Municipal Relations Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

These are tools the Bear Clan can use to combat illicit drugs here in Manitoba.

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

#### **Family Conciliation Services Budget Reduction Concerns**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** The Premier insists less is more, but his arguments have worn thin on Manitobans. Case in point, Madam Speaker: they have cut hundreds of thousands of dollars for Family Conciliation Services. And in July, Justice Doyle said in court, and I quote: There's a dramatic loss of resources in regard to Family Conciliation Services, end quote, warning the necessary assessments were not being done to serve families or justice.

Why is the Premier cutting the services Manitoba families need?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Well, I appreciate the question from the member, and this allows me an opportunity to talk about the investments we're making in fighting crime here in Manitoba.

The provincial budget for policing across the province has gone up \$6.8 million; that's an additional \$5.3 million for RCMP Manitoba, over 1.2 for First Nations policing and other initiatives we've taken. Additionally, for the City of Winnipeg, we have committed \$46 million, including \$20 million of unconditional funding for the City of Winnipeg.

And, quite frankly, Madam Speaker, the results we've seen just a week ago in terms of turning over \$2.7 million of illicit drugs and property and assets for illicit work in crime, these are the kinds of results that we're getting in Manitoba.

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

#### **Social Services Appeal Board Access to Justice System**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Well, I would ask the minister how about the people that are losing their lives because of his inaction?

So, whether it's the meth crisis—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Fontaine:** —or support for families, the Premier is failing Manitobans. And now, with Bill 24, the

Premier wants to remove the ability of Manitobans to exercise their Charter rights, Madam Speaker.

Janet Forbes, executive director of Inclusion Winnipeg says, and I quote: I think it's really an erosion of people's rights to access the justice system. End quote.

Why is the Premier stripping protections for Manitoba's most vulnerable people?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Well, Madam Speaker, we're taking steps to modernize our criminal justice system, things that the NDP government did not do for 17 years. We have a separate department within Justice dealing with victims of a crime. And these are important initiatives that our government has undertaken.

We've—also supporting other initiatives. We're talking about initiatives like HealthIM, which provides mental health resources to front-line police officers to make assessments when they are dealing with mental health individuals when they come across. We're investing an extra—more—\$390,000, Canadian Centre for Child Protection.

These are some of the initiatives that we are undertaking—previous government did not have an interest in. We are getting results, and more results will come, Madam Speaker.

#### **Lifelight Air Ambulance Privatization Concerns**

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Madam Speaker, the Pallister government has made it very clear—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Swan:** —that their decisions are all about the money.

Sixteen Lifelight doctors have now made it clear, directly to the Minister of Health, that their plans are only focused on dollars and cents and not on the quality or safety of patients. They have real concerns about downgrading the type of aircraft used, service levels and quality of service delivery. They are ready to resign their service if the minister goes ahead as planned.

Will the—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Swan:** Will the minister or anybody over there listen to these doctors and keep Lifelight public?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I'm pleased to respond to the member's question.

Last week, when I received a message from the doctors for Lifelight, I immediately committed to meeting with them, and we made that meeting happen within the space of less than a week, which took some doing with their schedules and our own. I was pleased to be at that meeting with the member—the Minister for Infrastructure as well.

Here's what we heard from the doctors when the meeting started. They said not only does the government have to right—has the right to ask questions about efficiency, they have an obligation to keep asking questions about efficiency of service. Why? To get better service provision for all Manitobans.

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

#### **Northern Patient Transfer Program Funding Reduction Concerns**

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Madam Speaker, this government has no right to put dollars and cents ahead of patient care in Manitoba. The minister knows this and that's why he's denied, over and over, in this House there's been any change to Northern Patient Transfer. But his own funding letter to the Northern Health Region shows that \$1.4 million has been cut from that program under the instruction of Cabinet. We've heard repeatedly from northern Manitobans who say that staff now are overturning medical recommendations on what kind of transport should take place.

Why is this Minister of Health only focused on the money and not doctors' advice and not the best interests of Manitoba patients?

\* (14:30)

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** So the statements of the member are patently false. Yesterday, my opening comments at the meeting were to state again for the doctors that we take a safety-first approach and that, simply, if the service cannot be proven to be better and safer through the RFP process that we're embarking on, we simply won't do it.

But I would also want to say about the Northern Patient Transportation Program the member is also wrong. That program continues to have increased investment and increased use by Manitobans.

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

**Meth Cases at Health Facilities  
Expanded Powers for Security Officers**

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Well, this minister needs to be familiar with his own budget, which shows those cuts.

The protection of health-care professionals should not take a back seat to trying to cut costs, and it's clear that tools that we have in place to fight this methamphetamine crisis are being sorely tested. Security guards in our health-care facilities have said clearly, they're uncertain about their legal protection when they do their job.

This government has the ability to review the powers that those security guards have.

Will the Minister of Health or the Minister of Justice (Mr. Cullen) or anybody over there take responsibility, commit to reviewing the powers of security officers to ensure they have the tools they need to meet the demands of this terrible drug crisis in this province?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, Madam Speaker, the incredible ability of the member and his colleagues to stay totally unfocused on getting value for people is just amazing to see repeated day after day in here.

None of the air ambulance services the NDP offered—which were increasingly privatized under the NDP, by the way—were ever tendered. Meaning they never, ever attempted to determine if they could get better value for money.

So they were borrowing money to provide services which they never shopped for. Imagine if Manitobans did that in their own homes, in their own small businesses, the disaster that would create for them.

Madam Speaker, it created a disaster for the people of Manitoba anyway because it created a billion-dollar debt-service cost this year alone. None of the services were ever tendered. There was no guarantee of available aircraft. No service standards were established. There were insufficient safety requirements.

We're cleaning that all up and we're looking at the possibility of doing what seven other provinces have already done, which is look to the private sector

to provide services that are better, safer and and at lower cost as well.

**Manitoba's Civil Service  
Hiring Practice Reform**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Last week the Premier and the Finance Minister announced a report that found irregular government hiring practices, suggesting that people were hired on contracts when there were other public servants who were eligible, apparently, also including an assistant deputy minister. It was suggested that there was irregular contracting, namely, that people who should have been treated as employees and taxed on their income were, instead, working for corporations, some of them outside of Manitoba.

The result was that these people were avoiding taxes that they should have paid. However, this review only looked into a time period when the NDP was in power.

The government has announced the scope of the review will be expanded to Crown corporations and academia, but will it expand to include hiring practices up 'til the present under this government?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, it won't be expanded because it's already been done, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Second Opposition—*[interjection]*

Order. Order.

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

**Tax Avoidance  
Conflict of Interest**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Again, I'm glad the Premier highlighted the very serious issue of tax avoidance in his press conference, Madam Speaker.

While tax evasion is criminal and illegal, tax avoidance is perfectly legal, although, certainly, it may be seen as wrong when somebody who earns millions of dollars a year pays a lower tax rate than someone who makes \$30,000.

In the news today it was reported that this government has spent \$16 million on contractors. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.



**Mr. Lamont:** Many of them are giant accounting firms whose business is telling companies and individuals to legally avoid taxes, and sometimes they cross the line and get in trouble with the CRA.

Part of the reason we have such a big deficit is that companies like—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** —KPMG tell their clients how to legally avoid paying taxes, then they tell cash-strapped governments they should cut and privatize.

Does the Premier see the inherent conflict here?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Madam Speaker, does the member see the inherent conflict in a Prime Minister calling people who abide by the tax laws tax evaders over 50 times in the House of Commons? Does he see the inherent conflict in a Prime Minister and a Finance Minister trying to hit small-business people who are struggling to make ends meet with higher taxes and calling them tax evaders? I see the inherent conflict in that.

I think that people who are—run our small businesses in this province and across the country are the engine of growth. They're the spark plugs for our economy. They create jobs. They put money at risk. They don't have benefits and securities like many enjoy, including people in this Chamber, and they should be respected and not called tax evaders, as the member and his colleagues in eastern Canada have done.

And that's why this province, this government stood up and led the fight against the federal Liberal government's proposals that jack up taxes on small-business people, and we'll continue to stand up for the small-business sector in this province.

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

**Mr. Lamont:** Madam Speaker, the hiring audit shows there's a clear double standard in conflict of interest requirements for the public service compared to elected officials.

Again, the review showed that public servants were working as contractors and using corporations outside of Manitoba to reduce the income tax they owed. Again, governments across Canada, including Manitoba, are losing revenue due both to tax evasion but 'arso'—also to perfectly legal tax avoidance. Canadian direct investment in the top 10 tax havens in 2016 was \$284 billion. In 2014, in Bermuda,

Canadian companies had \$31 billion in assets, but only 35 employees.

Has the Premier himself ever set up a perfectly legal company or trust in Manitoba or elsewhere in order to pay less than his fair share of taxes?

**Mr. Pallister:** While I had the honour of serving Manitobans in the House of Commons, Madam Speaker, I was also given the honour of chairing the House of Commons finance committee and actually organized and led a fight against offshore tax havens, and I'll continue to believe that that is the right thing to do.

The biggest abusers of offshore tax havens are friends and donors to the Liberal Party of Canada who work in big banks, Madam Speaker.

### **Climate Change Government Position**

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, three out of four Manitobans, according to a recent poll, do not believe a word this Premier says when it comes to climate change. Makes us wonder what the remaining one out of four is smoking.

But, more to the point, let's help the Premier understand why this might be the case. Who was it that cancelled the solar subsidy in Manitoba? Who cancelled the public transit funding arrangement? Who killed the electric bus?

Would the person responsible for these boneheaded decisions stand up and help the Premier understand why no one believes him? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

I would just urge some caution in using inflammatory language that has a tendency to take this whole Chamber off track. And especially on a day like today where we are recognizing veterans and what veterans have done, I think they would all be better served and democracy would be better served if there was more respect shown in this Chamber for questions being posed and the tone of the questions and the responses that are given as well.

So I'm asking all members to please show some respect here and stay away from the unparliamentary language because that is just totally offensive, I think, to this building. And I'm asking all members for their co-operation here, that we can have a better sense of decorum today.

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development):** On behalf of all the Manitobans that this member has just—used his inflammatory language, I would like to say shame on him and ask him to apologize to all the Manitobans that he continues to insult, whether it be in this Chamber or in his constituency.

Madam Speaker, for 17 years this member could not find his voice to speak up for climate change as his government sat and did nothing. And then when he finally did have an opportunity to say something, what did he say? He dared Ottawa to pull \$67 million off the table in Manitoba, money that would go for retrofits, money that would go for displacement of propane up in Churchill, money that would go for transitioning to a low-carbon economy. I say shame on that member. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member for Wolseley, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Don't worry, Madam Speaker; I am used to the minister going over the edge when presented with the facts. Let's just review a few things: she claimed that nothing happened for 17 years. I asked what's happened—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** —in the last two and a half.

Who was it that built the first wind turbines in Manitoba? Who was it that built the second wind farm in Manitoba? Who was it that supported 10 different curbside composting programs? Who was it that brought in legislation requiring landfill gas to be captured? Who was it that gave Manitoba a national and international leader in geothermal energy? Who was it that expanded the Power Smart—*[interjection]*

\* (14:40)

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** —program?

Will the person who wants to acknowledge who did all that good work in between the end of the Filmon dark era and the start of the Pallister government dark era, who did all that work?

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

**Ms. Squires:** I'd also like to ask who was it that sat silent when the Auditor General said that there was absolutely no way to meaningfully achieve carbon

emission reductions in this province. Who was it that sat silent? That was that member.

Who was it that sat silent as his government did absolutely nothing for the environment for 17 years? It was that member. And who was it who is now proposing a \$350 US price on carbon that would be about a \$4,000 hit to each Manitoba household per year? It is that member.

He has absolutely no credibility when it comes to the environment. He's done absolutely nothing to help the community transition to a low-carbon environment. We will take no lessons from members opposite.

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

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Well, Madam Speaker, who was it that brought in Manitoba's first ethanol mandate? Who was it that brought in Manitoba's first biodiesel mandate? Who was it that assigned a carbon price to coal and put all the revenue not into their own pockets, but into supporting biomass industries?

Manitobans do not believe this Premier for a very good reason: he's killed the good work that was going on, denied the climate science and is blocking the opportunities for good jobs for people to save money and actually save our children's future.

Madam Speaker, will the Premier stand up and please explain to the children of this province what he is doing on climate change and how that will possibly mean they have a future that we can be proud to hand to them?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Makes you long for the questions from the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum), doesn't it, Madam Speaker?

The member raises an issue—and I appreciate him raising it—of integrity, and, Madam Speaker, integrity is doing what you said you would do.

According to the Auditor General of our province, well, the NDP's plans on climate change were done on the back of a napkin, out of desperation, and they aren't believable. According to the people of Manitoba, who remember when the NDP promised not to raise the PST and did, the NDP's not believable either. And according to history, the historic rebellion, the Halloween rebellion, Madam Speaker, the NDP don't even believe each other, so I don't know why Manitobans would.

### **Manitoba's Culture Days Success of Festival**

**Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson):** Madam Speaker, while Manitoba has a vibrant, multicultural community, we know that the culture sector was neglected for 17 years under the former NDP government.

Can the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage please inform the House of the success of the Culture Days festival which was recently held throughout the province, including northern Manitoba?

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** Thank you so much for that outstanding question to the member from Thompson.

Our government values and recognizes and supports Manitoba's vibrant cultural sector not only in Winnipeg but from every corner of our wonderful province, and I am thrilled to announce that once again Manitoba has distinguished itself as a leader as hosting Culture Days events here in Manitoba.

And, Madam Speaker, for the sixth year in a row Winnipeg placed first across Canada as a community with the most activities during the annual Culture Day weekend.

But Manitoba wasn't finished there yet, and I am proud to announce that Flin Flon beat out Toronto—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mrs. Cox:** And not only that, Madam Speaker, it also ranked first for a community with a population under 50,000.

Madam Speaker, Portage la Prairie ranked eighth in the country. A big congratulations—

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

### **Meth and Opioid Addiction Need for Treatment Centres**

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Today in the gallery I'm joined by the students from Maples Met School and they have raised concerns regarding addiction and treatment centres, specifically regarding the meth and opioid crisis in our province.

Madam Speaker, to quote a student from up in the gallery: The Province of Manitoba is failing to provide the citizens of Manitoba with proper treatment centres to go to while they're struggling with addiction.

How does the Premier (Mr. Pallister) plan on providing adequate treatment options for addicts while ensuring our front-line nurses are being protected while on the job?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** And welcome the students to the gallery. They're asking important questions and we have some updates for them.

It's incorrect to state that the government isn't actioning, because they should be aware that there have been increased beds now at Health Sciences Centre, as well as 12 new addiction treatment beds in Winnipeg, at AFM, for women's treatments.

In addition to this, we're making it easier for those who struggle with addictions to get in the door and get to specialists and there is more to come and I look forward to augmenting my answer in the next set.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Burrows on a supplementary question.

### **Conservation Trust Boreal Forest Protection**

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** The students of Maples Met feel that the world is experiencing an ecological crisis with the present rate of ecosystem and species loss, and Manitoba is no exception.

Now, the students are aware that the Climate and Green Plan commits the Province to installing a \$100-million conservation trust to protect nature.

What they want to know is when will the trust be in place and when will it be used to speed up consultation processes that seek to conserve and protect Manitoba's boreal forests?

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development):** And I do want to thank these students for bringing, arguably, one of the best questions on the climate in this Chamber, and I really appreciate their thoughtful question.

We certainly have got a lot of work to do in terms of creating a sustainable watershed in the province of Manitoba. That is why our government introduced Bill 7, The Sustainable Watershed Act, and in conjunction with that \$102-million historic conservation trust we are going to get meaningful action, in terms of preserving our wetlands and preserving our boreal forests and our boreal wetlands for now and well into the future generations.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Burrows on a final supplementary.

### Education System Review Project-Based Schools

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, students from Maples Met School have brought up concerns about budget cuts and how they might affect project-based schools like theirs. Currently there are only three project-based schools in the province and the students of Maples Met are nervous that when budget cuts happen that their school will be affected.

What does the Premier (Mr. Pallister) plan on doing to protect schools like Maples Met?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education and Training):** I also want to welcome the students here to the gallery and to the Assembly.

Our government and our Premier have made education a priority, Madam Speaker. There is more than \$300 million more ever invested in the operation of schools, but it's not just the operation of schools. We know that good schools need to be built as well. That is why this government has committed to seven new schools around the province. We will continue to look at the needs of capital investment in schools.

The government has recognized that education provides the future for our province. We are making it a priority. The Premier's made it a priority, and we thank the students for raising it here today.

### Social and Affordable Housing Construction and Maintenance

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** The Families Minister has taken credit for hundreds of units that were built and were under construction even before they got into government. But, of course, they haven't built one single one of—on their own. She's cut maintenance by \$78 million. That's over 62 per cent. More and more housing are sitting empty because necessary upgrades aren't being done.

I would have thought that the Conservative government would want to conserve the resources that they have, but instead they're kicking maintenance costs down the road for future generations. Well, they cost a lot more than they do now.

When will this minister commit to a single new housing unit and when will she reverse her 62 per cent cut to social housing?

\* (14:50)

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families):** Well, Madam Speaker, it must be recycle Thursday. I believe the member has asked these questions before, and we will continue to answer the questions.

The fact of the matter is that, since taking office, we have opened and/or supported more than 750 housing—affordable housing units in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, the fact of the matter is that we inherited a—more than \$1 billion in deferred maintenance costs on Manitoba Housing units from the previous NDP government. So we're fixing up the mess. It doesn't happen overnight, but we're committed to doing that on behalf of Manitobans.

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

**Mrs. Smith:** I'll continue to ask these questions because this minister never answers any of my questions.

Manitobans deserve to know. People living in poverty want better—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** People living in poverty want better social services, not worse social services.

The former Families minister cut 300 people off of Rent Assist and reduced Rent Assist for over 7,000 families. This government froze the 'mimumum' wage for two years, failed to build any new housing, sold off social housing, cut the maintenance budget for social housing, cut transit. They refused to do anything about the meth crisis. And they still have not produced a poverty reduction strategy.

When is this minister going to get—

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

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, Madam Speaker, I will keep answering the questions. I can't guarantee that the members opposite will accept these answers, and that's unfortunate, because they are positive answers for Manitobans when it comes to affordable housing in our province.

The fact of the matter is we are helping almost 3,000 more people in rent assistance in Manitoba than the NDP ever did. We will take no lessons from the members opposite.

**Madam Speaker:** The time for oral questions has expired.

## PETITIONS

### Vimy Arena

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The residents of St. James and other areas of Manitoba are concerned with the intention expressed by the provincial government to use the Vimy Arena site as a Manitoba Housing project.

(2) The Vimy Arena site is in the middle of a residential area near many schools—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Fletcher:** —churches, community clubs and senior homes, and neither the provincial government nor the City of Winnipeg considered better suited locations in rural, semi-rural or industrial sites such as St. Boniface Industrial Park, the 20,000 acres at CentrePort or existing properties such as the Shriners Hospital or old Children's Hospital on Wellington Crescent.

(3) The provincial government is exempt from any zoning requirements that would have existed if the land was owned by the City of Winnipeg. This exemption bypasses community input and due diligence and ignores better uses for the land that would be consistent with a residential area.

(4) There are no standards that one would expect for a treatment centre. The Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living have stated that the Department of Health has no role to play in the land acquisition for this Manitoba Housing project for use as a drug addiction facility.

(5) The Manitoba Housing project initiated by the provincial government changes the fundamental nature of the community. Including parks and recreation uses, concerns of residents of St. James and others regarding public safety, property values and their way of life are not properly being addressed.

(6) The concerns of the residents of St. James are being ignored while obvious other locations in wealthier neighbourhoods, such as Tuxedo and River Heights, have not been considered for this Manitoba Housing project even though there are—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Fletcher:** —hundreds of acres of land available for this—for development at Kapyong Barracks or parks like Heubach Park that share the same zoning as the Vimy Arena site.

(7) The Manitoba Housing project and the operation of a drug treatment centre fall outside the statutory mandate of the Manitoba Housing renewal corporation.

(8) The provincial government does not have a co-ordinated plan for addiction treatment in Manitoba as it currently underfunds treatment centres which are running under capacity and potential.

(9) The community has been misled regarding the true intentions of Manitoba Housing as the land is being transferred for a 50-bed facility even though the project is clearly outside of Manitoba Housing responsibility.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Vimy Arena site is not used for an addiction treatment facility; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure the preservation of public land along Sturgeon Creek for the purposes of park land and recreational activities for public use, including being an important part of the Sturgeon Creek Greenway Trail and the Sturgeon Creek ecosystem under the current designation of PR2 for 255 Hamilton Ave. located at the Vimy Arena site, and to maintain the land to be continued to be designated for parks and recreation activity neighbourhood and communities.

This has been signed by Irene Derksen, Susan *[phonetic]* Derksen, Marge Barber *[phonetic]* and many other Manitobans.

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

### Gender Neutrality

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Gender, sexuality and gender identity are protected characteristics of human rights both federally and provincially in Manitoba, Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and soon will be in Saskatchewan, Yukon and other places in Canada. These governments have realized the need for this option on identification for the benefit of people who identify or who are identified by others as intersex, third gender, transgender, genderqueer or non-binary.

Identification and government documents should reflect gender neutrality to prevent issues that may arise from intentional bias on gender, and misgendering. The people described above face anxiety and discrimination in many aspects of day-to-day life, such as: interactions with health-care professionals; interactions with persons of authority; accessing government services; applying for employment.

Gender neutrality describes the idea that policies, language and the other social institutions should avoid distinguishing roles according to people's sex or gender in order to avoid discrimination arising from impressions that there are social roles for which one gender is more suited than other.

Many newcomers to Canada may already have gender-neutral ID. Many indigenous persons are coming to identify as two-spirit as the effects of colonization are lessening, and this needs to be addressed in the process of reconciliation.

Being forced to accept an assigned gender affects children and newborns as they grow and become part of society. There are many psychological benefits for transgender and non-binary people to be allowed to develop without the constraints put upon them by having their gender assigned based on purely physical attributes.

The consideration to have a third option like X or Other on documents was on the previous provincial government's radar for several years, but the current provincial government has not taken steps to implement.

The City of Winnipeg is actively making its forms reflective of gender neutrality in respect to all persons who work for or come into contact with that government.

\* (15:00)

The federal government now issues passports and is educating personnel about the correct language and references for non-binary persons.

An Other option existed on enumeration forms for Elections Manitoba in 2016, was easily accepted, and provided a framework to provide accurate statistics of those who do not identify under the current binary system.

The foresight, along with training and making changes on required forms, acknowledges and accepts persons who fall outside the binary gender so that governments and people can more effectively interact with one another and reduce the anxieties of everyone involved.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately begin implementation of plans to convert systems and forms to be more inclusive of two-spirit and other non-binary individuals, whether it be to include a third gender option or no requirement for gender on forms unless medically or statistically necessary, including health cards and birth certificates.

To urge the provincial government to immediately instruct the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation to offer a third gender option or no gender requirement for licences or any other form of provincial identification.

To urge the provincial government to instruct Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living to offer the option of Manitoba Health cards with no gender in order to reduce the anxieties of transgender and non-binary persons accessing the health-care system as a first step.

To consider revisiting legislation that may need updating to meet the needs of its citizens in this regard.

Signed by Hayden Schneider, Zoë Bishop, Rob Loewen and many others.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Further petitions?

## GRIEVANCES

**Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples):** I rise in the House today with a grievance about the Seniors' School Tax Rebate, along with other grievances within the grievance if time allowed.

Since 2011, I have been speaking up on the Seniors' School Tax Rebate, and today I speak again because this government will not keep the promise to Manitoba seniors. I championed the Seniors' School Tax Rebate in 2015, ensuring a much needed maximum rebate of \$2,300 annually would go to protecting our low- and mid-income seniors in Manitoba.

During the election in 2016, the PC government promised to leave the full Seniors' School Tax Rebate in place. But after the election, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) clawed the seniors' rebate back to a mere \$470 annually, and that small amount is only available to seniors making \$40,000 per year. Above \$40,000, it decreases as income increases. At \$63,500 family income, it becomes zero. Less than \$40,000, there is also clawback.

This is not helping Manitoba seniors at all. I have spoken with many senior constituents after the election in 2007 who need more to be able to afford to stay in their family home or to keep up their social, mental and physical wellness activities, which actually reduces their use of the provincial health-care system.

I was able to convince the premier, Greg Selinger, to make the election promise in the 2011 election the seniors—to the seniors for the school tax rebate. After some discussions in the caucus, the first rebate was started with \$235 and then was increased to \$470. For the year 2016, it was to be up to \$2,300. The PC Party also promised in the 2016 election that if they have government they will also do the same. But once they got in power, they did not keep the promise. The promised tax rebate must be given to Manitoba seniors.

Statistics Canada said food prices rose 4 per cent in 2016, with fruit and vegetable prices rising 18 per cent. Yet the Premier (Mr. Pallister) does not think our senior population needs an additional tax rebate. The Premier has taken healthy food out of our seniors' fridges.

The cost of electricity has gone up. The cost of heat has gone up. Even the cost of licensing pets has gone up. Yet this government is not helping our

seniors who have these rising costs and reduced incomes.

By not giving the promised annual rebate, the Premier is reducing the ability of Manitoba's seniors to stay functioning in the community economy.

When will the Premier recognize that seniors in our province need a greater rebate to survive in this economy? Seniors are part of our local economy; they need a higher tax rebate to have money to stay in their homes and make purchases. They need the higher tax rebate to stay in active wellness programming. A healthy, active seniors community reduces health-care system usage and also more seniors to take part in social and charitable events, participating at community clubs and being available as role models to our youth. Instead, the Premier insists on taking money out of the pockets of Manitoba's seniors, reducing their ability to have healthy aging.

By not giving the promised rebate, the Premier is creating stress for seniors, and we all know stress causes health issues. To add to this stress, the way the form and rebate are given has also changed for the worse. Senior homeowners used to be able to fill out the rebate form and get direct payment, but now it is part of the complicated income tax form fund. Previously, they used to fill the form and get the direct cheque, with which they were able to budget that fund. Now the hidden rebate is not that much appearing.

Why does this government keep making things harder and harder for our aging population? It is time this government helps our senior population. This government must keep the promise and ensure a maximum rebate of \$2,300 annually will go to our low- and middle-income seniors in Manitoba.

On November 6th, I brought forward a resolution to help the immigrant seniors. The resolution was to ask the federal government to remove the Labour Market Impact Assessment, which is called LMIA, and a relaxation in income requirement to bring in the foreigner live-in care workers to take care of seniors. Still, training and experience was supposed to be the same for foreign live-in care workers—what is for the Canadian resident workers. I was hoping that it will be passed unanimously, but the government MLAs talked it out. They made the excuse that we should not rush in this matter. I don't think that is a valid argument. If we had passed the resolution, then the federal government was—further to think about it. This was

simply an excuse. They don't want to understand the immigrant seniors' situation. They ignore the fact that immigrant seniors have cultural and language barriers and get isolated. They need someone whom they can trust and have emotional attachment.

Also, Madam Speaker, seniors, when they go to the parks, they—there's not washrooms and they have to run back to their houses, and they cannot enjoy, fully, our parks. And I think this government should invest money in parks, too, but they are not doing it. And they are not even participating to—participating with the City to come up with that plan.

Also, Madam Speaker, some seniors feel disappointed, because they were [*inaudible*] about in their young age, when they left, especially from India, when they left that country; now they are seniors.

There was a massacre in New Delhi. At that time, 800 Sikhs were killed; they were raped and they were put on fire and put a tire around them, and within four days—1984, since October 31st to—until November 3rd, 8,000 people were just massacred. And at that time I noticed even our politicians did not say a single word about it. Sometimes I wonder. When something happens in Europe, and everybody making statements; when something happens in Third World countries, they don't care—appears we don't care.

\* (15:10)

So we must have to keep in mind that minority lives are important. That senior—that's why seniors so much just—who are living over here who are Sikh and who were young at that time, they have not got any justice. And the government was involved. They arranged that massacre.

And Indira Gandhi's son, after her assassination, he said when big tree falls and—small trees underneath him die. So I think up to now nobody was brought to—up to justice.

So those seniors also suggest, Madam Speaker, those seniors also suggest we have to listen to them. There was—other day there was a kind of event in their memory, but even—I did not see anybody from the government side. Well, we have to be a little bit more sensitive about those issues.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Any further grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

#### OPPOSITION DAY MOTION

**Madam Speaker:** The House will now consider the opposition day motion of the honourable member for Minto.

I will now recognize the honourable member for Minto.

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I move, seconded by the member for St. John's (Ms. Fontaine), that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba condemn the federal government for continuing to fight veterans groups in court, for repeatedly underspending the Veterans Affairs budget, and for its refusal to properly fund pensions for veterans, and to call on the provincial government to raise the issue of support for veterans at every opportunity with the federal government.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Swan:** Madam Speaker, as we all know this is Veterans' Week, and after the House rises sometime late tonight or early tomorrow morning we'll all head back to our communities and we'll participate in events leading up to and including Remembrance Day services, and we'll be in schools and community halls and armories, in legions, and outside by cenotaphs and memorials.

And this year, as we've debated already this afternoon, those services take on special meaning as we commemorate 100 years since the end of the First World War. They'll be a lot of speeches, lot of thoughts, lot of prayers, and a recognition of the sacrifices made by those who have served and continue to serve our country. And, indeed, we all hope that our country will all but shut down for two minutes of silence at 11 a.m. on the 11th.

Then after the ceremonies on the 11th, well, they'll sweep away the poppies and put away the wreaths and pace of life will return to normal for most Canadians—for most Canadians.

This motion is intended to send a message to our federal government that veterans aren't a group that we can just bring out and recognize one day a year or one week a year and then ignore. This motion is intended to send a message that the federal government needs to do much more to meet its



obligations, its covenant if you will, to the women and men who've served our country and our military.

The truth is that our federal government has not treated those who have served fairly. I'll detail it shortly, but I bring forward this motion this afternoon, this Veterans' Week, in the hope that we can send a unified message to the federal government on behalf of Manitoba's veterans.

Now, we know there's no survivors of the First World War now. It's been 73 years since the end of the Second World War, meaning that veterans of that war are now, at the youngest, in their 90s.

But, Madam Speaker, what about other missions: The Korean conflict; peacekeeping missions; Bosnia; Afghanistan; Yugoslavia; people who've served in those actions walk among us. Those who have served in war time but also in various missions, even in our own country, walk among us. Some we know as neighbours. Some we are—we know as family. Some we know as friends. We don't even know who they are, whether it's at the community club, or the supermarket, or wherever they may be.

What we do know is that those who serve our country and those who aid our country are counting on our country to support them, and there's three issues in particular.

The first is that the federal government continues to fight veterans' groups in court. Secondly, they've repeatedly underspent the Veterans Affairs budget. And third, they've refused to properly fund pensions for veterans.

First of all, Madam Speaker, I want to talk about fighting veteran groups in court. Over the past two years, we know the federal government has spent more than \$38 million on legal proceedings against Canadian veterans. The majority of this spending has gone towards arguing disputes over veterans' benefits and pensions, money which could have gone towards veterans' lifetime benefits.

And what I think many Canadians find offensive is that during the 2015 election campaign, Justin Trudeau promised to do a better job of caring for our veterans, and he promised to ensure that no veteran has to fight the government for the support and compensation they have earned. But, Madam Speaker, his government's actions have betrayed his promise on the campaign trail.

In a town hall not that long ago, in response to a soldier who lost his leg in Afghanistan, the Prime Minister was saying something very different. And when he was asked the question about this issue, the Prime Minister said: Why are we still fighting against certain veterans' groups in court? Because they're asking for more than we are able to give right now. What an answer to a veteran who served our country.

We know that in the case of *Scott v. the Attorney General of Canada*, known as the *Equitas* case, the current government drew out a court battle with disabled veterans who launched a class action challenge against the former government's overhaul of the compensation program for soldiers injured in the line of duty. And the overhaul replaced lifelong disability pension with a lump-sum payment and career training, which veterans say is worth less than the pension system previously in place. And the veterans involved in the case argued that the government has an obligation to care for Canada's wounded soldiers and that obligation was breached.

And, unfortunately, rather than seeking to resolve the issue without costly and painful court proceedings, the federal government refused to negotiate. And it's indeed sad, Madam Speaker, the government spent tax dollars on a legal battle with veterans who were wounded by defending this country.

The Supreme Court of Canada recently ruled on the *Equitas* case, refusing to grant leave for an appeal of the decision of the British Columbia Court of Appeal. That leaves in place a court decision which states the government does not have a legal duty of care to those who have served. But there's a legislative gap which the federal government needs to correct, and there is a huge moral gap that we think this resolution will call on the federal government to address.

Canadians are upset their federal government has drawn out a legal battle with disabled veterans. In order to honour those who serve, the government should always do everything in their power to resolve issues outside of costly courtrooms. It is the right thing to do. We have a moral obligation to do that for people who served our country.

The second issue is underspending the Veterans Affairs budget. Veterans expect, and they deserve, that money will be spent on supports that help them.

Now, there've been some recent developments in the House of Commons on Tuesday. On Monday, there was a New Democratic opposition motion to end the practice of leaving money unspent at Veterans Affairs Canada and make sure that money is carried forward to the next years—was unanimously approved. First the Conservatives, the official opposition, said they would support that motion, and then the Liberal government said they would support that motion.

The NDP motion says the government should automatically carry forward all annual lapsed spending of the department of Veterans Affairs to the next fiscal year for the sole purpose of improving services for Canadian veterans.

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

As Global News reported earlier this fall, the Liberal government has allowed more than \$372 million meant to help veterans and their families go unspent since taking office in November 2015, and this despite promises from Mr. Trudeau, who in August 2015 said that leaving money meant for veterans unspent was wrong and that a government led by him would fix it.

Instead, in 2016, the federal government underspent Veterans Affairs by \$80.9 million; in 2017, by \$143 million; and in 2018, they're on pace to underspend this by \$148.6 million.

I can point out that the Conservative Party has passed a resolution acknowledging that this is wrong and that they will not continue to do that if they are returned to power. The New Democrats have been clear on that. We are hoping that the passage of this resolution—a non-binding resolution, but a resolution nonetheless—will encourage the government to make the changes they need to make.

\* (15:20)

The vote was unanimous. It was 301 to zero in the House of Commons, but we want to make sure that we speak on behalf of veterans here in Manitoba, and frankly across the country, to make sure that the government acts on that motion.

The third concern is the refusal to properly fund veterans' pensions. While members of the Canadian Forces are injured while serving, Veterans Affairs is obligated—and I think we'd all agree—obligated to provide non-taxable compensation for pain and suffering and taxable compensation for lost income.

The way this was done was changed when the previous Liberal government introduced the New Veterans Charter in 2005, taking away lifelong pensions for veterans and instead providing a one-time lump sum. The lump sum gives no compensation to family members and is equal to what was paid out to veterans in approximately seven years under the pre-2006 lifelong pension. The point being that an injured veteran who lived on for more than seven years was actually losing under the new plan.

The current Liberal government promised to restore lifelong pensions for injured veterans, and although the government introduced what they called the Pension for Life program, they have not truly delivered on this promise.

Veterans will have to wait until April 2019 to choose between the existing lump sum or a new lifelong pension that will now pay less than one half of what veterans who served before 2006 would be entitled to.

Families of injured soldiers will be shut out from compensation, and the average monthly payments will only be about \$200 compared to the pre-2006 average of \$680 per month.

So this program is actually perpetuating an unequal system of benefits. Some veterans have called this not just a two-tier but a three-tier system of compensation for veterans who have been injured in service of our country.

So we know as well that 270,000 veterans were shortchanged for over eight years due to an accounting error worth approximately \$165 million, a mistake brought to light by the federal Veterans Ombudsman.

The error continued unchecked between 2002 and 2010 when someone in Veterans Affairs noticed it. They changed that but didn't tell anybody, meaning that veterans, many of whom have now passed on, have been left without the benefits to which they were entitled.

Now, the only criticism someone might have is the word condemn might be too strong. I hope by passing this unanimously this afternoon, we can get the federal government's attention. But it is very upsetting that veterans would be attacked and ignored by their own federal government, by the country that they signed up to serve and to protect.

For veterans, it is a painful betrayal by their own country, and I hope we can speak with one voice this afternoon and make it clear to our veterans that here in Manitoba, our respect for their service is not limited to one day or one week in each year but throughout the year. Let us as legislators stand together to call attention to this and ensure that our veterans are treated fairly. Thank you—

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

**Mr. Jon Reyes (St. Norbert):** As the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) pointed out, more than 270,000 ex-soldiers were shortchanged by Veterans Affairs for over eight years because of an accounting error worth at least \$165 million. The mistake was uncovered by the Veterans Ombudsman's office, which has worked with the federal department for over a year to get it to confirm the mistake and make amends.

I remember when I thought about joining the forces. It was in high school. There was actually a recruiting booth at Sisler High School. Private Purdy, or Corporal Purdy, at the time was the one who was recruiting for having more members at the 735 com regiment.

So I—for facts, I actually served my career at Minto armouries, actually, which is located at the constituency of the member of Minto. And I had a very, very enjoyable career as a reservist.

I went to Germany—Lahr, Germany—in 1993, served there for base closure, just to close the base down. And after that, you know—they call it a callout, but that assignment—I would come back to Winnipeg. And everyone's going to know—I actually originally wanted to join the air force, but at the time, the air force trade was closed. They had a forces reduction program. And so it was either join the infantry or any trade in the navy. So I chose the navy.

And today, here, we have a recently retired Captain Wright Erubi from the Royal Canadian Air Force. Thank you for your service. My good friend and my—you're both my brothers, but my long-lost brother Jon Hawtin. We actually served at boot camp together, and I know last year you had all heard my private member's statement about Christian Duchesne. We both knew Christian Duchesne, we called, I guess you guys had called him Cheesy [*phonetic*] in your artillery days, but we lost him back in 2007, I believe—2007 or 2008.

When I started my career with the navy and I was an ordinary seaman, private, there was a pay freeze; there was an incentive pay freeze and that really, really hurt young sailors, soldiers, military families, and it was under a Liberal government, a federal Liberal government.

And I remember that. I would talk to my MP about why this happened because, you know, we're serving our country, yet we're not getting paid enough. And we were struggling. We were trying to pay our bills, pay our loans, and it was tough, it was really tough.

You know, like, you wanted to have that sense of pride, to serve your country, but at the time your country is not taking care of you. And, in this case in terms of veterans and my friends up top there, we should be taking care of them.

I was given this appointment, the Special Envoy for Military Affairs for the Province of Manitoba, which was a position created by the previous government. And, since I've been in this position, every time I am at an event or at a ceremony, when I meet with veterans or with active personnel who are still serving, the men and women, I'm always getting them for feedback because that's our job as government, we listen.

And I, with my role, I would listen to the troops whether I'm out in Shilo, whether I'm out at 17 Wing, whether I'm out at Southport, any legion that I visited in Manitoba, I'm always getting their feedback. And one of the challenges has always been interprovincial moves, interprovincial moves with our men and women in uniform. And I still get feedback from veterans because they care; they care about the people that are still serving.

So this past summer I actually went to one of the first meetings called Seamless Canada at the staff college in Toronto to share our ideas and information from other military representatives from each province, and there were also military spouses there, veterans, and they're all representatives from each province.

And one of the wives made a comment, why is it easier for us to be hosted to the United Kingdom versus another province in our country. And it baffled them. It baffled me because I've experienced this.

You know, you're going from province to province, but things don't jive. Military spouse, you lose that double income, professional designations,

child care, health care, driver's licences. I mean, our neighbours to the south, the United States, they have a national driver's licence. Why don't we? But there's a lot of things that have to be analyzed and talk with all our jurisdictions here nationally.

And the thing is, you know, we have a federal government that, in my opinion, is not listening, is not listening to our veterans, is not listening to our military, and they've found that they've shortchanged more than 270,000 veterans on pensions and disability payments.

Now imagine that you're, you know, 80, 90 years old, or you've had a loved one already pass away. Now there's going to be a lot of legal ramifications, I suspect with this, and I know that the current federal government has promised that they'll be getting these, the payments in 2020, but can that really be done?

\* (15:30)

I mean, I always had a sour taste in my mouth, and you couldn't really say anything when you're wearing the uniform. But we technically still wear the uniform and we want to be taken care of because we take care of the people in our country, and we have that sense of pride. But, when you have a government, a federal government that's not taking care of you, where is that pride? Where is that desire to serve? And being an elected official now, I'm at the government table. I'm here serving the people of Manitoba. I'm here taking care of Manitoba's military community. I'm here to listen because I want to take care of them, and it disappoints me that our federal government is not taking care, in my opinion, of our military personnel and our veterans.

I'm looking forward to going to Ottawa in December for Seamless Canada 2 to bring some ideas so we can make lives easier for people that are transitioning from province to province. We definitely want to do that in Manitoba.

The other thing I want to also mention is that there are going to be many Remembrance Day services throughout the province, the Convention Centre being the major one. I'll be at HMCS Chippewa and there'll also be a local one in St. Norbert, St. James, Valour Road, I believe, where the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) coincides.

But our job as elected officials, provincially or federally, is to listen: listen to the veterans; listen to the men and women in uniform; listen to their stories. Because if we don't listen, we're not taking

care of the people who have, you know, made sure that we have freedom, that we have the lives that we can have in our country; because I have travelled the world, and you know what? One thing that I have to say is, you know, you don't take that for granted when you're in other countries, and when I come back home here in Canada, in Manitoba, I am glad to be home. We got to take care of home. We got to take care of veterans. We got to take care of them, our men and women in uniform.

So, right? Jon? Brothers, thank you again for your service.

Thank you.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Any other speakers?

**Hon. Colleen Mayer (Minister of Crown Services):** I'm honoured to rise today to speak to the opposition day motion, and when I read the words written it's truly about respect: respect for those who fought for our freedoms and our rights; respect for those in the past who gave the ultimate sacrifice. It's about respect for those men and women today who serve in our military. It's respect for their families, their families who sacrifice, who are left here when they're off doing the work that they need to do.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, today is Aboriginal Veterans Day. As you've heard me speak in the Chamber from before, my grandfather was Metis; that includes him. He went and served our country so that I today can stand here and represent the people of Manitoba.

I want to recognize—I can't look at her because she's going to cry. My mom is in the Chamber here today. [*interjection*] Right here. My mom, Connie Mayer, came today because she wanted to hear what I had to say, how the words that I was going to speak would honour my grandfather.

And I think today when I went out into St. Vital, for a brief moment I went to Glenlawn Collegiate to participate in their service for veterans, and I was very touched at the program that they had presented, the students that were there, what they—the message that was being delivered to them, the respect that they gave to not only indigenous veterans, but to women in combat. They—there were videos and there were words in those programs that meant so much to so many people.

It's those stories that I think that we sometimes forget to hear. I think it's stories and memories that people hear it, sometimes; sometimes they don't

always think of it on a day-to-day basis. It's something that we should think of, not only at this time of year, but it's something we should think of every day because living in this province is something that, with the rights and freedoms we have, is something that we should remember.

Now, I spoke about my grandfather being a veteran and about respect and what this motion encompasses. My grandfather, Joseph Elie Barron, only had a—about a grade 6 education. He went over to serve, he married my grandmother, Myrtle Barron, in the summer of 1941 and just before he was enlisted, and over he went and he left his young bride and she was pregnant with my aunt, Auntie Elaine.

There weren't many times that my grandfather shared—or what I thought—he passed away when I was 12—what I thought were stories about that time. But there were some things that I reflect on now and I think were his way of teaching me and—to remember.

And how he shared of his experiences. We would march up and down the gravel road, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Left, left, left, right, left. I would follow his lead as he would charge those commands to me. He would never let me throw out burnt toast because they were thankful to have burnt toast in those trenches. That was sometimes all that they could get. He would tell me I love you big, big, high as the sky, because I think he knew how much it meant to be away from family, and you never—you don't want to regret that you didn't say those words to your family. And he taught me to be proud of who I am.

So today I'm going to take a moment, with the time I have, to read a couple of the letters that he sent to my grandmother, and I table copies because I am going to read them directly.

February 5th, 1943. My dear wife, well, darling, here I am again. I'm not too bad. How are you and Elaine? I hope you are all fine over there. Not much happening here, but I'll do the best I can to write what I have. Did Mom and Dad and everyone at home get my letters? I got all of your letters in one day. I was glad that day all day long. All the boys here said I have a good wife to write all those letters to me. And darling, you are a good wife. You are all one could wish for. I only wish that I was there with you and Elaine. That's all I want. Say goodbye—or, say hello to everyone for me and say goodbye to Elaine. All my love, yours only, Elie.

February 8th, 1943. Dear Myrtle, well, how are you, Elaine and all the family at home? I hope you're all fine. I'm in the war. I got all your letters. I—and did you get all of the letters? I wrote 50 this month, so you must have gotten some of them.

Well, darling, there's not much to write again today, but I want you to know how much I'm getting along. Don't ever forget to write your letters; they make me feel better. I hope your mom is getting along and I hope that she's better. I'll try to write again, so bye-bye for now. Say hi to Elaine, and darling, I'll never leave you again for I miss you too much. All my love to you and Elaine. Kisses from yours and forever, Elie.

February 4th, 1944. Dear Myrtle, well, how are you and Elaine? I hope fine. I'm in the hospital again but it won't be for that long. You are going to—they are going to look after me and I am not okay. We will—they will keep me—if I'm not okay, they will keep me longer. Did you get my letters? I wrote to you when I was in leave and when I went to Glasgow. I had a good leave. I had seen all my friends there and all I did was dance. I also got my picture taken. I send it. Well, darling, I have to close and say good night for now. All my love, kisses to you and Elaine, from yours, Elie.

Dear Myrtle, well, here I am somewhere in France and I'm fine. I hope you're fine too. How's my girl getting along? Jeez, I wish I could see her now. I guess she's getting to be a big girl. Well, darling, there's not much more to write about, but everything is okay and I'm with a good lot of boys.

I didn't see Cecile yet—and Cecile was my grandmother's brother. I guess I'll see him one of these days. Hey, dear, would you send me a writing pen if you can and send my mail to this address? So, here, with all my love to you and Elaine. Give my regards to all at home and tell Bertie—which was his sister—that I'm fine. Love, Elie.

\* (15:40)

And lastly: Well, darling, here I am again and I'm feeling fine. How are you and Elaine? I hope you're fine. Geez, darling, I'm glad I got my pen. I got it today, and it's a good one. I got two parcels from you and a lot of letters, so I am happy now. I didn't send my letters yet, but I'll be coming home soon. I'm not sure when, but about going home, just wanted to let you know I'll write when I know.

I don't hear from mom much, and I'll be glad when I get home so you and I can look after Elaine.

Geez, I wish this old war was over so all the boys and I can come back home again.

Dear, tell Auntie to write me, will you? I wrote her, and she never wrote back. I wrote Dad too, and he never wrote me, so I don't know what's wrong, but maybe I'll be getting some of those letters one of these days.

Well, darling, I'll say cheerio for now. All my love to you and Elaine, from all those loved ones.

Every letter is signed with multiple X's, and it's very clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the love he had for my grandmother and his longing to be home, home with his family, for all the boys to be home. How much he missed his family was evident, and I think that that is, if nothing else, why we deserve to pay our respects today and every day to the veterans, the men and women who serve our country, the ones who stand up and pay the ultimate sacrifice.

For my grandfather, I stand here today and I say thank you. Thank you for all you've given me; thank you for all you've given my mom; thank you for bringing us the best life that we've had in Canada.

Thank you.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there any further speakers?

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** It's a pleasure to speak to this and to talk about the importance of supporting veterans. It's important to notice that, when it comes to GDP, military spending is half what it was in the 1970s. We spend far less than we once would—once did, and Canada no longer has a blue-water navy.

In—I attended a really wonderful Remembrance Day service at Nelson McIntyre school in St. Boniface today. It was entirely set up by grade 11 students who wanted to ask why is it that young people today are becoming disconnected from Remembrance Day, and one of the things that surprised me was—because my own uncle and my aunt were involved in the Second World War, and my grandfather was in the First World War—that these were students whose great-grandparents and sometimes great-great-grandparents were—had—were in the Second World War.

So, clearly, there's been a generational gap, but also because the wars we tend to talk about are the older wars. We talk about the First World War, which ended 100 years ago this week. We talk about the Second World War, which, again, was 60 years ago. We talk a little bit about Korea, but there have

been conflicts since, and one of the things is they haven't been mass conflicts in the same sort of way, and people aren't drafted the way they used to be.

But there are other changes as well. So we have a volunteer army where a smaller—or a small—fairly small group of people are asked to take incredible risks and personal sacrifices, but the other thing that has changed is war has changed in technology, and medical technology has changed.

So one of the things that's happened is that, in the First World War or the Second World War, people might die of wounds which—from which today they might be saved, and this is extremely common. A friend of mine who's a member of the US Marines, who actually works at the Pentagon, has reflected on this, because he was in Iraq and he was in Afghanistan, and he had to visit friends in Walter Reed hospital who had survived really extraordinary traumatic injuries thanks to incredible battlefield medicine from which they would undoubtedly have died in earlier years.

But this means that they have enormously more challenges, not just sometimes physical challenges, but also mental challenges, and we have—we seldom mention the Afghan conflict. The fact is that Canada was involved in a shooting war in Afghanistan for years. We sent thousands of Canadians over there. Many were killed, and many more were wounded. And the wounds that they return with are not just physical wounds but mental wounds, terrible trauma, terrible post-traumatic stress disorder. And the rates of post-traumatic stress for soldiers are—in Canada, are among the highest in the world.

And sometimes we don't hear about it. We hear about people who are suffering, but sometimes they are suffering so seriously that they take their own lives. And that's one of the things that we really have to do, is that when we have—it used to be recognized more that there was a terrible cost to war. That when embarking on a military mission, it—you know, obviously would cost money, but it would take sacrifice in the part of everyone, that everybody had to chip in. People would talk about the home front, or that recognizing that your friends, family, brothers, sisters were going off to war and risking themselves and sacrificing themselves meant we had to make a sacrifice as well.

But one of the things that's happened recently—and the commentators said this about the US, but it's also true in Canada that we would send people to war and we would still continue to cut taxes. We would

not actually be willing to put the resources into—not just into the war, but into taking care of the people who are fighting for us when they return. And we often also talk about the ultimate sacrifice. We talk about those who died, but we have to remember that there are many who live and who are living, the walking wounded, after these conflicts.

And in—the history of taking care of veterans is actually supremely important part of how our government and our society has responded to our sense of responsibility in health care and pensions.

The development of pensions and health care—public health care and public pensions, initially they were some extremely important measures taken after the First World War because there were so many veterans who needed to be taken care of, who—and people recognized that they deserved to have pensions and that they deserve to have health care, and it was a federal responsibility.

So the federal government stepped up in order—in taking that role. And the same thing happened after the Second World War where there was a huge investment in the veterans and people returning, so that people had access to education and—free education. They were sent around the world sometimes. They might go work with allies and work.

But there was a huge investment by the federal government in taking care of educating—and educating—paying for the education of veterans and their families, and paying pensions, because they would recognize that this was something—that it's—ultimately, that it's the right thing to do.

There have been a number of terrible incidents involving the treatment of veterans in the last decade by the federal government. A Veterans Ombudsman was fired. A veteran who was fighting for his rights had his medical records distributed, his reputation was smeared. Ultimately he sued and he won justice, but we have to—I'm more than happy to say that this is a—to speak in favour of this, because the federal government has to step up and do what's right.

And, frankly, part of it is—the difficulty, I think, has been a change in a—or, trying to achieve a change in the attitude of Veterans Affairs—and sometimes the attitude in government—that it's an insurance company where they're trying to make money and hold back and keep from spending on things.

So I want to thank the people for moving this message—for moving this motion, and we are happy to support it.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** There's no other further speakers.

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The question before the House the opposition day motion in the name of the honourable member for Minto (Mr. Swan).

Do the members wish to have the motion read?

**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Yes.

Be read: THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba condemn the federal government for continuing to fight veteran groups in court, for repeatedly underspending the Veterans Affairs budget and for its refusal to properly fund pensions for veterans, and to call for the provincial government to raise the issue of support to—for veterans at every opportunity with the federal government.

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

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask leave of the House to show that the vote today was unanimous.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is it leave to the House to have the motion unanimously voted on? *[interjection]*

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Unanimously adopted.

**Mr. Swan:** I wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we can all—if we can also canvass the House if there's leave to have the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba send a copy of this passed motion to the Prime Minister, to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and the leaders of the other parties in the House of Commons.

\* (15:50)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed to the House to have the letter sent to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Veterans Affairs, and the leaders of the other parties? Is it agreed? *[Agreed]*

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Seeking leave to call it 4 o'clock.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is it leave to call it 4 o'clock?  
[Agreed]

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

**Madam Speaker:** The time being 4 p.m., I am now interrupting debate to put the question on the remaining concurrence and third reading motions, without further debate or amendment, on the following designated bills except for the debate provisions allowed under 2(20): bills 8, 12, 16, 24, 27 and bill—pardon me, Bill 34, BITSA.

For Bill 8, the minister and critics from the official and second opposition parties have already spoken, so only the independent members will have the opportunity to speak to that bill for up to 10 minutes each.

And on Bill 16, the minister, the official and second opposition critics and the honourable member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) have already spoken. So the only members eligible to speak on Bill 16 for up to 10 minutes each are the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Saran) and the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon).

For bills 12, 24, 27 and 34, the minister, the critics from the opposition and second opposition parties and the independent members will have the opportunity to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The House will not adjourn until all applicable questions have been put and royal assent has been granted.

In accordance with our rules, all matters of privilege and points of order are deferred until after these actions have been concluded.

The bills will be called in numerical order.

### **DEBATE ON CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS**

#### **Bill 8—The Government Notices Modernization Act (Various Acts Amended)**

**Madam Speaker:** On Bill 8, do the independent members wish to speak to this bill?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Madam Speaker, community newspapers, notice to the public, transparency, accountability are all something that form the pillars of our democracy. Bill 8, which allows the government to apparently not be able to or

not be required to post notices in community newspapers, is of great concern.

Madam Speaker, community newspapers since time immemorial have been a way to communicate to the public what the government is up to. It provides a hard copy to ensure, to protect all parties, that these notices have been provided. The electronic version that the provincial government is suggesting, who's to say that the electronic version just disappears or changed? A two changed to a nine or a zoning requirement changing. There's too many possibilities of either.

Well, for—it's tough to say, but it—really, community newspapers, the hard copy, prevent corruption or help prevent corruption. Not only are they accountable, but it's a hard copy, can't be digitally fixed. Once it's in the paper, it's in the paper.

And what is the harm? It costs a little bit, maybe, for the provincial government, but it's pennies—it's not even—that's—it is just part of democracy. This place costs money. You know, I would be quite willing, as an MLA, with all my colleagues here, to forgo the advertising portion of our budget that we all use to advertise in community newspapers and allow the ability to have the government use community newspapers to publish notices.

So that is not the issue here, Madam Speaker, because if it were, (a) we would do that or (b) the hypocrisy of this place would be revealed. If the—if the community newspapers are so useless and not necessary to communicate with the public about issues that are happening, why, then, does every single MLA use taxpayer-funded dollars to advertise in community newspapers? Every single one of us. It's because community newspapers are an effective way to reach out.

Why do people advertise in community newspapers? Because it's a way of reaching out. Like, private business advertises in newspapers. People read community newspapers, but the government wants us to believe that people are going to go to the Manitoba Gazette, which is an obscure website, and look up these notices.

So section A, B, C in rural municipality X, Y, Z at the latitude and co-ordinates of X, Y—you know, it just gets ridiculous; nobody's going to look at that online. But if it goes into the notice in a community newspaper saying that this area's going to be rezoned



or redeveloped, well, that makes—at least people have an opportunity, at least there's a record.

Madam Speaker, why do we publish these notices in the newspapers in the first place? Has that changed? Not fundamentally. People read the newspapers. Community newspapers, in many ways, touch a market that doesn't exist in a national sense; it's local, and many of the decisions that the Province makes, from ecological to financial to land use, all are issues that affect people in the area.

So why would the government—unless the government doesn't want people to know, they don't want there to be accountability, they don't want transparency, or maybe it's some sort of vendetta against the press. I know the government's been getting a lot of bad press, but welcome to western civilization.

But trying to shut down the press is not a reasonable goal. And to minimize the press is not a reasonable—not even—and, Madam Speaker, as the last Tory, I support freedom of the press, and I support their ability to critique, to criticize, even when it's blatantly unfair, because that is the price we have to pay to be in a democracy. Another investment is transparency.

\* (16:00)

So, Madam Speaker, why is the government doing this? They have not provided a plausible explanation. We have one member of the government, the member from Riding Mountain, who has forfeited—or, not forfeited—he has declared a conflict of interest. What is the conflict of interest? It's not clear. But it is probably because he doesn't agree with the legislation. So the conflict of interest is not the legislation, it's that he doesn't agree with his caucus. Well, we know what happens when you don't agree with government legislation. You—or you have a question, even a question, about government legislation. You're out, gone, bye-bye, end of career.

If the government—if you really want your voice heard in this government, you have to join me over here, and then maybe issues around the carbon tax, for example, the government will listen and change their position. And maybe the government will change its position on Bill 8. Are they listening? No, no, no. No one's listening. As per the course with the government, the only person that matters is the Premier (Mr. Pallister), and that is his way of governing. And fair enough, I guess, but there's also the issue of fair play. And fair play is providing

notice of government decisions, providing notice in a variety of formats, including digitally and in newspapers. If a newspaper has a website, yes, by all means, make it a requirement to have them post it, or on social media. But don't do it the other way. Don't force people to go online and look up some obscure government website which most people in this place probably have never heard of or even seen, never mind the average Manitoban.

Madam Speaker, where are the Tories? Send in the Tories. There are no Tories. There's only this Tory, the last Tory.

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

I will now put the question on concurrence and third reading of the motion on Bill 8.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** 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.

#### Recorded Vote

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader):** I'd like to request a recorded vote.

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

\* (17:00)

Order, please.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 8, The Government Notices Modernization Act (Various Acts Amended).

#### Division

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

#### Yeas

*Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Guillemard, Helwer,*

*Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Pallister, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.*

### Nays

*Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Smith (Point Douglas), Swan, Wiebe.*

**Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 35, Nays 16.

**Madam Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

### CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

#### Bill 12—The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act, 2018

**Madam Speaker:** We will now move to Bill 12, The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act, and I will recognize the honourable Minister for Crown Services to move and speak to concurrence and third reading motion.

**Hon. Colleen Mayer (Minister of Crown Services):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Sports, Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Cox), that Bill 12, The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act, 2018, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mrs. Mayer:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 12, The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act. This is our second bill aimed to help reduce red tape. A total of nearly 285 'burdensome' and unnecessary regulatory requirements will be eliminated, and of these, 399 requirements are currently in force, with the remaining 475 requirements pending.

We believe these streamlining efforts will save the provincial government nearly \$1 million annually in time and money. Millions more will be saved by impacted organizations, businesses and individuals by reducing the administrative burden of government rules.

I am pleased that this bill will see the important changes necessary to improve services Manitobans rely on.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** This Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act is nothing but putting money before people, putting lives before—or putting money before lives.

This bill looks to amend 37 acts and repeal four acts through 'omnious' legislation to reduce or eliminate regulations in order to streamline government operations. They just threw all of these things into one 'omnious' bill.

You know, they continue to use their heavy-handedness to do whatever they want. They're not listening to Manitobans. They claim to be, but on this side of the House, we're listening to Manitobans, and Manitobans are saying they don't want this. But are they listening? No. They just want to streamline ahead and continue to put money over lives.

They want to change the way people can, you know, appeal their rent. Well, in the community I work and live in, people can't afford, you know, to pay the high rents and live in houses that need repair. And they—well, this bill will not allow people to go in front of the board to appeal their rents if it's not above what the limits are, even if their house is falling apart.

\* (17:10)

And, you know, I don't know why this government wants to have people living in places that are falling apart. They also want to take away the regulations around—it's also taken away the people who are going to inspect buildings for fires and making it no longer, you know, regulatory.

So, you know, we know that there were fires in the United States—where people in the Greenfell towers [*phonetic*] perished. And this bill could possibly do that right here in Manitoba. For a government that claims to be standing up for Manitobans and working for their best interests, I say they're not, you know. And many Manitobans would say they're not.

And they continue to not listen to people when they come to committee. People came to present on this bill. They spoke against the bill and—all of—actually, in fact, all of these bills that they brought forward. There are people that don't want these bills to go through. But, you know, another playbook in this government's heavy-handedness in bulldozing through whatever they want.

We're especially—concerns about the changes to health and safety that are not being given enough

consideration by this legislation. Again, they're not thinking through it. And we're also concerned that this bill will make life less affordable for Manitobans.

The Pallister government's proposing contracting out fire inspections and raising the cost of living for renters and drivers. You know, my granddaughter goes to a daycare—and I shared this story earlier. Often, when I go into the daycare, they're very cognizant of making sure all of the exits are clear of anything. And, you know, this essentially might make that not happen. If inspectors are not going to inspect annually in these daycares or in these buildings, then there's a potential for fires to happen, a potential for people to lose their lives.

But I don't know what this government is thinking. They want to save money instead of people's lives, which is a shame.

**An Honourable Member:** This government doesn't know what they're thinking.

**Mrs. Smith:** No.

We all want—we want government to be accessible to all Manitobans. But, you know, again, they fail to meet with Manitobans. We heard the mayor say that he's been trying to get a meeting with the Premier (Mr. Pallister). Can't happen. You know—and we've heard that over and over again from other agencies that are working in the community for the betterment of Manitoba.

For example, when we look at the fire prevention emergency response act, this will allow fire inspectors that are currently conducted by municipal employees exclusively to be now contracted out to private contractors. Do we know if those people are going to be qualified? Do we know if those annual inspections are going to happen? Well, this bill—you know, if it's passed, is going to essentially not be in regulation.

So these cuts to safety standards are of great concern to us on this side of the House, and we're hearing it from Manitobans that this government isn't listening. They continue to, you know, bulldoze through anything they want.

They claim to be consulting with Manitobans—

**Some Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Smith:** But we know that that's not true. And I hear members over there going, Hear, hear! Maybe

they're listening to themselves, but they're certainly not listening to other Manitobans.

You know, the approach of this conservative government in the UK is eerie familiar to the approach of what's happening here in Manitoba with this Pallister government. It's a one-in, two-out approach to slashing regulations and privatizing and contracting out of inspections to private contractors. Maybe—who knows, maybe they have a vested interest in that. Maybe it's, you know, some people that are in the business who knows.

We're also concerned about the cuts that will make life less affordable. And, you know, I'm certainly hearing that from constituents in our Point Douglas area—and probably across the province, I would assume, that all Manitobans are worried about safe, affordable housing. And this bill essentially is going to take out the safety. It's also going to take out the affordability. And it's going to take the rights away from people to be able to go and appeal decisions.

And this government thinks that taking away people's rights is a way to go. And, you know, it's unfortunate that that's what they continue to do—take away the rights of Manitobans when Manitobans deserve the right to have a voice and, you know, be listened to by this government.

But they continue to just, you know, sit on their hands, put their earplugs in, put blinders on, and just forge forward and not care about what Manitobans want and Manitobans think.

And Manitobans didn't ask for them to cut health care. Manitobans didn't ask for them to raise tuition. Manitobans didn't ask for higher transit rates. Manitobans—in fact, they knocked on doors and said, we will make sure that we are, you know, protecting front-line services.

But over and over again, we brought up in this very House all of the things that this government is doing to take away the rights of Manitobans.

And they ran on this. They ran on the fact that they would listen to Manitobans, that they would protect the front-line services and that they would listen, and none of that is going on right now with this government.

They've been in government almost three years now; what have they done? They've built zero social housing, they've cut \$78 million from the maintenance budget. That's actually to help housing.

So is it that they don't want, you know, these tenants to go in front of the board against them because they're not fixing, you know, the social housing that they're responsible for? Who knows? You know, I don't know what goes on the mind of a Conservative, nor do I wish to because, you know, on this side of the House, we actually care about Manitobans. We actually care about all Manitobans, not just some Manitobans, not the ones that have money in their pockets that can afford to get on the bus.

But we're listening to all Manitobans. You know, where this government is failing, of course, we are picking up the slack and holding them account. You know, they're failing to fix anything. They keep saying, oh, where this—where that government failed, we'll fix it. Well, it's not happening. They haven't fixed anything. If you look at the—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mrs. Smith:** Well, actually, one thing they fixed: they're trying to fix their own salaries, I'll give them that. That's what they're concerned about is making sure that they have their own interests and their own money and that they're protected and that they have incentives.

And, you know, they don't care about Manitobans. They talk about, oh, we're going to make sure that this isn't on the backs of Manitobans—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mrs. Smith:** —well, I can tell you, \$78-million cut to maintenance into social housing is going to put it onto the backs of Manitobans in the future because you have to maintain housing. If you don't maintain housing, what's going to happen? Falls apart. They can't go in front of the appeal board because all of a sudden there's something here that says that they can't because they're in the rent regulations.

So, you know, who are they trying to protect? I would say they're trying to protect themselves, their salaries, their pensions and make sure that they're taken care of and not caring about Manitobans because certainly this isn't going to take care of Manitobans.

I think that the Conservatives should just rip this up, scrap it, throw it in the recycling bin.

Miigwech.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Thank you for—to the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) referring to my professorial—I actually going to—I'm actually going to be drawing on some of the lessons I used to teach when I had a job at the University of Winnipeg.

The—and then one of the things I want to talk about—there are—look, one of the things that I want to quote is Ron MacLean, the great NHL—he was a broadcaster, a ref, he was on—he's—we all love him and know him from Hockey Night in Canada, and he said, without rules, there is no game. That's one of the fundamental things: Without rules, there is no game.

And that is incredibly important when it comes to—not just to what we do as legislators and as—in government, but regulations are also—can be a form of protection.

So this is—what's—it's extremely important because, again, regulations aren't—can serve as protections and there also have to be as reinforcements. And when you start stripping out protections and you start stripping out reinforcements, you can actually increase the risk of failure and you can make failure more likely.

We already have very weak enforcement. This bill in particular reduces the rights of tenants to appeal, and for some reason it makes it easier to start a hazardous waste disposal facility. And that is a huge problem because when it—when you have something that has kept people safe, sometimes people become complacent about it.

You might have a system that has worked for a long time, but people go, well, it's perfectly fine; why do we now dismantle the systems that have kept us safe? It's people who are—in the same way, I think, people who are fanatic about deregulation are similar to people who are anti-vaxxers in that we say, well, you know, vaccination has worked for all this time; why do we really need to do it anymore?

\* (17:20)

But one of the things I used to teach my students about was—is about the issue of how disasters can happen, how good people working in complex systems can have things go wrong. And sometimes—this was in health care—but it also happened in any—all sorts of systems.

And there was a study of it, and it talked about how things can go wrong in health care; for example,

the really frightening stories about when people might have a—amputate the wrong limb. There were people who turned off—there was a very disturbing case of a surgical team that turned off a life support so that the patient could be X-rayed and they forgot to turn it back on, because the alarm had been turned off. There used to be an alarm in place to warn people that the life support wasn't working anymore. And the patient ended up dying.

So this is the thing—is—you can have systems with people who are supremely well intentioned, who are educated, who have all the best intentions, but, when you start to take apart the warning systems around them and the regulations around them, things to—start to fall apart in ways that could be truly disastrous.

And, again I—one of the things that they found, and this happened in major disasters, like with the Challenger explosion, with chemical plants in Bhopal. They said what these disasters typically reveal is the factors accounting for them usually had long incubation periods; they'd been going on for a long time; there were lots of rule violations—all sorts of things; and accidents that were happening, accumulating unnoticed—but also cultural beliefs about hazards, that, together, prevented interventions that might have staved off harmful outcomes. Further, it's especially striking how multiple rule violations and lapses basically combine to enable a disaster's occurrence.

And this is one of the reasons why regulations are in place. And they are in place, and sometimes they might seem like they're doubling up or that there's duplication. But there's duplication precisely because it's a kind of reinforcement; it's there to keep things safe.

There are—and one of the things I've always quoted is that there was a great—he was an engineer who ended up testifying at a whole series of disasters into accidents that happened involving bridge collapses, plane crashes, boats and so on. And he said very few accidents just happen in a morally neutral way; nine out of 10 accidents are caused not by the more abstruse, technical effects but by old-fashioned human sin, often verging on wickedness.

Of course, I do not mean the more gilded and juicy sins like deliberate murder, large-scale fraud or sex. It is squalid sins like carelessness, idleness, won't learn and don't need to ask, you can't tell me anything about my job, pride, jealousy and greed that

kill people. So that's J.E. Gordon. I recommend anybody—he was—I recommend that anyone read his books, which are absolutely fantastic.

But this is the thing, is that I think there are decisions that are being made in this bill, which, frankly, are overlooking the serious risks. We can become blind to risk and take for granted the systems that have been—kept us safe for so long, and that dismantling those systems ultimately does put the public at risk. That's why this is a bad bill and we won't support it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** I will now put the question on concurrence and third reading of Bill 12.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** 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.

#### Recorded Vote

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** A recorded vote, please.

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

\* (17:50)

Order, please.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 12, The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act.

#### Division

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

#### Yeas

*Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Ewasko, Fielding, Goertzen, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin,*

*Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.*

#### Nays

*Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Smith (Point Douglas), Swan, Wiebe.*

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Yeas 34, Nays 16.

**Madam Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

### DEBATE ON CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

*(Continued)*

#### Bill 16—The Climate and Green Plan Implementation Act

**Madam Speaker:** We will now move on to Bill 16, The Climate and Green Plan Implementation Act, and I would notice that there are no eligible speakers to speak to this bill, so I will put the question now on concurrence and third reading of Bill 16.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** 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.

#### Recorded Vote

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** A recorded vote, please.

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

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 16, The Climate and Green Plan Implementation Act.

#### Division

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

#### Yeas

*Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.*

#### Nays

*Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Smith (Point Douglas), Swan, Wiebe.*

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Yeas 35, Nays 16.

\* (19:00)

**Madam Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

### CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

*(Continued)*

#### Bill 24—The Social Services Appeal Board Amendment Act

**Madam Speaker:** We will now move to Bill 24, The Social Services Appeal Board Amendment Act, and I will recognize the honourable Minister of Families to move and speak to the concurrence and third reading motion.

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Cullen), that Bill 24, The Social Services Appeal Board Amendment Act, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

**Motion presented.**

**Mrs. Stefanson:** I just wanted to put a few words on the record with respect to Bill 24 in third reading.

I want to thank all the people who had the opportunity to come out and speak to this bill at committee and thank them for taking the time to do so. I know many people believe very passionately about this bill and about their rights, Madam Speaker, and rightly so.

We do know that, you know, certainly this bill does not take away the rights that some have talked about, but we know that members opposite took away the rights of Manitobans at a time when they changed the legislation, where it came—when it—what it had to do with the PST increase and the rights for Manitobans to choose, in the way of a referendum, those tax increases. So we know when people take away rights, as the NDP did in the—before the last election, Madam Speaker, and Manitobans cried out about that. They were very concerned about that.

So I do understand that when people feel that their rights are being taken away that they have the opportunity to come forward and talk about those, Madam Speaker. And I think it's important in our committee stage to allow that to happen, but I think it's important also to dispel some of the myths and the fear mongering that has happened from members opposite.

The first myth is that this bill denies individuals their Charter rights. Madam Speaker, Bill 24 does not eliminate or deny any individual their rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Instead of the Social Services Appeal Board having the authority to resolve Charter disputes, Bill 24 replaces more—the more complex tasks in the hands of the courts and—places it in the hands of the courts and potentially the Human Rights Commission as well, both of whom are equipped to deal with these more complex matters.

The second myth is that Bill 24 reduces access to justice. Madam Speaker, the vast majority of appeals heard by the Social Services Appeal Board do not involve the Charter at all. Almost all appeals heard by the Social Services Appeal Board are exclusively about access to government-provided social services. This bill allows the Social Services Appeal Board to focus on these important access questions and not the—on complicated Charter questions. Removing Charter jurisdiction from the SSAB promotes faster decisions for vulnerable Manitobans.

In the rare event a Charter dispute arises, justice can be pursued either through the courts or the Human Rights Commission. This approach is in keeping with other jurisdictions in Canada, including Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

So, Madam Speaker, I think it's important. There's another myth that stated that this legislation is contrary to the ruling of the Manitoba Court of Appeal, and again, that is a myth. The Court of

Appeal decision stated that its—the court also ruled that the government has a right to change this legislation to deal with these matters. That's exactly what is done here.

So I think it's very important that we get—dispel some of these myths. Charter values are different than Charter rights, which is a very important part of this. Charter rights are the enumerated rights guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Charter values are the aspirational principles that should inform and influence decisions made by government officials, tribunals or other quasi-judicial bodies. Our government takes Charter values very seriously, and that is why all government decisions are made in accordance with Charter values. This bill in no way affects the ability of the board to be informed by Charter values when considering appeals heard by the Social Services Appeal Board.

So I think, Madam Speaker, with those few words, I think it's important that we dispel some of the myths and the rumours and, I would say, the fear mongering that has happened and transpired by members opposite. It's time for them to stop the fear mongering and support this bill tonight.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** So I'm pleased to get up and say a few words on this, and we on this side of the House will be voting against this bill.

This is a bill that takes away the rights of Manitobans. Again, let's put some myths—let's dispel some of the myths that the minister just put on the record.

So, one, presenters came. Every single presenter that came to committee wanted this government to withdraw this bill. If this government listened, they would tear this up and put it in the recycling bin. But do they? They absolutely don't listen.

Let's see what else. She thanked them for coming, but she doesn't listen to them. Why won't she listen to the presenters that came and told her directly that their rights were being taken away and that this government was silencing them? Let's see. Once again, you know, they—heavy-handedness.

I went to the briefing. When I sat down with the people who did the briefing, I asked, how many people actually come in front? How many people are we talking about? You're talking about, oh, we want to take away this backlog because it's, you know, there's too many people coming before this board;

the board doesn't have the authority; they don't have the—they're not equipped to hear these. They told me and everybody else in the room that was there that there was less than a handful. So this minister is saying that the reason she's sending it there is to free up the Social Services Appeal Board: false. That's false, because we heard it in the briefing.

She also said in committee—but she didn't put it on the record—she said that the Social Services Appeal Board will still have the authority for—to hear these cases, but if they don't feel that they have the qualifications, or if it's a Charter right, that they would refer it.

So why not let them decide that? Why is this minister taking away the right for the Social Services Appeal Board to make that decision? Again, trying to silence Manitobans, take away their rights, when they say: Oh, we're listening to Manitobans; this is what they asked for. Well, certainly, this isn't what they asked for.

I was in the same committee room that she was in, and presenter after presenter said the same thing: We don't want this. We want you to—if you're going to implement it, then train the Social Services Appeal Board, people who are listening to these, so that they can decide whether they send it over to the courts.

Well, let's talk about the courts. This minister wants to say that, you know, they're backlogged there. Well, she knows—she was the former Justice minister—how backlogged the courts are. Ha. How long is it going to take for them to hear these cases? How many people are going to sit and have their Charter rights not being adhered to until they get a hearing?

Tell you, it's not going to be as expedient as it would be going in front of Social Services Appeal Board. Over 700 people last year went in front of the Social Services Appeal Board. That's only seven people per day.

And, you know, is she listening to the Social Services Appeal Board and the people who are on the committee? She's making the decision for them that they're not qualified to listen to these decisions. Then put some people on there that are qualified, if she doesn't think they are. They appoint them. They have the authority, but yet, you know, they want to make that decision for Manitobans.

In 2017, again, the appeal—the Manitoba Court of Appeal found that the Social Services Appeal Board does have the jurisdiction and obligation to

hear Charter rights. Again, the minister over here decides that she's going to overrule that and she's going to take that right against—away from Manitobans and the Social Services Appeal Board. Shame on that minister. She's supposed to be standing up for members of Manitoba. I don't think she's standing up for any Manitobans when she's doing this to them.

Once again, you know, continuing to silence Manitobans. For one, this minister knows how much it costs to go to Legal Aid. It's \$25 just to make an appointment. Well, I can tell you, the people that are going to be going in front of the Social Services Appeal Board, they don't have \$25 to be able to even go see a lawyer to get someone to represent them—*[interjection]*

\* (19:10)

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —in court. And certainly, they're not going to go to court by themselves. Of course they want someone to represent them. So this minister knows—she was a former Justice minister—that he's taking those rights away from those people.

We heard from a woman who had high anxiety that had a hard time even getting out of her house to come and present. And she said I would never go in front of the courts because—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —I had anxiety just coming out of my house just to get here for the minister to hear me. But did she listen? Absolutely not. Here we are; she's trying to pass Bill 24 and, you know, just slide it right in there so Manitobans don't have a say.

And the minister knows who's going in front of Social Services Appeal Board. It's the people who are most vulnerable; it's the people who have disabilities; it's the people who often are voiceless. And the ones that will stand up will not be able to afford the \$25 to go to court to stand up for their rights. And this minister is, you know, pleased with this? She should be standing up against her Premier (Mr. Pallister). We know who's behind this bill.

I mean, all of these, you know, Conservatives over here, nobody's standing up for Manitobans. They're all just worried about themselves, their own whatever, you know, their salaries. And then, you know, it's forcing the people to appeal decisions and go to court, like, really.



You know, the member from Brandon East there is talking. Like, I'm sure he has members in his community that will need to go in front of Social Services Appeal Board, and he's not saying anything about it. He's not standing up for his Manitobans. He's just being silent on this issue, and I'm sure he's going to stand up and support it.

Well, shame on you guys for taking the rights away from Manitobans. It's just atrocious. Legislation is another indication that this government's careless attitudes towards Manitoba's most vulnerable population. Well, I can tell you, come visit my community. Come to the North End. I don't think I've seen anybody come from that side to the North End. I've never seen any of you in the North End. *[interjection]* And Kildonan is not the North End. That's further.

So, if you want to come and visit—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —you know, I'll set some visits up in some of our social housing apartment blocks. I'll set some visits up in—some of our people with disabilities and you can see what you're taking away when you're going to pass this bill. Shame on all of you—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order, order.

**Mrs. Smith:** You know, Stadler—wow—you know, I get calls in my office from people who are living at Siloam Mission because this government is putting them there.

You know what they're doing? They're forcing people to take their old—or, their CPP early, which means when they turn 65 and they get their CPP, they get a lesser amount. So they're already putting them in poverty. They haven't even got there yet. They're living in poverty and now they're going to get their CPP, it's going to be less. They don't see a dollar of that. This government claws that back, dollar for dollar.

So maybe they're getting \$300, \$300 that would help them a little more. Maybe they'd get \$380 when they turn 65. But they're taking that \$80 away from them because they're making—forcing them. So they say to them if you don't go and apply for that, you're not going to get any EIA.

Well, I'm sorry, but people that are living in Siloam Mission have rights, too, and you're taking away those rights from those people—horrible—and

forcing them to take their old age or their CPP early and putting them in, you know, poverty.

You know, you guys just continue to pick on the poor, pick on the children, pick on the old people, the seniors, you pick on the vulnerable. Like, when is anybody else going to get a leg up? When are you going to give them a foot up? When are you going to provide some services—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Order.

I would just remind the member to direct her comments in a third party manner through the Chair, because otherwise it just provokes a lot of dissention in the room and gets the heat turned up. And I would ask the member for her co-operation, please.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

I would ask the member, please, to direct all her comments through the Chair.

**Mrs. Smith:** Of course I get riled up about this because this is people that are affected in my community and of course I'm going to stand up for them. I'm going to fight tooth and nail this government to make sure that people that are vulnerable, people that have disabilities, people that this government isn't looking after.

They continue to cut services to women's centres in the North End, now Neighbourhoods Alive! is coming again for a refunding; now I'm hearing from our community organizations that again this government is going to be making cuts there.

Like, when are they going to stop with the cuts? When are they going to stop picking on vulnerable people? When are they going to start taking care of Manitobans and actually listening to them? *[interjection]*

You know, they haven't built a single house of social housing, and I hear the minister for—or, minister from Kirkfield there speaking up. Well, he was the former—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —family services minister and what did he do? Not very much.

Not very much.

You know, he gave himself a raise. That's about all he did.

So if they want to clap for the minister, for getting—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —a raise and taking that money out of Manitobans' pockets, then you clap. You clap, you keep your—you know, your conservative ways.

**Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook):** I know many of my colleagues across the way hadn't had an opportunity to hear from the lady, my colleague was talking about. So I have her presentation here and I'm going to read it to them so that hopefully they—it'll appeal to some sort of heartstrings that they may possess, and maybe they'll convince the minister to withdraw this bill. So here she goes.

Good evening, I am here to express concern for Bill 24.

My name is Sylvie Sabourin Grindle. I'm from St. Jean Baptiste, where I grew up on a farm with my family. My husband and I live in Winnipeg. For a career, I had the pleasure of being an early childhood educator for many years. I worked at various daycares and nursery schools, mostly in Winnipeg.

I haven't worked in five years because I have mental illness. My husband also has mental illness. My husband and I receive financial assistance from the federal and provincial government. I receive CPP, disability, and we also receive welfare.

I'm considered non-functional. I am not able to work. I'm not a professional in any way and I don't communicate like a professional. In fact, I have a great deal of difficulty with communicating, as do many people with mental illness. My presentation will require your patience and I thank you in advance for your patience.

As part of my illness, I experience emotional dysregulation, agoraphobia, and insomnia. Those all make it difficult for me to be here. It takes a lot for me to leave the safety of my home, but I feel it's important that I be here and try to explain some things from my perspective.

In November of 2014, it has been approximately one year since my last day of work and four months since my husband's last day of work. We had used up our savings and needed to rely on credit cards to pay for living expenses. This is when we applied for welfare, and it was my first experience with the

welfare system. The entire process felt and was dehumanizing.

After being on welfare for six months, we received a letter in the mail. My husband read it and he was scared to tell me what was going on because he knew this would be difficult for me to handle, and I was already extremely sensitive. He told me that our welfare was being cut off. The letter didn't give a reason that our benefits were ending and we had no idea why.

It was the end of June when we found out that we would not be receiving any money for July. We also had our medical benefits taken away. We just finished a six-month waiting period to qualify for our medical benefits and we were waiting for a decision on some medical devices, but we were being cut off, and we lost our medical benefits, too.

I was in complete disbelief. I thought there was a mistake and it would be fixed and everything would be okay, but my husband had inquired and confirmed that it was true. I still didn't believe it because this is Canada. This was traumatic for both of us. I found myself in a terrible psychological state; I cannot describe it. We needed to appeal the decision.

At the time, I wasn't even well enough to be involved in the appeal process, so it was my husband who took on the responsibility and the stress. He went one day to present our case to the appeal board. When he returned home, he told me what happened. He said he did not present our case. With the appeal board all facing him, he had a panic attack. He also said that no one helped him or showed any support. Those who were there for the meeting seemed annoyed that they went there for nothing.

\* (19:20)

We needed to get back on welfare. We needed to meet someone at one of those offices. I was way too scared to go through it. The first time we went through the application process, I had a panic attack in the office where I needed to leave. I knew I wasn't well enough to go through that again. So we could get through it, my psychologist 'accompanying'—accompanied us and stayed the entire time. This was so that I could be there and go through the process without having a major panic attack.

My husband asked me not to present this evening because he is afraid it could result in our losing benefits. He said he lives in constant fear that our benefits could be taken away. My mental illness isn't permanent. I believe I can heal. I know I can

heal, and I deserve to heal. Many of us who require financial assistance are experiencing mental illness. We all need and deserve a chance to heal. While we stress about money, we cannot heal from whatever caused our mental illness. The current appeal process is dehumanizing, traumatizing and ineffective. Therefore, by opposing Bill 24, I am definitely not suggesting we keep things the way they are, but I'm 'alsing'—also asking that you don't eliminate the appeal board without replacing it with something more effective.

In 2015, the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association indicated the financial costs of providing services to mentally ill people in various places. These are the results: in a hospital or a psychiatric bed, the daily cost is \$665. Times that by 31 days, it rounds up to about \$20,615. In a provincial jail, at a daily rate of \$143, the monthly cost is \$4,333. For a shelter bed, it's \$69 per day, for a monthly cost of \$1,932. But for supportive and social housing, at a cost of \$25 to \$31, the monthly cost is \$775 to \$961. She goes on to say, what we receive as two adults, CCP disability, at \$27.10 a day equals to about \$840 monthly. For their welfare, they get \$23.23, for a monthly benefit of \$720. So the total they get is \$1,560.

So, as you can see, CPP disability isn't enough to live off of, and there are no medical benefits with CPP. Even though I worked hard for as long as I could, CPP doesn't give me enough to survive; therefore, welfare, which is provincial, needs to supplement. The amount decided by welfare isn't based on the actual cost of living. Those of us on welfare are people too. We have needs. We are biological beings with needs and wants, just like those who are not on welfare.

This bill is clearly not to save money because we know it'll end up costing more money. We also know it'll cause a huge amount of stress. Financial stress is a burden on our nervous system. It leads to mental illness, and there is just so much we can handle. I ask that you please always consider the most vulnerable and the most marginalized people when you create laws.

Experience is the best teacher, and there are some things that we can only learn and truly understand through experience. Poverty can only be understood by those with personal experience. I, myself, do not know poverty. Even though my income is low, I don't consider myself to be a poor person. This is because, for one, my freezer is full. I

have never worried about not having enough food or water. And the other reason I don't consider myself a poor person is because I've seen poverty. I've witnessed enough poverty to know I don't actually know poverty. Poverty means helplessness. Getting a job isn't a solution for those of us who aren't able to work. Poor people don't need a Poverty Reduction Strategy; poor people need money.

Manitobans are experiencing a serious mental illness crisis, and you could help by not adding even more financial stress to people's lives. Some people are even healing from generations of trauma; that takes time in order to allow people to heal. We need to provide them with safety and take away their stress so they could focus on healing.

Thank you all—thank you to all of you and everyone else here this evening for your time and for listening to my presentation.

And that was, again, Mrs. Sylvie Sabourin Grindle, and I just wanted to reiterate again that the Liberals will not be supporting this bill. Miigwech.

**Madam Speaker:** I will now put the question on concurrence and third reading of Bill 24, The Social Services Appeal Board Amendment Act.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** 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.

#### Recorded Vote

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** A recorded vote, please.

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

\* (19:50)

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 24, The Social Services Appeal Board Amendment Act.

### Division

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

#### Yeas

*Bindle, Clarke, Cullen, Curry, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.*

#### Nays

*Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Klassen, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Smith (Point Douglas), Swan, Wiebe.*

**Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 33, Nays 14.

**Madam Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

### Bill 27—The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Amendment Act

**Madam Speaker:** We will now move to bill-concurrence and third reading of Bill 27, The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Amendment Act, and I would recognize the honourable Minister of Finance to move and speak to the concurrence and third reading motion.

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Sustainable Development (Ms. Squires), that Bill 27, The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Amendment Act, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and now be read for a third time and passed.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Fielding:** I'm going to put a few brief comments on the record in regards to this legislation. I'm pleased to speak to Bill 27, which amends The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Act in June of 2017.

Bill 27 continues to require that each consecutive budget shows progress towards balance through progressive smaller deficits, ensuring a sustainable financial future for the province. We think it's important to make sure we're making progress for taxpayers.

The bill also continues to hold ministers responsible for achieving deficit reductions of at least \$100 million, Madam Speaker—\$100 million per year relative to 2017-18, a budget baseline, and staying on track. We are on a track to recovery here in this province.

To clarify the baseline for 2017-18, the starting point for the deficit reduction targets under the legislation is \$924 million. Targets for additional years will continue to go down by \$100 million each and every year, Madam Speaker.

The amendment in the bill will remove the disincentives to go beyond the \$100-million target reduction amount and reward the essential success of balance to the budgets that is important to Manitobans and, quite frankly, one of the reasons why we were elected, Madam Speaker—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Fielding:** In addition, the bill adds a requirement to specifically account for amounts of salary withdrawn from each minister. It confirms that the consequences for non-compliance is a loss of ministerial salary; provides authority to pay a rebate to ministers of a cumulative amount withheld upon achievement of the balanced budget, 2026; creates more of incentive, certain planning framework in instances when accounting standards change, 'verng' essential changes are made within the government reporting entity and results in one-time revenue reduction of upwards of \$25 million.

Bill 27, Madam Speaker, recognizes that the members of Cabinet play a significant role in ensuring that our government is on track on a fiscal and prudent course for taxpayers. The bill eliminates disincentives and recognizes progress, reinstating salaries when real and sustainable financial progress are achieved.

As reported in 2017-18 Public Accounts, the deficit balance calculated under the act will be \$782 million, Madam Speaker, which is a reduction of \$142 million from the 2017-18 baseline of \$924 million.

\* (20:00)

Included in this calculation is a deposit of \$50 million in the rainy day fund. That, Madam Speaker, is five times more than we had budgeted for at the start of the budgetary year. We think that's important to put a little bit more money away from—the past, we know that the former NDP

government drained that account—drained that account. It was over \$750 million in that account. We think it's important to put a little bit more money away in the pockets of Manitobans when a real tragedy or something happens, an emergency where we need to draw upon those costs.

The 2017-18—we have exceeded the deficit reduction requirement under the act, while setting aside more planned—as mentioned, for a rainy day. I'm pleased to recommend the legislation to the House, and I encourage all members to support this balanced budget legislation to ensure that Manitoban taxpayers are protected and we're making sustainable progress.

Madam Speaker, we are on a road to recovery here in the province of Manitoba.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** You know, I had an opportunity just now, I was out of the building—ran very quickly, of course, because we have important business to do here this evening—but I did have a chance to run over to a—to great event in the community. And I had a chance to talk to people—real people, real genuine, actual Manitobans—and they asked me, what are you doing tonight? What is the priorities?

I told them I was here, I was voting, there was important business to be done. They said, what is that important business? And I said to them, well, actually, we're making sure that the ministers in government get a raise. And they couldn't believe it, Madam Speaker. They couldn't believe it.

Now, some of them are—were a little a more savvy, and a few of them had been around—they pay a little bit more attention, I guess, to the work that we do here. And they said, wait a minute. Didn't you already debate that? Didn't you already have some sort of debate on that, on the balanced budget legislation?

I said, yes, as a matter of fact, we did. And they said, wait a minute, no, no, no, I'm pretty sure it wasn't just once. Did you do that twice before this? And I said, yes, that is, in fact, true. This is the third time, Madam Speaker, that this House is spending our time debating and making sure that these ministers in government get a raise.

It is bizarre. It has no bearing on the lives of Manitobans. When I told them what we were doing

tonight, they were totally shocked that this was the priority of this government, that they would hold us here to this late hour to ensure that they had time to debate this bill, and this was a priority. *[interjection]*

Now, I hear members opposite chirping, and maybe they're changing their minds. Maybe they're going to withdraw now at the 13th hour here, and they're going to actually withdraw this bill and stand with other Manitobans to stand up for things like health care, education, good jobs, the environment, things that Manitobans care about—but no. Instead, here we are, talking about the balanced budget legislation for a third time.

Now, the other thing that people were saying is, they said, wait a minute, is this really the priority of the government? And in fact, it was. Because, you know, when this government ran in the 2016 election, they said—well, they didn't say much, but they did say a few things would be priorities for them.

So what did they say? They said, well, you know what, the absolute No. 1 first priority for us should be personal-care-home beds. Well, here we are, two years into their mandate—I think they said first 100 days—here we are two years into their mandate, and yet not a single personal-care-home bed has been built in this province. And yet, the priority remains to make sure that every minister gets a raise.

What else was a priority? A mental health strategy, something that I think every member on this side of the House said, yes, absolutely, let's continue to invest and work and, you know, make sure that mental health is a priority in this province. This government said first 100 days. Did they accomplish that? No.

What did they bring in in the first 100 days? A convoluted plan to ensure that they got their money, and that's, in fact, what they did. Madam Speaker, 2016, the first change that they made was to say, you know what? There's a law that says we shouldn't be getting a raise. Guess what? We're just going to sweep that under the rug and we're going to make sure we get a raise.

And we called them on it. We called them on it. Every Manitoban out there called them on it. Even the Winnipeg Sun called them on it, Madam Speaker. I mean, it's unbelievable. And they go, oh, wait a minute, wait a minute, okay, you're right. You know what? Maybe there's going to be—there's got to be some way around this.

And so they tinkered with the numbers, and they made—they moved some things around and, okay, well, wait a minute. We'll come up with this convoluted plan to ensure that we get the raise, and they took their raise.

And we continued to criticize them about that. That's what we do. And they said, you know what? That's not good enough. So the minister, the former Minister of Finance said, you know what we need—and I know, Madam Speaker, that they continue to pat themselves on the back about taking the—making sure that this is the No. 1 priority for all Manitobans, is that they get their raise. And, boy, have they come up with a plan to make sure that that raise comes through, because now we're not talking about 2018; we're not talking about 2019; we're not talking about 2020—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Wiebe:** We're not talking about 2021; we're not talking—2026. I think my kids are going to be in college by then, Madam Speaker. It's unbelievable.

And if at that point—if they can show—and, you know, they're—hey, they're doing their best to cook the books. They're making sure, you know, WCB's been withdrawn from the summary accounts and authorized transactions, even with the Auditor General saying this isn't right. They're going to make sure that they hit that target so that they can get what the minister called a jubilee clause. Well, you know what? Manitobans aren't jubilant at all about this scheme that they've cooked up. What they're asking for is for this government to stop the cuts—stop the cuts to health care, to education, to protect our environment and come up with a real jobs plan. So this is the priority of the members opposite.

Like I said, when we go and we tell people in the, you know, in the public—I mean, I would just ask if any member on the opposite side would go knocking on doors tomorrow in their constituency, if they would say to them, yes, you know what, we were working late last night; we stayed all night to ensure that we got a raise. I want to see what every constituent told them.

You know, this minister keeps talking about ensuring that they have an incentive to balance the budget. Well, you know what? You don't need an incentive. The incentive is being a good public servant, is being an MLA, is being a minister in government. It has nothing to do with your pay. I

mean, I just can't understand this government's obsession with making sure that they're getting the absolute maximum amount of money from taxpayers to pay their own salaries.

That's not the priority, Madam Speaker. That's not—should not be the priority for any member of this House. We get paid, and we get paid well. It is a nice thing that we get, and we appreciate that, but by no means should any member be in this House to make money and to become rich off of this job. It just ain't happening.

Madam Speaker, you know, every Manitoban wants this government to listen to them, not to listen to their own ministers, not worry about how much money they're making, but to actually react and actually get things done to protect the services, to run—to do the things that they promised they would do in the election—to protect those front-line services and protect those who deliver them. And this government continues to fail while at the same time prioritizing ridiculous bills like this.

Madam Speaker, we are voting against this bill. The fourth time it comes forward, we'll vote against it again. Fifth time, sixth time—they can keep bringing it; they can keep coming up with more and more convoluted ways to twist themselves into a pretzel to make sure that they get paid. But we will vote against it at every turn.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Ready?

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** This is a bill that has promised balanced budgets that has been amended, I believe, seven times by the NDP and now three times by the PCs so they can avoid getting their pay docked. That is 10 times that PC and NDP governments have shown they pass laws they have no intention of following. It is bad law; it is bad government; it is bad economics; it is bad public policy. It undermines people's faith in politics and politicians. It depends on three different definitions of the deficit, which the Auditor General has condemned, and it seeks to enshrine in law a single outdated, discredited economic ideology that has been disproven everywhere around the world since 2008 that this government doesn't even believe in.

We need to be fiscal realists. This government, when elected, said it would run seven years of

consecutive deficits without a plan to bring the budget to balance. When they did that, Standard & Poor's dropped the government's credit rating. The next year, the government still didn't have a plan, and Standard & Poor's dropped the Province's credit rating again. Why? Because the government was focused only on cuts. I quote from Standard & Poor's: The PC budget did not contain measures to materially increase revenues. In fact, it includes some tax relief through the indexation of personal income tax brackets and a pledge to reduce the provincial sales tax by one percentage point by 2020. As such, Manitoba achieving its revenue targets will largely depend on the economy performing in line with its forecasts.

\*(20:10)

That isn't me saying tax cuts are bad, Madam Speaker; it's Standard & Poor's. I wrote the analyst at Standard & Poor's to ask them why they downgraded Manitoba. They wrote back to me, and they said our credit ratings represent our opinion of the government's ability and willingness to repay its obligations when due.

So the signal this government has sent not once but twice is that it may not be able or willing to repay its debts. And we are all going to pay the price for that, Madam Speaker. That's why Manitoba's debt was downgraded twice under this government—not the NDP, this government. Just last month, this government voted to borrow \$3.8 billion. Two billion dollars of that is going to Hydro.

Standard & Poor's said that this government's plan to bring the budget back to balance 'depends'—depends on some optimistic assumptions, but that this government's plan to cut keep cutting taxes while borrowing billions is actually putting the Province's finances at risk. This is bond rating agencies.

The Premier (Mr. Pallister) keeps talking about what would happen if the government acted like a household. Well, we have to be realistic about what is happening to Canadian households. The average household in Canada is drowning in debt. They owe 170 per cent of what they make each year. Canadian households owe way more than governments do. Canadian households owe over \$2 trillion in debt, one and a half trillion dollars in mortgages, hundreds of millions of dollars in credit cards. One in five Manitobans haven't had a raise since 1976. Less than half of Canadians between 25 and 54 are working full time. And the federal government cut taxes,

pursued austerity, including massive cuts to Manitoba transfers.

The government is simply wrong when they say the NDP did nothing but raise taxes all the time. It's true under the NDP Manitoba had some of the highest taxes for low- and middle-income earners. But not at the top. It's true the NDP raised the PST.

But the fact is that tax cuts have driven Manitoba's deficit. Tax cuts contributed to Canada's deficit because parties of all stripes have cut taxes in good times, and when there is a recession or a massive global financial crisis caused by bad bets requiring trillions of dollars in bank bailouts, what gets blamed is health care, education and pensions.

What I'm saying is obvious when you look at the Manitoba government's own statements. Under this government and the NDP, the economy generally has been growing faster than government spending for a decade. It's revenues that have been dropping.

And I will quote an NDP news released from 2009 that Manitobans would be saving a billion dollars in cuts by 2009—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** —compared to tax rates under the Filmon PCs in 1999. There are personal, income and property tax cuts, farmland school tax rebates, increasing the basic personal exemption. The small business tax cut 8—from—cut from 8 per cent to zero. The general corporation income tax rate was lowered. The capital tax was being lowered. And there were a whole series of additional tax credits. A billion dollars.

People with second homes and cottages were given a break on their taxes. At the most—and the NDP thought this was good news. All these taxes and tax credits are listed in the KPMG report this government commissioned.

At the federal level, corporate taxes have been cut in half; personal income taxes are a fraction of what they were in the 1960s. The difference, however, between what nominal tax rates are and what people actually pay is colossal.

And what has changed over the decades is that people who have benefited are people at the top because we've shifted the burden of tax away from people who earn for a living and from corporations to people who work for a living. We get—need to get real about the economy and real about government

finances because this government is still stuck in 1982. It might be 1892, I'm not sure.

But I want to say something about the idea that a balanced budget alone will fix the economy, because it won't. You can balance the budget and have a bad economy, bad health care, bad schools, high unemployment and lots of poverty and massive amounts of household debt.

It is private debt that is the single biggest danger to our economy right now, and we need to focus on the well-being of people outside this building, in the real economy, with jobs and houses and families, as well as the environment. We need to deal what is real and focus on growth in-out there, outside of this building, to improve the government's finances in here.

I will finish by saying one more thing about balanced budgets, which is that they have been gamed just the way this budget—this bill has been gamed over and over again—in ways that are financially dangerous.

There's an old law from an economist named Goodhart. He said that as soon as a measure becomes a target, it becomes useless as a measure. For a generation, balancing the budget has become the only thing that matters. It's become the target of what is deemed good economic stewardship. And what we have missed is all the manipulation that is done to make books look good.

In Manitoba, the previous government and this one have been taking tens and hundreds of millions of dollars a year every year from Manitoba Hydro. The capital tax, the water rental and debt fee are taken out of Hydro, even as Hydro borrows billions of dollars.

What has been happening is that the previous government and this one have been taking billions of dollars in debt that would have shown up on the government's books and been paid for with taxes and it is going on Hydro's debt instead, where it will be paid for with massive rate increases.

This will hurt families, this will hurt businesses, and it is because those governments have been putting their budgets on Hydro's tab. This is not fiscally responsible; it is absolutely reckless. It is putting our credit rating at risk, and that is why the board of Hydro quit.

This is a government that has twice signalled to credit-rating agencies that it is unwilling or unable to

meet its obligations. There is nothing fiscally responsible about that or this bill. What this government needs is a dose of fiscal realism; I don't expect it any time soon, and that is why we oppose this bill, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

I will now put the question on concurrence and third reading of Bill 27, The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Amendment Act.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** 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.

#### Recorded Vote

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader):** I would like to request a recorded vote.

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

\* (20:50)

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 27, The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Amendment Act.

Prior to moving into the vote, I would just ask members again that when the pages are doing the division, that the House remain in silence. If you can imagine, you know, these are 15-, 16-year-old kids that are here for the first time and it's pretty intimidating. And they're trying to do everything by memory, and it's very distracting if there is any noise going on in the Chamber, and it can throw them off.

So, out of respect for our pages, I would ask everybody to please remain silent while they're trying to do their job.



### Division

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

#### Yeas

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

#### Nays

*Allum, Altemeyer, Gerrard, Klassen, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Swan, Wiebe.*

**Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 36, Nays 12.

**Madam Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

### DEBATE ON CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS—AMENDED BILLS

#### Bill 34—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2018

**Madam Speaker:** We will now move to Bill 34, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, concurrence and third reading. And I will now call on the Minister of Finance to speak to concurrence and third reading motion.

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance):** I move, second by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler), that Bill 34, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, as amended and reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now be read for a third time and passed.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Fielding:** I want to put a few words and highlights a little bit on BITSA on the record.

I'm pleased to speak to Bill 34, the budget implementation and statutes act. I would like to say it's a—democracy is a beautiful thing. We had over nine hours of questions and answer from a variety of members from across the floor, and so I think we were—some good dialogue that was had on all fronts.

As we focus on fiscal management and our government continues to listen to Manitobans, the priorities that our government takes direction on—we are ensuring that the provincial tax measures are supported to continue to meet the extended outcomes and fiscal responsibility that our residents would want from us.

Our ongoing review of some of the tax credits resulted in phasing out of some tax credits that were not meeting its intended purposes. We also increased—or, introduced some new tax measures—tax credit programs, as well as extending some out for the cultural sector.

As announced in bill—in Budget 2018, the bill includes aligning the Education Property Tax Credits with property tax credits that are done across the province right now—that applies on school taxes, as opposed to residential properties—and eliminating over \$250 deduction. What that means is over 26,000 renters will be supported by this change.

Also, eliminating the process for applying with Manitoba Finance for school tax reductions, which greatly simplifies the process. And our government is very supportive of reducing red tape for citizens by streamlining systems and 'aprocesses'.

Same thing with Primary Caregiver Tax Credits; by replacing the process for applying to government for pre-approvals and providing a flat annual credit eliminates the necessary paperwork of people when they're trying to care for loved ones and have to keep in—a log. We're giving a flat rate, which is another streamlining and effective process for people and their loved ones when they're taking care of them.

Establishing a new, unique, refundable child-'tare' tax credit—this is something that we've seen immense amount of supports, a new and innovative approach to creating spaces—much-needed child-care spaces in our centres.

We're also increasing things like the business income eligible for the small business deduction from 450 to 500 thousand dollars, costs upwards of \$7 million but there's thousands of—business will be supported by this. And we're aligning with what other provinces are doing.

We're also extending the Manitoba book publishing credit—tax credit and cultural industries printing tax credit for one additional year.

Bill 34 also phases out the credit union special deduction over a five-year period, which is a longer

period than areas like Saskatchewan that's phased it out, that the federal government, as well as PEI and Quebec. But we also are eliminating the credit on—rather, the profits tax of credit unions that will help credit unions, because they are valuable in our society.

Based on a number of considerations, deliberations with the federal government on legalization of cannabis, Bill 34 also introduces a retail sales tax exemption on non-medical cannabis. We truly think that it's important to keep the price of non-medical cannabis low, to get rid of the black market in terms of our approach. And that's something that a lot of other jurisdictions are copying, our approach to cannabis.

Changes were also made with small things: exemptions on fertilizer storage bins, drill bits—a part of the retail sales tax. And, based on requests from the Manitoba chiropractors, we've changed to allow them incorporates like similar professions in the medical field.

\*(21:00)

Finally, the bill also makes several technical administrative changes that are important for Manitobans, and we encourage the whole House to support the BITSA bill. We think it's an important step forward in a variety of ways and will support Manitobans as we move forward.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Once again, we're spending our evening debating, you know, an issue—I think it's important to Manitobans. But in this case, we wouldn't have had this opportunity if it were up to this government and that's because back in the spring, when every other government in Manitoba's history outside of an election brought forward their BITSA legislation, this government refused to do that and they tried once again to slip it in without anybody noticing.

Now, we might not have even caught on to this had it not been for what this government tried to do last year, and what this opposition did last year in holding up and trying to stop the BITSA from going through. Well, what we did was, we tried to bring attention to what this government was doing and we did that very successfully; we did that because this government totally changed its funding formula with municipalities without them knowing, without any kind of consultation.

I think municipalities call that fair share, Madam Speaker. This government pulled the rug out from underneath them. It rescinded the legislation which required the Province to direct one point—percentage point of PST to municipal infrastructure. And the result of that was that after these two years of the cuts of the Pallister government, the results have been clear. That Canada's Parliamentary Budget Office last year said that Manitoba saw the biggest cuts to capital spending in the country.

So we kind of expected that there was something going on here. We knew that the government was up to something. So what did we do in spring when, you know, the House was sort of moving along and getting ready to break for the summer? We said, where's the BITSA? That's what we said. Where's the BITSA? I think the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) said that over and over again in this House. Where's the BITSA? And we wondered, where is the BITSA? What is this government trying to hide?

So we went through the Estimates process, we spent lots of time with the member opposite, the former member for—the former minister of Finance. And we spent lots of time, you know, we talked about things like revenue from cannabis. He said, well, there's absolutely no way to know. This is what the minister of Finance said. There's absolutely no way to know. We can't go to other jurisdictions, we can't use other projections, we can't possibly know what the revenues are going to be. I can tell you what the costs are going to be. And the minister said, well, it's going to be at least \$100 million and we'll write that into the budget. Well, what would the revenues be, we cannot come up with any kind of figure.

That's what the minister of Finance tried to tell Manitobans. So we said, okay, well, that's fine. Why don't you tell us what the tax—what your taxation is going to be. And levies on the cannabis. Well, the minister said, we're just—that's why we can't bring BITSA forward. We're waiting for the federal government, and we're waiting to make a deal. Well, you know what, Madam Speaker, here we are, in fall, after holding this government to account in the spring, a working opposition that actually held this government, in the summer, to ensure that we got a deal to debate this BITSA bill, and we still don't know if there is a deal with the federal government. It's unbelievable. They continue to fight and bicker with the federal government at every turn, and they won't even tell us what the deal actually is.

And while this bill exempts cannabis from PST, the cynicism of this Pallister government is absolutely endless. There's different levies on cannabis, they collect from retailers so they don't get it through PST, but they get it through the retailers, increased fees and levies that will be paid by consumers in other ways.

And I sat here—you know, the minister said they were beautiful questions that he heard that day from—*[interjection]* They were spectacular questions, some have said. And, you know, so I was happy to ask them, but I couldn't get an answer, I couldn't get a clear answer from the minister about what kind of taxes and levies. So he's trying once again to muddy the waters and make sure that Manitobans don't actually know what this government is up to.

Same thing with credit unions. We said, well, okay, so you are taking an important tax break that credit unions and caisses populaires throughout the province have used and they are so important in our communities, and you are taking away?

He said, well, yes, well, we're giving something back to them. But the numbers don't add up, Madam Speaker. They're—it's a major hit against those credit unions and those small caisses populaires throughout our province that communities count on.

So we have so many important concerns with this year's BITSA, even though here we are at the end and we still don't have all the answers from this government.

We know that the bill changes the eligibility for the \$700 education property tax rebate. So while the budget—the government's budget line says that the changes have been neutral, these changes are neutral only for the government, Madam Speaker.

They're not neutral for those people who have to pay more, and, in this case, Manitobans have to spend more—30 per cent of those Manitobans will lose the funding. And it's most—it's those Manitobans hardest who are in the—in low-income housing, and that includes those people who are mobile home owners.

And, you know, I want to give absolute credit to the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey), who brought that issue on behalf of his constituents to this House and said that, in particular in Flin Flon, this is going to be a major change; 440 residents will be impacted by this change. And for those homeowners whose properties are assessed between \$15,000 and \$72,000 will be affected by this change.

Now, members opposite, you know, may not think that that's relevant, but it is so relevant to those people who are in that situation. And, as the member for Flin Flon says, the minister came into town under the cover of night, the cover of darkness. He didn't tell anybody he was there, just hand-selected his people that he wanted to come.

I'm wondering how many mobile home owners he spoke to. Did any mobile home owners come to his meeting? I wonder why those mobile home owners didn't know about it, this minister's meeting. It's because it wasn't on his website. It wasn't publicized in any newspapers or anywhere else.

Nobody knew about it, Madam Speaker. Only this minister, who decided to come in last minute and talk to his hand-selected group of people, stakeholders that he—as he calls them, and not listen to any other Manitobans.

Well, the member for Flin Flon was standing up for those homeowners, and he will continue to stand up for the people of Flin Flon going forward.

You know, this bill also ends the rental housing construction credit, we know, at a time here in Manitoba where we are faced with a government who refuses to spend any money on building new, affordable housing in this province.

You know, it's up to the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) every day to point out that this government continues to talk about investments our government made. That's the only thing they can talk about, because they haven't built a single unit of social housing in this province. The only units that have opened have been units that we committed to, and that we set in motion or built when we were in government.

And so there is clearly a need for more affordable housing in this province, and yet the minister has no qualms about ending the rental housing construction credit.

As the minister mentioned, it also changes the employer of all health employees to Shared Health, and we know, Madam Speaker, at a time when cuts are hitting our regional health authorities; when cuts are affecting our front-line workers, as we heard from the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) just today in this House, about important cuts that nurses are feeling on the front lines; this is the last thing that members of the health-care sector need, and that is changes that create more chaos or more confusion.

And we know the minister doesn't seem to care too much about that.

You know, Madam Speaker, I see my time is running short, unfortunately. I've got pages and pages. We could ask for leave. I'd be happy to go all night, because there's so much more to talk about.

The bottom line is, Madam Speaker, is that we are an opposition that continues to work on behalf of Manitobans and actually get things done, and this is an example of holding this government to account.

If it was up to this government, they would have slipped this one through in the summer without anybody noticing. We held them here. We held them for three weeks while the members opposite sweated. We were ready to go all summer.

And now we got more of an opportunity to talk about it. Maybe all of this time has actually made a difference. Maybe they're actually going to back down from this particular BITSA bill, make some amendments that actually protect Manitobans and invest in Manitoba.

\* (21:10)

Maybe this is their opportunity to say, you know what, they're going to vote against this, that we're going to go back to the drawing board, try to focus on those things that Manitobans care about: about health, about education, about the environment, about good jobs in this province. Maybe this is the opportunity that members will take, and I encourage them to absolutely do so.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** BITSA, for a budget—being a budget bill, it doesn't have many numbers attached to it.

Tax credits can be problematic and sometimes they're like pizza coupons. That is, there are two-for-one pizza coupons, which is that you still actually need money to make them work. So they're often when you talk about providing tax credits to people, it's only really people who already have money who can take advantage of them, which means that people who don't are left out.

There are a number of measures in this bill which are uncoded. There was one issue that came up as far as the costs of marijuana or the cannabis legislation is concerned. This government has very often said that Manitobans are smart shoppers, but I was approached by a constituent who wanted to

know why it was that official—that the cannabis available in official stores seemed to be so much higher in price than the black market stuff.

So I know that—

**Some Honourable Members:** Know this for a fact?

**Mr. Lamont:** I don't know, see, because this—the thing is I was—this is, again, I'm operating from hearsay on the basis of a constituent. Thank you for that question, Minister—the—from the member of flip-flop. So I'm asking for a constituent, Madam Speaker, yes.

The—and I know, like, I mean, one of the things that this government has said, they don't—they claim they're not expecting any cannabis revenue. They don't have any numbers attached to it. I actually do hope they're wrong. Frankly, I hope, for the sake of the Province's books, that we do see cannabis revenue.

There are a couple of concerns. I mean, one of the ones that I've often raised is the issue for the tax rate for small corporations. Now, I—at committee, I asked the First Minister and his officials—sorry, the Finance Minister and his officials whether there's any distinction being made between different types of corporations.

Because the fact is there are entrepreneurs and risk-takers, people who are risking their own money, they're creating jobs, they're building value in this province, and they're starting companies, they're creating jobs. But there are also—it is equally possible to have shell corporations created solely for the purpose, basically, of avoiding income tax.

And one of the major researchers discovered is a research named Jack Mintz, who's the farthest thing—he's a professor of finance at the University of Calgary—he's the farthest thing from being—he's not a Liberal and he's certainly not a social democrat, Madam Speaker.

But he showed—his study showed that 60 per cent of private corporations were registered to households with incomes over \$150,000, who represent less than 10 per cent of the population in Canada. And other studies showed that, of the top 0.01 or 0.001 per cent of the population, who are extreme high-earners, 80 per cent of them owned entire networks of small corporations.

And basically, they're using them as a way—they don't employ anybody, they're not taking any risk, they're used as an income-sprinkling device.

Having said all that, I wanted to say I will now—I'll take the indulgence of the House to speak briefly. This is my last speech of the session—*[interjection]*—thank you very much, thanks—I'm sure, and—to the relief of all and sundry.

So I wanted—I just—I would like to take this opportunity, I would like to thank the—you, Madam Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the clerks and the pages for your patience and tolerance with my rank—occasional rank amateur behaviour. I would like to thank my caucus members. I would like to thank the member from River Heights, the member from Burrows, the member from Kewatinook, as well as our incredible caucus staff.

I will also thank the government—

**An Honourable Member:** What about your seatmate that helps you out?

**Mr. Lamont:** I'm getting there.

I'm almost get—I would also like to thank—I will also thank the government members and the opposition, because I have sometimes said that for that I am the leader of a political party, that I'm not so partisan that I want to see other people—people in other political parties not succeed.

I want—I do actually—I don't want them to win elections, but I do want them to succeed in life, because I do believe the greatest disagreements can sometimes between—be between people who want the same things but disagree on how to get there. And I do believe that we do all want what's best for Manitoba.

I'd like to say one other thing, on a personal note, because sometimes it just—as an observation in this House, although there's lots of rancour—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Lamont:** I'm talking here.

As—oh—there's lots of rancour and disagreement and heckling, that there have been—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** —there have been some moments, some truly special moments where we are remembering people who served in this House who've passed on, and today, also when we were talking about remembrance. And we talk about those things that are very, very serious. And today as remembrance, where I was talking about members of my family.

And I don't know if there's anyone else in this House can—who knows exactly where they were 20 years ago. I was sitting vigil at Misericordia because my father was dying of cancer. He was in the ICU ward. And I—and that's why I know exactly where I was 20 years ago today.

And when he died, he was surrounded—he had many friends. He had friends from all across—from all walks of life and all political parties. And when he died, the response from people was so amazing. I was living in Toronto at the time. That people came and—I was incredibly impressed by the generosity of spirit and how everybody seemed to be—know exactly what to do.

And I was incredibly inspired by what an incredible place that Manitoba is and Winnipeg is. And it completely crossed all party lines.

And one of the promises I made to my father on his deathbed was to name my first child after him. His name was Francis, and my daughter, Frances, is supposed to be—is up in the gallery tonight. So I—*[interjection]* She deserves that applause much more than I do.

Anyways, but I want to—I do—I—honestly, I want to say thank you to all of you for the work you do. We may disagree, but ultimately, we—and we may disagree very seriously about the right direction to go, but I do believe that we all have the best—the province's best interests at heart. And thank you very much for this opportunity.

**Madam Speaker:** I will now put the question on concurrence and third reading of Bill 34, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2018.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** 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.

### Recorded Vote

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader):** Recorded vote.

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

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 34, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2018.

### Division

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

#### Yeas

*Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.*

#### Nays

*Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Smith (Point Douglas), Swan, Wiebe.*

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Yeas 37, Nays 15.

**Madam Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

\* \* \*

\* (22:20)

**Madam Speaker:** I am advised that Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor is about to arrive to grant royal assent to the bills. I am therefore interrupting the proceedings of the House for the 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 8—The Government Notices Modernization Act (Various Acts Amended); Loi sur la modernisation de la publication des avis du gouvernement (modification de diverses lois)

Bill 12—The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act, 2018; Loi de 2018 sur la réduction du fardeau administratif et l'efficacité du gouvernement

Bill 16—The Climate and Green Plan Implementation Act; Loi sur la mise en œuvre du Plan vert et climatique

Bill 24—The Social Services Appeal Board Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Commission d'appel des services sociaux

Bill 27—The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la responsabilité financière et la protection des contribuables

Bill 29—The Wildlife Amendment Act (Safe Hunting and Shared Management); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune (pratiques de chasse sécuritaires et gestion intégrée de la faune)

Bill 34—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2018; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2018 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité

Bill 35—The Crown Lands Amendment Act (Improved Management of Community Pastures and Agricultural Crown Lands); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les terres domaniales (gestion améliorée des pâturages communautaires et des terres domaniales agricoles)

Bill 36—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Impaired Driving Offences); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (conduite avec facultés affaiblies)

Bill 223—The Child and Family Services Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille

Bill 228—The Animal Shelter and Rescue Awareness Day Act; Loi sur la Journée de sensibilisation aux

refuges et aux établissements de secours pour animaux

Bill 230—The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day Act; Loi sur la Journée de sensibilisation à l'ensemble des troubles causés par l'alcoolisation fœtale

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

*Her Honour was then pleased to retire.*

*God Save the Queen was sung.*

*O Canada was sung.*

\* (22:30)

**Madam Speaker:** The hour being past 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until November 20th at 1:30, or at the call of the Speaker.

Have a good constituency week, everybody.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 8, 2018

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are also available on the Internet at the following address:

**<http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>**