

**Fourth 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

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

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

**Madam Speaker:** O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Please be seated.

### Point of Order

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Elmwood—and I would just draw to everybody's attention that the member had not completed his point of order yesterday and so it is a carryover today.

So I would recognize the honourable member for Elmwood, to conclude his statement.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I rise on a point of order. I'd like to restate and complete the point of order that I began yesterday.

As you know, Madam Speaker, misleading this House is a serious matter. I'm raising the matter of misleading information that has been put on the record in this House by the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler), as well as his obstruction in providing necessary information pertinent to debate in this Chamber.

I want to make it clear that I understand that this is a matter that you have previously considered and ruled on in regard to the issue of a matter of privilege. However, in your guidance on this matter, you said that the matter was best referred to a point of order, not a privilege. I note that there has not been a subsequent point of order raised on the matter. Following your direction, Madam Speaker, I wish to point—issue as a point of order.

Firstly, the minister put false and misleading information forward in—to this Chamber. On April 11th, 2018, during the Committee of Supply, the Minister of Infrastructure was facing some significant pressure from the opposition, and rightly

so, in regard to an untendered contract that he awarded to a party donor.

The minister was pressed on this—at least 11 occasions—to explain when this untendered contract went to Treasury Board. The minister stonewalled. After obscuring and sidestepping the question, the minister said, in the Committee of Supply: It—the contract—was done all the right way. It went through the proper process. The professionals did a great job. Congratulations, department of Manitoba Infrastructure.

Madam Speaker, the minister has since admitted to the media that this contract had, in fact, not been done the right way and had not gone through the proper process. In fact, not only was the contract sole-sourced to a party donor, it was not even gone to Treasury Board or been signed off by the deputy minister.

By admitting this to the press, the minister has also admitted that he deliberately misled this House, which, of course, is a breach of our rules and requires an apology from the minister, not just to the media, but also to the House.

This breach by the Minister of Infrastructure is particularly galling because, for years, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his Cabinet minister's entire caucus railed against any use of untendered contracts. Yet, in this case, the contracts were not tendered. They were not even brought to Treasury Board.

For these reasons, the minister has an obligation to disclose that the contracts he's given out are untendered and done without appropriate financial authorities.

This is part of our parliamentary duties, to analyze and scrutinize expenditures. The minister has breached our rules by proceeding without financial authorities. Certainly, it's a violation of The Financial Administration Act, and worse yet, the minister did not disclose the status of this contract.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, the Minister of Infrastructure obstructed me and other members of this Chamber from receiving information relevant for our duties. He called this contract a tendered contract, leading me and the public to believe

that this was being fairly awarded. It was only after members of the construction industry brought this forward did we learn that, in fact, this contract was given directly—and it wasn't even directly awarded. These were not even financial authorities to give this—there were not even financial authorities to give this contract.

The minister further obstructed our ability to learn anything with regard to this contract during Committee of Supply. The minister should have simply admitted that what had happened at the time of the breach, but instead chose to cover up what he had done during Supply with misdirection, obstruction and, as I 'previlly' noted, outright falsehoods.

Madam Speaker, I note again that this privilege has been brought to you as a matter of privilege and that you have in turn ruled that it's—this is a point of order; however, I did not believe the issue was subsequently brought to the House as a point of order as you have advised.

As such, I bring this issue forward as a point of order so that the minister will stand in his place and apologize for misleading statements he has made to the House; to wit, the minister claimed last year that it, the contract, was done all the right way. It went through the proper process. The professionals did a great job. Congratulations Department of Manitoba Infrastructure.

We know that's not true. The minister has said it's not true; the minister only recognized—apologized publicly for these false statements to the media. It was only after considerable discussion that I recalled—was able to locate the offending statements in Hansard.

In conclusion, it is clear that the minister has breached our rules by the statements I have quoted, and given the context of which further evidence came to my attention, the minister owes this House an apology.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, this matter has been dealt with by the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler) already. The Minister of Infrastructure is busy building roads, he's busy building bridges, and the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) is busy destroying his credibility.

I'll stand with the member—the Minister of Infrastructure—

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

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable House leader for the second opposition.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (Second Opposition House Leader):** I wasn't going to speak, but after that tirade, I felt that I'd better at least emphasize the fact that many of us in this Chamber are concerned about some of the information that has been put on the record in the past and feel that an apology in the House would be required.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Elmwood, I thank all members for their advice to the Chair on this matter.

To summarize the point of order, the honourable member for Elmwood alleged that the Minister of Infrastructure put false and misleading information forward to this Chamber on April 11th, 2018, during Committee of Supply in regard to an untendered contract they—that he awarded to a party donor.

The honourable member for Elmwood went on to say that the minister had since admitted to the media that this contract had not gone through the proper process. The member then alleged that, due to this public admission, the minister also admitted that he deliberately misled the House, which would be a breach of our rules.

This is not the first time such an allegation against the member has been raised in this House, and the rulings of previous Manitoba Speakers have been very clear and consistent on such matters.

Speakers Walding, Phillips, Rocan, Dacquay and Hickes have all ruled that in order to prove allegations that a member deliberately misled the House, a member must clearly demonstrate that another member purposefully intended to mislead the House by making statements with the knowledge that these statements would mislead.

\* (13:40)

As explained by Speaker Hickes in a 2011 ruling, and I quote: A burden of proof exists that goes beyond speculation or conjecture, but involves providing absolute proof, including a statement of intent by the member involved that the stated goal is to intentionally mislead the House as it is possible members may have inadvertently misled the House by unknowingly putting incorrect information on the record. End quote.

In 2007, Speaker Hickes also ruled that proving—pardon me—that providing information showing that some facts are at variance is not the same as providing proof of intent to mislead.

As well, Speaker Dacquay ruled that without a member admitting in the House that he or she had stated the goal of misleading the House when putting remarks on the record, it is virtually impossible to prove that a member had deliberately intended to mislead the House.

In raising his point of order, the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) has not met the threshold of evidence set in the references I have shared with the House and, accordingly, I am ruling that he does not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Madam Speaker, on March 14th at the 16:40 mark in Hansard I violated rule 54(2) in the Legislative Assembly rule book, and I unequivocally apologize and withdraw the comments.

**Madam Speaker:** And I thank the member for that apology to this House.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 25—The Municipal Amendment and City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Municipal Relations):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler), that Bill 25, The Municipal Amendment and City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act, now be read for a first time.

**Madam Speaker:** And just to be clear, I did call routine proceedings and introduction of bills.

It has been moved by the honourable Minister for Municipal Relations, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture, that Bill 25, The Municipal Amendment and City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

**Mr. Wharton:** Madam Speaker, this bill will amend The Municipal Act to provide ratepayers with enhanced transparency and accountability when municipalities are responding to significant municipal tax shifting after a reassessment.

This amendment will also modernize, balance and streamline how municipalities and the City of

Winnipeg are required to refund excess taxes after an appeal.

I am pleased to present this bill to the House for its consideration.

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

#### Bill 227—The Child and Family Services Amendment Act

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** I move, seconded by the member from The Pas, that Bill 227, The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, be read now for the first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mrs. Smith:** I'm honoured to rise in the House today to introduce Bill 227. This bill would ensure that no child is found to be in need of protection solely because the child's parent or guardian is or was in care previous— was previously in care.

It is my hope that this bill will work to reduce the number of apprehensions and encourage community-based and culturally appropriate services that identify and assist struggling parents and guardians during and after pregnancies.

I am pleased to present this bill to the House for your consideration. Miigwech.

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

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Standing Committee on Public Accounts First Report

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Chairperson):** I wish to present the First Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

**Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts presents—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

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

### Meetings

*Your Committee met on March 18, 2019 in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.*

**Matters under Consideration**

- *Election of a new Chairperson*

**Committee Membership**

- *Mr. HELWER (Vice-Chairperson)*
- *Mr. ISLEIFSON*
- *Mr. JOHNSTON*
- *Ms. KLASSEN*
- *Mr. MALOWAY*
- *Ms. MARCELINO (Logan)*
- *Mr. MARCELINO (Tyndall Park)*
- *Mr. MICHALESKI*
- *Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE*
- *Mr. WISHART*
- *Mr. YAKIMOSKI*

*Substitution received prior to committee proceedings:*

- *Mr. ISLEIFSON for Mr. BINDLE*

*Permanent substitution received prior to committee proceedings:*

- *Ms. MARCELINO (Logan) for Mr. WIEBE*

*Your Committee elected Mr. MALOWAY as the Chairperson.*

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

**Motion agreed to.**

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

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

Would the honourable minister please proceed with his statement.

**Agriculture Awareness Day**

**Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Agriculture):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Ag Awareness Day in our province.

In 2005, Manitoba established Agriculture Awareness Day to promote greater awareness of the contributions agriculture makes to this province and the industry's role as a key driver of the Manitoba economy. In 2014, The Farm and Food Awareness Act formalized this recognition in legislation,

making Agriculture Awareness Day the third Tuesday in March.

Our focus this year is on highlighting both animal and plant-based protein, along with the research that is being done right here in Manitoba to grow the protein sector.

We were pleased to launch our new protein strategy earlier this year, with the goal of attracting \$1 billion in new plant protein investment by 2025 to go along with \$500 million in new animal protein production and processing investment, which continue to make—place Manitoba at the leading edge of agriculture in our country and around the world.

I want to thank all the guests that attended today, including Robin Young from the Food Development Centre, Curtis Rempel from the Canola Council of Canada, as well as Stephen Ross from Trouw Nutrition of Canada.

All members of this House that attended were able to sample some of the quality food grown and produced right here by our sector, prepared by the culinary students from Assiniboine Community College and Red River College.

Ag Awareness Day is a wonderful opportunity to highlight what our sector does to feed the world. Agriculture remains the backbone of the Manitoba economy and our producers dedicate their lives each and every day, not only working to feed their family, but to feeding us all.

On this Ag Awareness Day, I offer my deepest thanks and appreciation to all those in the agriculture sector. I pledge to continue doing my part in sharing the story that our industry has to tell, because it important one, from the farm all the way to the table.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, today—I'll say that again. Today we are celebrating Agricultural Awareness Day, and bringing attention to Manitoba initiatives to develop animal and plant proteins to meet global demand.

Manitoba is known for its rich agricultural heritage. Thousands of Manitobans are employed in the agricultural sector, and they contribute immensely to the economic health of our province. They can also be recognized for their continuous innovation in crop and protein diversity.

Our farmers are also essential to the Canadian way of life. Many of the items found on our kitchen tables have been grown right here in Manitoba.

As the world grapples with the effects of climate change, there is a global movement to eat and shop local. Whenever they can, Manitobans should take advantage of the fresh, local products that our nearly 20,000 farms offer.

Community Supported Agriculture Manitoba is designed to encourage the purchase of local food grown by our farmers. Manitobans can subscribe to the farm of their choice, which will grow a variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the year and deliver to your door each week. Programs like these help to reconnect people with the land and support our local farmers.

I encourage all MLAs to support Manitoba farmers and, whenever they can, buy local.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, agriculture is at the core of who we are as Manitobans.

\* (13:50)

All of us have to eat. All of us benefit from the nutritious food produced by farmers. Many of us benefit from the jobs and opportunities which result from us having a strong agricultural industry, a strong food-processing industry and a strong retail and restaurant sector.

Agricultural Awareness Day is a day to pay attention to agriculture. I thank our presenters today—Robyn, Steven and Curtis—who gave us an update on the importance of protein in the food produced on our farms and of new developments in the canola and poultry industries.

Agricultural Awareness Day is an opportunity to connect with individuals in agriculture from all over our province.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank the budding chefs from Assiniboine Community College—Klarisa Baer and Beth Butterfield—and the budding chefs from Red River College—Peter Matkowski and Anna Borys. Your creative delicacies were amazing.

I had a good discussion with farmers on the canola market given recent developments in relation to China. I gather canola prices have firmed up and the farmers I talked with are optimistic. I had a good discussion with farmers about the carbon tax, which exempts purple gas. I understand that farmers will be

looking through the federal budget today to see if any of their other issues are addressed.

Thank you to all the farmers and all those in varied other parts of the agricultural industry who are here today, your contributions to our province and to the health of Manitobans is significant.

Thank you, merci, miigwech.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Charlene Stoneham

**Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about someone who has impacted my life and continues to inspire me in my role as the MLA for Fort Richmond and in my responsibility to the community that I serve.

Madam Speaker, preparing today's private member's statement took me on a roller coaster of emotions as I waded through the memories of laughter and fun shared with a friend and colleague, while also reliving the pain and emptiness at the loss that followed her passing. My bittersweet experience pales in comparison to what her family deals with every single day.

Today is Charlene Stoneham's birthday. She would have turned 39 years old and holding. Yes, that's an official age, respected among women all over the world. Charlene left her mark on each heart that she loved and cared for while with us, and so we celebrate her life, love and legacy as a true star who will continue to shine in and through all of our lives.

I was blessed to know Charlene in her role as constituency assistant for my office in Fort Richmond, but more importantly, as a friend and confidante who continually encouraged me as I learned the ropes in politics.

Madam Speaker, I can still hear Char's voice and her unique laugh in my head, especially when dealing with tough situations. She had a special word that she would use to break the tension and it worked every time. I would share it with the Chamber today, but I worry it may be considered unparliamentary.

Many people can relate to the phrase you don't know what you have until it's gone. Madam Speaker, Charlene's family and friends absolutely knew what they had all these years, which made the pain that much harder when we said goodbye.

Please join me in acknowledging in the gallery today, Charlene's husband, Ross Stoneham; her son

Ryan, with wife Naomi; her daughter Deneen Davidson and husband Travis, along with Charlene's grandchildren, Collyns and Porter; Charlene's sister, Carol Melnyk; as well as many other friends and loved ones.

I ask leave of the House for two things: to have a moment of silence in honour of Charlene Stoneham's life on her birthday; and to have the names of her family and friends entered into Hansard.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to include those names in Hansard? [*Agreed*]

*Family and Friends of Charlene Stoneham: Deena Evans, Patrick Evans, Bryan Johnson, Pam Johnson, Janis Kippen, Chris Melnyk, Tenise Melnyk, Victoria Melnyk, Wayne Melnyk, Dave Nielsen, Erik Nielsen, Linda Nielsen.*

**Madam Speaker:** Is there also leave to have a moment of silence? [*Agreed*]

*A moment of silence was observed.*

#### **Stu Briese**

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** It's a tribute to a champion.

On Tuesday, March 12th, Manitobans lost a true champion and many of us here today, myself included, said goodbye to a great colleague and friend. Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to pay tribute to the late Stu Briese.

Stu was elected as the MLA in 27–2007 election for the riding of Ste. Rose. After faithfully serving his constituents, Stu was re-elected in 2011 in the newly formed riding of Agassiz. For those who were lucky enough to know Stu, they could simply describe him as a gentleman, through and through.

Stu accomplished much in life, both personally and professionally, and always did so with the utmost of dignity and respect: dignity and respect for both himself, but also for all those that he was seeking to assist.

It is these character traits that saw Stu serve 20 years on the council for the RM of Langford; serve the AMM as both a director, vice-president and president; served three years on the board for the FCM and sat on the federation of municipalities and awarded the war-wall of honour for his contribution to the municipal sector in Canada.

Stu was instrumental in bringing the union of municipalities and the Manitoba Association of

Urban Municipalities together to form the current association of municipalities in 1990, in which he later served as the president from 2001–2004.

Out of recognition for his lifetime of service, Stu was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, and is recognized as an honorary life member with the AMM.

A patriot and selfless public servant, Stu was always looking out for those most vulnerable. As proof of these convictions, he sought consensus and received unanimous support for the passing of Jordan's Principle resolution in this very Assembly, aspiring to ensure that the First Nations children will not fall victim to interjurisdictional health-care dispute.

These are simply a few examples to pay tribute to an amazing Manitoban.

You will be missed by many, my dear friend.

Madam Speaker, I would ask for a moment of silence in the memory of our departed colleague.

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

*A moment of silence was observed.*

#### **Concordia ER Closure**

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Northeast Winnipeg residents have been fighting to keep Concordia ER open now for almost two years, since April the 7, 2017. The short, sharp shock aimed at residents has turned into a festering wound for this government.

During the election of April 2016, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his candidates knocked on doors and promised Manitobans they'd protect front-line workers and services. Just 12 months later, they broke their promise. Target date for Concordia ER closure: March 2018.

Plans hit a big snag when their own wait times task force reported, sounded alarm bells, warning St. Boniface Hospital's ER was headed for mass congestion. Further warnings were sounded about the haphazard government planning. The ICU closures at Concordia threaten its hip and knee replacement program.

More delays are in the offing to this hair-brained scheme: general surgery ending, nursing shortages, new ambulance diversion protocols. The list of the



problems and accompanying haphazard planning goes on and on.

The government's response: announce another part-time walk-in clinic to be opened sometime in the future. Really, Madam Speaker? Do the MLAs of Rossmere, River East, Radisson, and Transcona not see their constituents' eyes rolling at this insult?

Everyone knows June 6th isn't going to happen. It's June 26th. How in—how convenient. Oh, the irony. This government actually wants to keep Concordia ER open for a few crucial weeks more.

\* (14:00)

Why? An election, of course. They don't want to close it just before the election. The Keep Concordia ER Open—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** —campaign will continue to keep the pressure on this government.

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

### **Spinal Muscular Atrophy**

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** I want to use this opportunity to share with the House a bit of information about spinal muscular atrophy, SMA, which typically causes major problems with walking, muscle strength, motor skills and more.

There are four types, with varying levels of severity. It can be terminal, it can shorten life expectancy, and it is extremely life limiting.

As of June 30th, 2017, Health Canada approved the first ever treatment for SMA called Spinraza. It is now available, however, completely unaffordable. Currently, it's funded in Manitoba for those with type 1, leaving those with other types unable to receive treatment.

To give you an idea, there's a predicted 500 cases here in Manitoba—or here in Canada, sorry. And currently, if a person wants treatment to a drug that has proven to improve a person's quality of life, it will cost them \$750,000 the first year and \$375,000 every year thereafter.

Madam Speaker, here are some examples in Manitoba. Braelynn is now three years old and was diagnosed when she was just 14 months. Braelynn's mother Maylia, who is up in the gallery today, has joined us, and her father Ryan had to stand by

helplessly while Braelynn lost her ability to hold up her own head, even though there was a treatment available, just not accessible.

Jason, who is also up in the gallery, is 35 and was diagnosed when he was 17. He continues to lose his strength and his performing activities of daily living, like bathing and dressing.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, Crystal started exhibiting signs of SMA at eight months old and was diagnosed when she was one and a half. The older she gets, the more chronic her health problems become. Crystal is my age, and next month she's undergoing surgery, despite her respiratory issues, because of the amount of pain she is in. She is hoping to survive this surgery.

Madam Speaker, in closing, Manitoba could really take the lead on this. Let's encourage people to stay in Manitoba. Let's be proud of our health-care system, and let's provide those with SMA a better quality of life.

### **Rogers Hometown Hockey**

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education and Training):** Madam Speaker, Henderson scores. Gretzky to Lemieux. The golden goal. In hockey, it is more than just a game; it is our memories, it is our community. It's woven deeply into the fabric of our lives.

On March 9th and 10th, this was demonstrated as the community of Steinbach and residents from around the southeast came together for Rogers Hometown Hockey, a national event that promotes Canada's game in our cities and towns and celebrates our hockey heritage.

The two-day festival took place at the T.G. Smith Centre, home of the Steinbach Pistons, and was hosted by Hockey Night in Canada's Ron MacLean and Tara Slone. It was a pleasure to meet Mr. MacLean and to hear him share, in his own unique way, the many stories about our great game.

I was also pleased to welcome my friend and colleague, the Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage, to the event and our city.

Madam Speaker, there are countless volunteers who help at the Rogers Fan Hub in many activities as possible. The city and the host committee showed this love of hockey, but more than that, it showed its love of community, of neighbors and creating memories.

Rogers visits many towns around Canada; in fact, it had just been in Winkler the week before. And why, by all accounts, the Steinbach event was just a little bit better than Winkler's, just as the Pistons are a little better than the Winkler Flyers, these events really do unify us, Madam Speaker.

In addition to bringing the event to Steinbach, Rogers also donated \$15,000 to the Headway Program in Steinbach to help youth, a great legacy for the event.

Thank you to Rogers for helping us celebrate our great game and our Canadian heritage. It truly was a wonderful memory, Madam Speaker.

### Introduction of Guests

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

Seated in the public gallery we have with us today members from the Financial Advisors Association of Canada, Advocis, who are the guests of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding).

And also seated in the public gallery, from École Regent Park we have 23 grade 6 students under the direction of Robert Grégoire, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski).

And seated in the public gallery, from École Charleswood we have 30 grade 6 students under the direction of Danielle Peloquin, and this group is located in the constituency of Charleswood.

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

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

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

We have a lot of guests in the gallery and I don't think this is the way we want to start our oral questions, please. I think the students are really interested in seeing what happens here, and I'm hoping that we can show them democracy in action in a good way.

### St. Boniface Hospital Cardiac Care Heart Surgery Wait Times

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Well, Madam Speaker, I thank you for your wise guidance, but I am proud to be encouraged by all members of this House to stand up for health care in the province of Manitoba.

You know, a doctor once told me, Madam Speaker, that the further away from the bedside you get, the worse the health-care decision making gets, and that's a lesson that the Premier just doesn't seem to have learned with his rushed plan to close emergency rooms in Winnipeg and cut health-care services. We know that there's fewer nurses working at the bedside as the result of these changes, and the effect has been that there are many, many heart surgeries that have been cancelled at St. Boniface.

Of course, these cancellations make the quality of life for these patients worse, but they could also have health implications.

Now, the Premier has been aware of these changes and the consequences, the cancelled surgeries, for quite some time.

What is he doing to ensure that everybody in Manitoba who needs a heart surgery can get it?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, I just want to say, Madam Speaker, that we care deeply about health care. But it's not enough to care deeply about health care, of course; it's important to improve the outcomes for patients and that's what we are doing.

After years of failure from the previous government, we are making a difference. Shortened wait times for a number of procedures is evidence of that; acknowledgement as the most improved province in Canada by the Canadian institute of health information is other support for the thesis, Madam Speaker.

But I have to say to the member, where the previous government failed, we are succeeding, and we will continue to do so.

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

### Critical Care Nursing Staff Levels

**Mr. Kinew:** When heart surgery gets cancelled, we know that that has a serious effect on the life of the patient. There's not too many things that are more important than your heart, Madam Speaker. We know that, again, the cancellations are happening

because there are 17 vacant positions at cardiac care at St. Boniface; that's a vacancy rate of over 20 per cent.

Now, we know that the nurses and staff there are working to the best of their ability, but they're, quite frankly, tired and they're being mandated to work extra overtime.

The problem is that there does not appear to be much relief in sight. There are only four nurses currently enrolled in the program to become qualified to deliver critical care. These documents that I'll table that we've recently obtained show that this is the lowest number in more than a decade.

So, in some years there have been as many as 40 new critical-care nurses being trained; this year there are only four.

What is the Premier doing to ensure that there will be more critical-care nurses for St. Boniface cardiac care?

**Mr. Pallister:** Actually, Madam Speaker, just recently, 33 nurses completed critical-care training and they are working in the WRHA, all of them focused on improving wait times and getting better care sooner to Manitobans.

I would say to the member that, you know, the health-care system has obviously undergone some major changes in the last while—recommended to the previous government—that they failed to undertake.

But we are demonstrating the courage, Madam Speaker, to listen to the advisers and experts who have said we can have a better system, and we believe that's what Manitobans want.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, the reality is that there's currently a nursing shortage at St. Boniface today, Madam Speaker; again, 17 positions vacant, a vacancy rate of more than 20 per cent.

Again, the relief, if any, in the form of four additional critical-care nurses—four contrasted to those 17 vacancies, I would add—is at least six months away. This is a six-month training program to be able to train these nurses up. So, certainly, more needs to be done.

\* (14:10)

We know why, however, that there aren't nurses applying to take part in this program. It's because of

the acrimonious attitude against health-care professionals led by this Premier, the deletions of the jobs and, of course, the mandated overtime. It's all sapped morale among nurses across the province.

What specific actions will the Premier take to ensure that there are more critical-care nurses to deliver heart surgeries at St. Boniface Hospital?

**Mr. Pallister:** A bit of a contradiction, Madam Speaker, in the member's preamble that I must point out: he claims that the further away you get from the experts, the worse the advice, and then offers advice—as far away as he can be from the experts. We are cozying up to the experts and listening to them and we're doing what they're advising us to do.

I want to applaud the work of our front-line workers, but I would also like to support the work of our managers in the health-care system, who are making difficult decisions, not easy ones. Easy to criticize a system as complex as the health-care system is, Madam Speaker, harder to make it work; and the fact of the matter is the previous government didn't have the courage to endeavour to try, and this government will continue to demonstrate that courage with better results and better care sooner for the people of Manitoba.

### **Residential Road Repair Government Intention**

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

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Madam Speaker, we listen to the nurses at the bedside; they listen to the accountants at the consulting firms, and it's that simple.

It's spring in Winnipeg and, of course, Winnipeggers know what that means: it is construction season once again. Well, at least it used to be construction season when spring rolled around in Winnipeg, but we know that that is not likely to be the case here in Winnipeg this year because the Premier left a \$40-million pothole in the City of Winnipeg's budget. As a result, there is going to be zero residential road construction—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —here in the city of Winnipeg; again, not one dollar being spent to fix residential roads and streets here in the city. This will make life more expensive for drivers, could even harm the environment as a result of having less fuel efficiency on the roads.

The Premier needs to make a choice: Will he invest in roads and streets in Winnipeg this year?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Madam Speaker, our investments in infrastructure have exceeded any previous administration's investments, apart from the two crazy years before the last provincial election when the NDP decided to mortgage the future of children and grandchildren in our province so they could try to buy popularity by inflating their investment, just briefly, in roads and bridges.

Fifteen of 17 years of NDP handle on power, Madam Speaker, we've exceeded those investments 15 of 17 years the NDP were in power.

So our commitment to the City on infrastructure continues. The City of Winnipeg has some of the most generous funding in the country of Canada. It has the most unconstrained funding, and the mayor and council will decide, Madam Speaker, how they allocate their money. If they don't wish to repair potholes, we are allocating the funds anyway and they will have to decide what their priorities are, just as all governments must do.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Again, when I'm at the hockey rink talking to parents, the sad state of roads in the city of Winnipeg is a consistent complaint that we hear from a—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —lot of those folks, Madam Speaker. And, again I'm hearing some members opposite raising their voice. But I, now, do not hear too many of the MLAs serving constituencies here in Winnipeg raising their voices, at least on that side of the House.

I know that not only has this issue been raised by me with citizens, by parents, by—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —drivers in the city of Winnipeg, even including people who commute to the city of Winnipeg and rely on the city of—city infrastructure raise this complaint. But we know that the situation is just going to deteriorate this year. Because of the \$40-million hole left in the City of Winnipeg budget, there's not going to be any residential road repair happening here in the city of Winnipeg.

Will the Premier stop his cuts to infrastructure in Winnipeg and will he instead invest in Winnipeg roads?

**Mr. Pallister:** Perhaps the member's just illustrated why he and his party don't want to have question period, Madam Speaker, because the member's simple, dull repetition of a false statement does not give it any element of truth whatsoever; and the fact is that the City of Winnipeg has some of the most generous funding in the country of Canada. It has the most unconstrained, hands-off funding of any city in the country, and the City of Winnipeg will make its decisions on how it—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —allocates resources. But if the member would like to criticize provincial roads, I would welcome such criticism. But when he's criticizing city roads, Madam Speaker, he needs to run for city council. [interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Madam Speaker, the Premier knows full well I'm running to replace him, not the mayor; and the Premier knows—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —full well, also, that—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —just one week ago today I asked questions about the \$11-million cut to provincial highways that his government has proposed in their budget.

Again, I did not receive an answer on the \$11-million cut to the highway budget here in the province of Manitoba, so I guess I should not be surprised that there are no answers today when I'm asking about the infrastructure cuts that have been handed down here inside the Perimeter.

Now, we know when we drive around Winnipeg, whether it's Osborne, St. James, Ness, there's many streets that we could see—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —repaired. When we drive through our residential neighbourhoods there's many streets that we would like to see repaired there too.

So I would ask the Premier, again, to please back off from his arguments with the City of Winnipeg and instead commit to investing in roads right here in Winnipeg.

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, the member can run, Madam Speaker, but he cannot hide.

And the reality is that the NDP record on infrastructure's a miserable one: underspending their commitments in infrastructure year after year after year; not putting the money out for roads and bridges year after year after year, until just before the last election when they actually suddenly discovered that people cared about roads and bridges.

Well, we knew that, Madam Speaker. That's why we've added 35 per cent to the City's budget, year over year. That's why we're adding \$55 million this year to the Infrastructure budget.

Madam Speaker, the member may run, but he cannot hide from the NDP indifference to infrastructure investment in this province.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Point Douglas.

#### **Methamphetamine Addiction Prevention and Treatment Services**

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** Front-line workers in our hospitals are fearing for their safety. Now, too often nurses, staff and security guards are hearing the words code white: a code called when there is a violent or aggressive incident in the hospital or when staff fear for their safety.

The rise in threats, assaults and incidents occurring in our hospitals are connected to meth-induced psychosis. In January alone, code whites at Health Sciences Centre had nearly doubled, Madam Speaker; since 2008 they went from 35 to 60.

Will the Premier (Mr. Pallister) admit there is a meth crisis in our province today and commit to investing in more prevention and treatment services here in Manitoba?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I thank the member for her question about health facilities' safety.

Yesterday I was pleased to be joined by the Premier of Manitoba and the Minister for Indigenous and Northern Relations to officially open a \$27.1-million health-care centre in Flin Flon: the new emergency department, which—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** —at which one of the new features is enhanced security.

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

#### **Safe Consumption Site Request**

**Mrs. Smith:** Not only are violent meth-induced incidents increasing in our hospitals, Madam Speaker, but they're also increasing in our communities right here in Manitoba. Random meth-fueled attacks continue to target the innocent, and recent homicides here in Winnipeg's inner city have been fuelled by the city's meth crisis. Winnipeg police chief Danny Smyth said last week that police suspect meth played a role in six of the then 10–seven recent Winnipeg homicides.

\* (14:20)

After this weekend and multiple tragic crimes, a local resident of Winnipeg's North End said that the drug is changing her neighbourhood for the worse and she worries for her children's safety.

Will the minister today commit to establishing a safe consumption site here in Manitoba?  
*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** The member conflates issues of code white instances with saying that somehow it's all caused by illicit drugs. But that member should know that, when it comes to health facilities, the largest number of those code whites is actually due to individuals with dementia or other confusion wandering off. There is a broad variety of reasons for these codes, and they are on the rise; we're aware of that. But we know that all patients, visitors and staff members have welcomed the enhanced security as well as our new review of security taking place in the province of Manitoba.

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

**Mrs. Smith:** This past Friday Winnipeg's mayor publicly stated, and I'll quote: We need to put partisan ideology aside when it comes to establishing supervised consumption sites. End quote. And he's right, Madam Speaker. Evidence is clear that safe consumption sites mitigate overdoses, related harm and blood-borne infections, and actually facilitate uptake of addiction treatment.

The mayor's on board. The federal government's on board. The chief of police is on board, and most importantly Manitobans are on board. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** When will this minister and his Premier get on board?

Will the minister today commit to a safe injection, safe consumption site here in Manitoba?

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, once again members of the opposition offer simplistic solutions where everyone else agrees on one thing, and that is this: these issues are complex.

But she says the evidence is clear, and yet, in Calgary—I just referred that member to evidence only a week ago that indicated when it came to the establishment of a supervised safe meth site there, they saw that calls for service by police rise by 29 per cent. It has even proponents of that meth site now saying something has gone terribly wrong.

Madam Speaker, we are taking action for all Manitobans. We will continue to do so. Why doesn't that member get on board?

#### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to continuing with oral questions, we have some further guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

From HBNI-ITV out of Fairholme school we have 20 grade 9 students under the direction of Evelyn Maendel, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Wishart).

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

#### Vulnerable Children in Care Status Update

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** Last week the children's advocate released her report on the life of Tina Fontaine. An incident like this should not be allowed to happen ever again. As we learned, there are currently 17 children who are in—who are—imminent risk of death or harm in the Province's care today. The Premier (Mr. Pallister) had indicated last week that the director of Child and Family Services was in contact with the children's advocate to obtain information on this matter.

It's the responsibility of the Premier (Mr. Pallister) to ensure these children's safety

and he needs to inform this House today on the status of these children.

So could the Premier update the House on the status of these children and have their safe—and have they been safely accounted for?

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families):** I want to thank the member for the question.

Of course, when we first heard of these 17 individuals it was alarming for us, Madam Speaker. We looked into it right away through our authorities and agencies, to ensure that the children's advocate had been in touch with them about this.

We had opportunity to meet with the children's advocate; I did, prior to this going forward. There were domain meetings as well. Those 17 children were not included in the report at that time, nor did she mention the concern that she would've had for these 17 individuals prior to this coming out into the report.

So I have serious concern about how this has come out, Madam Speaker, and we are continuing to get to the bottom of this.

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

#### Support Services Needed

**Ms. Lathlin:** The report into the life and death of Tina Fontaine showed what happens when our systems fail, when our public services and supports fail to work together and meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable children.

The lives of 17 vulnerable Manitoba children are currently at risk. We cannot let this be overlooked. We need to ensure that they are provided with the supports and services they need to ensure they lead a successful, healthy and safe life. It is the responsibility of the Premier to provide the full resources by the Province to get these kids the help they need.

Have these children been assured their safety and well-being? Have these children been provided with support and services that they need?

**Mrs. Stefanson:** We take the issue of safety of our children very, very seriously in our province, Madam Speaker. And that's why we have reached out to the authorities and agencies to ensure that these children and all children are safe in our province.

We will continue to work with the authorities who have the purview over those agencies to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our province.

I will say, Madam Speaker, that it is one of the reasons why we expanded the role of the children's advocate, to be able to look into these various matters. That was something that wasn't there under the previous NDP government. We are taking steps to ensure the safety of all children in Manitoba.

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

### **Children's Advocate Report Implementation of Recommendations**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** We collectively failed Tina, and as the advocate explained it very clearly, children are going to die if we do not make changes.

It is our duty as members in this House to advocate for all the children needing our help. We have the ability to inflict these changes that are desperately needed and laid out by the children's advocate. What is needed is the political will to do it and do it now. It is the government's job to make sure no child is ever at risk of death in this province.

Could the minister provide a timeline for the implementations of the children's advocate's recommendations?

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families):** Well, I first of all just want to extend to the family and friends and the community of—the—our heartfelt loss and sorrow on the loss of their beloved Tina, and our thoughts and prayers remain with them today.

Madam Speaker, we can recall back at a time and, unfortunately, in this House where there were discussions in this House about children being put in hotels. I can tell you that that is unacceptable to our government. We will continue to work with the authorities, with the agencies to ensure the well-being of all Manitoban children. And I can—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** —tell you that we have taken steps already, Madam Speaker.

Where members opposite failed, we are delivering on behalf of Manitoba children.

### **Family Medical Centre Patient-Care Concerns**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** This government recently announced the closing of the family medical clinic in St. Boniface. No reasonable explanation was given, but we have heard that this sudden decision has stranded 3,000 or more patients without referrals, many of whom have been there for decades, many elderly with complex needs. The WRHA has no plan for what to do for them.

A patient wrote to me to say, quote, a hotline was put in place to answer questions, but no answers are forthcoming. The staff do not know where they are going. A patient served by the FMC cannot find out who their doctor is or where they will receive service. This is a horrible way to treat patients and staff. End quote. We agree, Madam Speaker.

Can the Premier explain what exactly is courageous about breaking his promise to shield front-line workers from his cuts and stranding thousands of Manitobans without a doctor?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** I appreciate any question from a Liberal member on health care and the support for health care, given the stoic response to the member—of the member opposite to the federal government's unwillingness to support a partnership with health care that is sustainable.

I would appreciate him changing his position and joining with his colleagues elsewhere in the House to support the federal government re-introducing itself as a genuine partner in the support of health care in our province. That would be helpful, Madam Speaker, and I'd appreciate that support.

\* (14:30)

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

### **Health-Care Funding Government Record**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** The Premier and the members opposite have been repeating a series of talking points about health care that are divorced from reality and years out of date. This government is essentially running two sets of books and it's on display in the fiscal and economic update: two charts, one on what they promised and the other on what they actually delivered, which is cuts to health care.

Madam Speaker, in 2017-18 this government promised \$198 million more that never appeared; in 2018-2019, \$247 million more, which never happened—all while federal funding goes up, though the Premier himself voted to change the formula that undermined Manitoba's health-care system.

Taking credit for others' accomplishments while blaming everybody else for their mistakes is usually considered a serious character flaw, but it's the defining feature of this government.

Will the Premier admit that he is the one freezing and cutting in health care, or will he just continue to blame the NDP, the federal government and the elderly just for growing old?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Attacking someone's integrity, Madam Speaker, is not a strategy. If the member would like to focus on integrity perhaps—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —Madam Speaker, he would like to focus on the conduct of his federal colleagues recently. If he would like to focus on integrity, perhaps he would like to stand in his place and deplore the obvious rejection of the rule of law as a priority for people in legislative positions.

If he'd like to attack someone for their integrity, perhaps he'd like to attack his federal colleagues for running on a promise to balance the books and running a \$20-billion deficit and promising to do that for another 25 years, and I expect again today keeping that promise, not the one they ran on.

But instead, Madam Speaker, he'll do none of those things. He'll simply stand here in this place and represent Ottawa to us while we represent Manitobans.

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

#### **Lead Contamination in Soil Remediation Plan Request**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** There is a further public—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** —health issue across Manitoba, the issue of soil contaminated with lead, which can lead to serious and life-long health problems.

Last week the Department of Sustainable Development tabled a new report on lead levels.

It wasn't put online. It didn't include St. Boniface, but it did review Weston, Point Douglas and some other areas. The findings and recommendations are no different than what the NDP and PCs have said for 40 years. There is still lead there, but instead of action there will be another report.

Madam Speaker, unless this government plans to bury the lead-contaminated soil in all the reports that have been written about it, Manitobans are going to be no safer, and this budget has nothing to fix the problem. The government seems to be—think that doing nothing about lead contamination is serious when the NDP does it.

Where is the plan to clean this mess up?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** The member might choose to demonstrate a little more intellectual integrity in his assertions, Madam Speaker.

The fact is this issue of soil tests was one which was covered up by the previous government, but which was delved into mightily by this government.

In fact, this minister had ordered soil test information on them to be released and made available to the public where that was covered up in various parts of the province for years, in Winnipeg neighbourhoods. The NDP didn't tell people living in St. Boniface anything about the soil tests. This government has proceeded to do so in Wolseley, in Logan, in Point Douglas, and not a peep out of the member for Point Douglas on this issue.

The NDP was wrong to cover this issue up. We are dealing with the issue which they covered up. The member should show some respect for the honest, hard work of our minister and of the staff in the department who are dealing with the issue.

#### **Curriculum Support Centre Elimination of Library Services**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Madam Speaker, the curriculum resource library stopped lending resources on Friday and the minister still intends to close the doors by the end of the month. The minister says that they're planning to move the library online, but we've heard no commitment to that—to digitize existing resources or anything that will be added to the library's existing online collection.

Of course, if the minister was serious about these resources he would have had the plan—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.



**Mr. Wiebe:** –in advance, and he would have communicated that with teachers long before he announced the closure. Instead, he's closing the doors in the middle of a school year; so it's clearly all about this Premier's agenda of cuts.

Will the minister back off his plan, actually talk with teachers, or is he just going to push ahead no matter the damage that he's doing?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education and Training):** After cancelling question period for the last few days the member opposite now feels that this is important again, and we certainly always feel that it's important for students to be able to get resources and, Madam Speaker, like every other province in Canada we are moving to a system where there are more online resources so it can be more equitable across the province. Those resources that can't be put online, of course, are still going remain within the education system and accessible to students and, by virtue of that, to teachers—or to teachers and, by virtue of that, students.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Madam Speaker, if the minister was serious about protecting education, he would've announced a plan before he announced this closure.

The minister suggests that children will still have access to these resources through just one resource consultant, so the work of over a dozen people who put materials together is now in the hands of just one single person.

The minister's bent the limits of belief past the breaking point in this case. The reality is is that he's closing this library and he has no idea how these existing resources are going to be distributed to students and to teachers. It's, again, all about this Premier's (Mr. Pallister) plan for cuts in the education system.

Why is the minister pushing ahead with his plan to cut this important resource without consulting teachers?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Madam Speaker, the reality is that 14 people a day would walk into that library, and there are 21 staff.

These resources are going to be put online. There'll be additional resources that are put online so they can be available to teachers across the province, Madam Speaker. Those resources that can't be put online will still remain within the education system

so that teachers can access them and provide them to their students as they see fit.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Madam Speaker, ministers in this government had the audacity in this House to suggest that reading real books is somehow living in the Dark Ages. But, in 2017, it was the Premier who gave an interview on this exact topic.

Here are some excerpts from what the Premier had to say. He said: I prefer paper. It works way better than reading it off Kindle. He says: When I'm doing my research, I prefer to mark it up. This is how you retain information. The Premier said: I like books.

Well, the Premier came to these conclusions as an educator. But when hundreds—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wiebe:** –of teachers and librarians from across Manitoba tell him the exact same thing for their students, well, he just doesn't seem to care.

Why is it one thing for him and nothing for the students and teachers in the province of Manitoba?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Madam Speaker, I—we're not eliminating books. I like books; the Premier likes books. I like the Premier; I think he likes me. We all like each other, or at least on this side of the House we all like each other; I won't speak for the other side.

Madam Speaker, like every other province in Canada, we are putting more resources online so they can be accessible in all parts of the province. We're going to have a provincial resource officer for those resources that can't be accessible online. We'll ensure that they're within the education system and accessible to teachers.

### **Municipal Infrastructure Additional Basket Funding**

**Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin):** On the PC—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Michaleski:** –side of the House we understand the importance of working with our municipal partners across the province. Unlike the former NDP government, who forced amalgamation on many municipalities, on the eve of the AMM convention, our government is committed to

listening to municipalities and ensuring stable, predictable—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Michaleski:** —and unconditional funding to support the critical infrastructure needs of our communities.

Can the municipal—or Minister of Municipal Relations please share with the House how we are keeping our promise to invest in municipalities and give them a fair say in meeting their infrastructure needs?

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Municipal Relations):** Well, I'd like to thank my colleague from Dauphin for that great question, Madam Speaker.

It was a pleasure to attend, this morning, AMM's Municipal Officials Seminar in Winnipeg, Madam Speaker, to announce Budget 2019's increase to the municipal operating unconditional basket, to the tune of \$10 million.

\* (14:40)

Madam Speaker, this support will be unconditional and will help municipalities leverage investing in Canada's infrastructure programs and other provincial investments going forward. This new funding will not require an annual grant application. It reduces red tape and administration, and it's consistent and predictable, unlike members opposite.

When my colleague said when they announced forced amalgamations for 2013, we promised to get—

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

### **Spinal Muscular Atrophy Medication Costs**

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Earlier today, I shared some information about spinal muscular atrophy, SMA. Just to quickly reiterate, it typically causes major problems with walking, muscle strength, motor skills and more.

Now, there is a treatment that not only stops the progression, but in some cases reverses it. This magical drug that has the ability to change a person's quality of life is completely unaffordable.

According to this Globe and Mail article that I table now, Spinraza costs \$708,000 for the first year and \$354,000 for every year thereafter. This article suggests that the price is going to be lowered.

Can the minister share any information on this?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I thank the member for the question.

I can inform that member that Manitoba, as she should know, has been a leader when it has come to getting better drug pricing for provinces. We have continued to work collaboratively with other jurisdictions. It's now why we express some concern about federal plans. It is our hope and desire that if the federal government wants to make a foray into a federal pharmacare program that they will do so wisely, respecting the gains we have made, the leadership Manitoba has shown, and won't just simply seek to take over projects that are currently working well.

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

**Ms. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, there are many parents in this Chamber. Imagine if you had a child and this child started to exhibit signs of muscle weakness. One day, they stop walking. The next day, they can no longer lift their own arms over their head. Your child is then diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy and you're told that there is a treatment to stop the progression, but then you learn that, rather than treating it, you will have to watch your child's quality of life deteriorate day by day because the treatment is unaffordable.

Madam Speaker, will the minister expand on the recommendation from the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health to provide larger access to Spinraza and ensure that it is affordable for those who need the treatment?

**Mr. Friesen:** The Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health had previously issued a recommendation on Spinraza. It had the participation of the provinces at that time. We have continued to follow, very carefully, statements by CADTH in respect of this drug.

I notice now that there is a new CADTH recommendation when it comes to the reimbursement for the treatment of SMA, and we are continuing to understand that the dialogue continues to go on in respect of how to expand drug treatment for these families and their real issues that they face in respect of this debilitating condition.

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

**Ms. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, Quebec has approved broad access for all types of SMA. If Manitoba and other provinces don't do the same, we are going to fall behind and have different access to medical treatment based off where we reside. Adults with SMA and families with children who have SMA are very willing to move to Quebec to gain access to life-saving and life-changing treatment.

Will the Health Department follow Quebec's lead with respect to offering treatment to all so that Manitobans aren't forced to leave our province to get medical treatment?

**Mr. Friesen:** I thank that member for recognizing the very area of concern that provinces continue to articulate, that the federal government's move to somehow scope out the new area of federal pharmacy program needs to be properly understood. This is exactly the opportunity that the federal government could move into, legitimately, in respect of high-cost prohibitive drugs.

And if this is the kind of leadership that the federal government wants to show, we would be interested to know about it. The federal government has not been forthcoming. We will continue to press them to better understand, will they make that good investment for all Canadians? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

#### **Manitoba Public Insurance Privatization Inquiry**

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** It's been reported to us that at least one pollster is calling Manitobans about their voting intentions and whether they support getting rid of public auto insurance.

The Premier has said previously that he has no plans to privatize MPI.

So I ask the minister today: Is her party testing the waters on privatization, and are they now developing plans to privatize Manitoba Public Insurance in whole or in part?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** No, Madam Speaker, not at all.

What we're doing is opening the new Flin Flon emergency department.

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

**Mr. Lindsey:** So, we didn't get an answer to whether they're planning to privatize Manitoba Public Insurance.

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order. Order. Order.

**Mr. Lindsey:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

So now we know that this Crown Services Minister has a somewhat inappropriate relationship with the insurance industry. She's been caught several times taking corporate—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lindsey:** —donations.

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Lindsey:** Now we're concerned that the PCs or the insurance companies are testing the waters on a plan to privatize MPI.

So can the minister or the Premier once again stand up, give us their insurance that they have no intention of privatizing any part of Manitoba Public Insurance?

**Mr. Pallister:** Given their record in respect of ending harassment, or basically hiding it, covering it up and telling people to be quiet about it, I wouldn't want to raise questions—if I was the NDP—on inappropriate relationships, Madam Speaker, and I think the member should get up and apologize to the Crown Services Minister for that comment and that'll be his call.

Madam Speaker, in terms of the question, I gave him a no; and this is the same problem Jody Wilson-Raybould has with the Prime Minister. He won't take no for an answer.

The fact remains, Madam Speaker, we're emphasizing and focusing on three things: after a decade of debt we're repairing and fixing the finances in the Province; after a decade of decay we're repairing the services; and after a decade of decline we are rebuilding the economy.

But, Madam Speaker, it's springtime, and four years ago the NDP staffers all flew away over to Alberta; and now four years later, I expect in a few weeks they'll be flying on back here. The difference will be: we aren't paying them to come back like the NDP paid them to leave.

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

### PETITIONS

#### **Flin Flon General Hospital Obstetric Services**

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** I wish to read the following—present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Access to quality health care is a fundamental right of all Manitobans, no matter where they live.

(2) The Premier has slashed budgets and cancelled projects for northern communities, making it harder for families to get the primary health care they need.

(3) The budget of the northern regional health authority has been slashed by over \$6 million, which has negatively affected doctor retention programs and the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

(4) With limited services in the North, the Premier is forcing families and seniors to travel further on health care they need.

\* (14:50)

(5) On November 6, 2018, the northern regional health authority announced that obstetric delivery services at the Flin Flon General Hospital would be suspended with no discussion regarding when they will be reinstated.

(6) The result of this decision is that mothers in Flin Flon and surrounding area will have to travel at least an hour and a half to The Pas, creating unnecessary risk for mothers and their babies.

(7) The people of Flin Flon are concerned for the health and safety of mothers-to-be and their babies, including the extra physical and financial stress that will be placed upon them by this decision of the provincial government.

(8) There have been no commitment from this provincial government that mothers and their escorts who have to travel to The Pas will be covered by the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

(9) Flin Flon General Hospital is a regional hub that serves several communities on both sides of the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border.

(10) Because this provincial government has refused to invest in much-needed health-care

services in The Pas, the hospital in The Pas may not be able to handle the extra workload created by this decision.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reinstate obstetric delivery services at Flin Flon General Hospital and work with the government of Saskatchewan and the federal government to ensure obstetric services continue to be available on a regional basis.

And this petition has been signed, Madam Speaker, by Lindsey Deminick, Roberta Linus, Lori Bada and several other Manitobans.

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

#### **Dog Overpopulation in Northern Communities**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Many Manitobans are deeply concerned about the safety of northern, isolated communities in the province owing to an exploding overpopulation rate of dogs.

(2) The current overpopulation of dogs is increasingly alarming to front-line rescuers, who witness the severe, difficult and heartbreaking conditions experienced by northern dogs, including starvation, extreme weather conditions, attacks by wild animals and acts of animal cruelty.

(3) As a result of non-existent veterinarian services in most, if not all, northern communities, dogs are not adequately cared for, to no fault of the communities or their members.

(4) Roaming dogs are often sick, injured and alone, with no one to advocate for their care, and Manitoba's animal welfare organizations are the—often the only ones sounding the alarm in this present crisis.

(5) Time and time again, front-line rescuers witness northern families who, with no access to veterinary care, watch their beloved dog perish from injuries or diseases which would've—which would be easily preventable with better access to veterinarian services.

(6) This present crisis poses a serious and immediate risk to citizens, in particular, children, in northern communities, with the threat of pack maulings.

(7) Many Manitobans and front-line rescuers are currently lobbying for stronger animal welfare laws alongside provincial regulations for animal rescue organizations in partnership with adequate veterinarian services and education for northern communities.

(8) Currently, vaccination rates for owned dogs in Winnipeg is 70 per cent, while in northern isolated communities the rate is less than 5 per cent as a direct result of this current lack of access to veterinarian services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to immediately commit to addressing the overpopulation of dogs in Manitoba, more specifically, in northern communities, by humanely removing and re-homing unwanted dogs.

(2) To urge the provincial government, in partnership with animal welfare agencies, the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association, the MVMA, front-line rescues and the federal government, to immediately develop a provincial strategy to spay and neuter dogs, while providing access to veterinarian–veterinary services for owned dogs in northern communities, ensuring the safety of communities and their citizens.

Signed by many Manitobans.

### **Daylight Saving Time**

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

The loss of sleep associated with the beginning of daylight saving time has serious consequences for physical and mental health and has been linked to increases in traffic accidents and workplace injuries.

(2) According to a Manitoba Public Insurance news release, collision data collected in 2014 showed that there was a 20 per cent increase in collisions on Manitoba roadways following the spring daylight saving time change when compared to all other Mondays in 2014.

(3) Daylight saving time is associated with a decrease in productivity the day after the clocks are turned forward, with no corresponding increase in productivity when clocks are turned back.

(4) There is no conclusive evidence that daylight saving time is effective in reducing energy consumption.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to amend official–The Official Time Act to abolish daylight saving time in Manitoba effective November 4, 2019, resulting in Manitoba remaining on Central Standard Time throughout the year and in perpetuity.

And this petition has been signed by Stanley Kustra, Al Brandt, Joe Lagoski and many, many more fine Manitobans.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, would you call for continuing debate on the budget motion?

### **BUDGET DEBATE**

#### **(Fifth Day of Debate)**

**Madam Speaker:** Resuming debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) and the amendment and subamendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Burrows, who has 18 minutes remaining.

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** You know, I wasn't sure if I was going to actually get the opportunity to stand up again. I know the NDP have been playing some games, but we do get to stand and finish our speeches?

So I don't recall exactly where I left off, but I'm going to start back up again with immigration because this government failed to even bring it up inside of their budget. It wasn't even mentioned, the word immigration. And, you know, this is really telling of the fact that this government does not understand the importance of immigration and what immigrants have contributed to our economy. We wouldn't be anywhere near where we are today without immigrants.

In fact, this government continues to take advantage of them by charging the \$500 head tax, as the NDP likes to call it, or fee once they're approved.

You know, Madam Speaker, it's not fair because it's—you're forcing immigrants to pay this fee if they want to come to Canada. And the Conservative government cannot say that it is necessary, because the Provincial Nominee Program worked very well and functioned well previously without this \$500 fee.

And then they like to say that this \$500 fee is supposed to be protecting Manitobans and lowering the wait times. But we know that this isn't the case because, once the wait times are gone, is this fee going to go away? I suspect not. We will ask the government to take it away, but I don't see this being the case.

And, Madam Speaker, we know that when the government says that the wait times of three, four, even five years have disappeared, this isn't actually the case.

Just a couple weeks ago I had a constituent come and see me at my weekly McDonald's and tell me that they've been waiting for a status update for over a year and a half. Things have not changed.

With respect to seniors, I don't know how else to spell it out for the government: personal-care-home beds is not the only answer.

Here in Manitoba we have a wide array of different facilities. Personal-care homes are just one of them. We have supportive-housing homes, retirement homes, 55-plus homes, hospices and independent living. We have all of these facilities because people have different needs.

So, while I am all for more personal-care-home beds, there needs to be a conversation about other housing facilities and investments for seniors.

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

We should also be discussing investing into home repair and home care, because they're huge factors that affect the decision of people—for people when they want to—or they need to move out into a senior facility.

I have seniors telling me that they want to stay in their primary residence and, Mr. Deputy Speaker—I see the switch there—we want to encourage Manitobans to be able to stay in their homes as long as possible. And if we, as a government, could be

doing small things to help accommodate that, we should be.

Seniors are being forced out of their homes when it could take a simple rail outside of their house or perhaps in their bathtub that would enable them to stay in their homes in their communities with their friends and families for longer periods of time.

\* (15:00)

A couple years ago, this government also raised the prices for senior day programs, making it even more difficult and unaffordable for seniors too.

Does this government realize how reckless and harmful their cuts are? This is why we need to talk about ideas.

Over the last few years, I've talked a lot about the idea of a seniors advocate, and I still believe we need to be looking into this because of the horrific stories that we're hearing in the news.

A couple of weeks ago, I had the opportunity to meet with the seniors advocate in BC, and we discussed many issues, including home care and transportation. You know, transportation is something that my constituents in the North End—it's a group called Hans Kai—in particular talk a lot about. We need to make transportation easier for seniors.

And I continue to learn how beneficial it would be to have a seniors advocate, someone who is non-partisan to advocate for these people.

Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just last night at McDonald's—again, I go every Monday from 6 to 8—I had a senior come and visit me, and her partner, her husband, is in a care home right now.

And she is fearful that he is not receiving adequate attention, and so she actually took pictures of this and we're going to be talking with the Health Minister to try and determine what is really happening and making sure that these seniors are getting the care that they need, that they deserve.

I'm not at all satisfied with what the budget has to say with respect to justice. We keep hearing about plans to make a plan. For example, now we have to wait until June for a report on the meth crisis.

This is not new. Why is this government not taking immediate action when immediate action is so desperately needed? And we see this day in and day out.

People want and deserve to feel safe in their own homes, in their communities, so let's be smart and proactive on crime. Let's talk about youth justice committees, restoration opportunities, rehab and education from a younger age.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this budget appears to be an attempt to manipulate the people of our province into positive feelings towards the ruling government rather than the best interests of our province. Simply put, it's disingenuous.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to leave my remarks at that and just briefly say, we do not support this budget.

Thank you.

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the budget. The previous member from Burrows used the word disingenuous; I think that sums it up quite well.

Mr. Speaker, let me go through some specifics and then talk about the larger issues at play.

Some specific issues: Isn't it interesting that \$84 million this past year has gone to bail out the football stadium at the University of Manitoba?

Now the government may be quick to point at the previous government but, really, it is the City; it is the Finance Minister, who was then a city councillor, that is largely responsible—uh-oh.

So what this budget is, is actually a cover-up, a cover-up for the misdealings and shady land deals and other activities made while other members were in city hall.

Let's examine this a little bit further: The budget speaks about responsibility of assets. What is further from the truth? We have a government that has forced the City to transfer land worth millions from parkland, from the City to the Province through the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, and they will, in turn, lease that building for \$1 for 99 years. Madam Speaker—Mr. Speaker, it's a travesty for the community; the community is outraged. I tabled petitions in this place for a year of people who lived in the area.

And the reason why it is so bothersome is, who pops up in all this again? The Finance Minister, the MLA for Kirkfield Park, he was the city councillor at the time when that land was apparently put on surplus. There's all sorts of caveats that was promised, but all those promises have been broken.

The trust between that member and the community is broken; it's demonstrated to be broken. Another cover-up. Another shady land deal.

And then who's paying for it? The people of St. James and the people who need legitimate help to recover from addiction. We know the Auditor General's looking into the project and the government should be more respectful of assets of the taxpayer. They have loads of other properties, like the hospital on Wellington Crescent, which is empty, the facility on Magnus street, which is largely empty.

It—the previous government created about 150 beds. We learned that the government says, oh, well, it's full. Well, no, it's not full; it has 18 beds. He goes, only 18 beds are funded. What about the other space. So the government is not maximizing the assets they already have. And then they're taking assets away from communities.

Madam Speaker, the budget doesn't talk—I'm—usually, I'm against regulation, but when it comes to the health and safety and the health care of people receiving treatment, that is the appropriate place for regulation.

The facility for crystal meth addicts and opioid addicts, recovering addicts, is—that's not regulated. And the government is not fulfilling its responsibility across the province. They have no continuous plan on addiction. Absent in the budget. Huge epidemic, nothing. Nothing.

And who's responsible? Well, it's actually the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), who's the MLA for Kirkfield Park, and the former city councillor for the area of St. James. So that's—so these are very specific examples.

Madam Speaker, let me go to sole-source contracting. There's a whole section in the budget about sole-source—you know, I thought out—you know—the irony of that goes to exactly what the member from Burrows said: disingenuous. What a disingenuous thing to do.

The government, when they first got in, that's exactly what they did. Right away, sole-source contracting. And when challenged, in committee, the minister just said no, no everything was done appropriately. Well, no, it wasn't. There was no Treasury Board approval, there was no tendering, it was blatantly obvious, to anyone with any kind of experience, and it's no coincidence that it was the

member from Elmwood and myself who really brought this to the fore, at the committee.

The minister denied, deflected; I would argue misled, and it's been a matter of privilege and points of order since he admitted that, in fact, what the members for myself and Elmwood were saying. And then, even in the Hansard, he said, what, just say it was a mistake, minister. Here's our offer act. And it wasn't taken. And—but—in—I'll actually defend the minister for a sec; it wasn't actually him, it was the previous minister from Midland and the current minister of something or other.

\*(15:10)

And he—but, actually, it's not his fault either, because in this government, the Cabinet doesn't really do anything; it's the Premier's office. So it's the Premier's office that's responsible for that sole-source contract. And then they have the gall to put in that they're going to somehow respect sole-source contracting? They already violated the western trade agreement, the internal trade agreement between Canada, signed in 1984.

Madam Speaker, in a budget, there needs to be some truth. It—time will show that it's not—what the words say will not be followed through. However, that puts us in a tough position as MLAs because it will be shown in the future where all the hypocrisy is. But we're asked to vote on the words even though we know that it's not going to happen.

And that's probably why—a close examination of the budget is why the Premier's office was so keen on preventing any MLAs or any stakeholders they didn't want or thought might be critical from going to the budget lock-up.

Madam Speaker, the budget has—shows that there are huge liabilities that are not accounted for properly. The total liability for Manitoba is almost \$52 billion. That is not a 'speako' or a typo; it is \$52 billion. That's the total debt obligation.

Now some of those are offset with pension investments and other things, so it comes out to just 23 billion-odd dollars. But it doesn't include the 23-odd billion dollars that Hydro is on the hook for and, ultimately, the people of Manitoba. So that's 46—that is 51—what were we—oh, yes. Why is the government borrowing over \$5 billion this year? Yes, it's true.

So there isn't a surplus. There isn't—they're just taking debt on. To—now there's a PST cut. You

know, of course, I support a PST cut, but I do not support—and the people of Manitoba don't support—adding on to the government debt.

What the government should have done is deal with the structural deficit, and it has not. Manitoba is a pariah when it comes to financial responsibility. If you look at the transfer payments from Ottawa to Manitoba, they have increased substantially—by \$700 million. So you think, oh, well, that's great. No, it's not. It—what that says is that, relative to other provinces, Manitoba is going—is becoming less competitive. And, if it wasn't for those federal dollars, we would be sunk.

So I find it so disingenuous and ironic when the government stands up and rails against the government when they, in fact, are the main beneficiaries of the equalization benefit. Not to mention that they blew the health transfers just because they tied it into cannabis. You remember all that? They just fight, fight, fight. And then they get caught because Manitoba is in no position to fight with Ottawa regardless of the government there because we're financially dependent on Ottawa.

That's why I advocate the goal of this government shouldn't be to have—should be the most-improved province. Like, oh, great, then maybe we get a participation badge. We should strive to be the best province. We should strive to be a net contributor to equalization, not a huge recipient. That should be the goal.

But—so why is the government's prepared to borrow billions and billions of dollars? That won't happen. The debt load will just get greater and greater. Manitoba Hydro—that's going to hit the books probably after the next election, but the government will be able to say, well, look at—you know, we'll just deflect. I hope the people of Manitoba can see what is going on, but they probably—you know, there's a lot of stuff going on, and the government is probably going to get away with it again.

Madam Speaker, I was at the Prospectors and Developers Association annual convention two weeks ago. This is the largest convention in the mining industry, held in Toronto each year—25,000 participants, and where was Manitoba? It was nowhere; we had nothing. There was one, sort of, booth for Manitoba, but there was no mining operations. Even HudBay and Vale, they just had signs, they had no booth.



And then we have the minister, the other day, stand up in this place and say, oh, the member from Assiniboia didn't go to the social function on the Sunday night, and therefore didn't do—like what the heck is he talking about? And I—*[interjection]*

**An Honourable Member:** Exactly, maybe that's one thing he went to.

**Mr. Fletcher:** —what I went to, was I met with the presidents and CEOs of dozens of mining companies. I asked the mining companies and the stakeholders—and, by the way, I'm a geological engineer and was in the mining industry, so it's familiar territory. They had nothing but scorn and disappointment and sadness for what has happened in Manitoba—the collapse of the mining industry. And I've spoken to this point, and I've written in the appropriate publications on this topic; the mining industry of Manitoba is about to collapse.

The government has done nothing. They promised a report, which we haven't heard anything from, and I'm looking forward when that report comes out, because I have a initiative called *mindfulminingmanitoba.com*, and believe me, whenever that report comes out, there will be a critique, because the government doesn't have a clue of what it's doing to help grow the Manitoba economy in a real way. Yes, you can survive on equalization, but that's not empowering, it's not inspiring. But that's this government.

Madam Speaker, Manitoba Hydro's a fiasco. The government's still going forward with its ill-fated creation of a new Crown corporation called, ironically, Efficiency Manitoba. It will increase the cost and red tape for electricity, for natural gas, for transportation and, wait for it, potable water, drinkable water.

Does the government intend to put a price on water when this Legislature? It'll be in the way of fees or—you know, which is a great tactic because the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding)—that's the way it worked at city hall. Or—we won't raise taxes, we'll just raise fees on sewer and water and on housing and economic development. You know, it's just so obvious. It just is unbelievable.

\* (15:20)

Madam Speaker, the government proposed a Hydro inquiry. They never did it. They suggested that they would have one—or, at least, a review of something a little more recent—project. That fell by the wayside. As an independent MLA, I've

conducted Hydro inquiry—citizen's inquiry. We'll be reporting it in due time. And that's a lot more than what the government has been able to do. So that's another promise, giving a promise—promise, well, not kept.

Conflict of interest—been raising that for years. Government has avoided that like the plague. I wonder why.

Madam Speaker, they've increased campaign donations of political parties from \$3,000 to \$5,000. Who can afford to give a party five grand? Well, I see that not even the Premier (Mr. Pallister) gives even a third of that amount in each year. But maybe other people will lead there.

But Madam Speaker, the budget is hugely flawed. It's disingenuous. It falls short on mining, on health care, fiscal responsibility, it increases debt, increases—it's not really decreasing the deficit, it's just moving it into the future.

Madam Speaker, the budget is bad, but it could be worse.

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

The honourable member for Emerson. Oh, the honourable member for Elmwood.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Oh, just one second. Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** —this was a pleasant surprise—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It is actually the honourable member for Emerson, actually, his turn.

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** I apologize for not paying attention—*[interjection]*—again, according to the colleague sitting over here. That's—and apparently he knows everything if you just ask him.

But, at any rate, Manitoba is one of the highest taxed provinces in Canada, and this budget does address some of the tax issues by reducing the PST from 8 to 7 per cent, as promised a year before it was intended, as we said, by the end of the first term when we were campaigning.

It does raise the question: Is this now the end of the first term?

Reducing ambulance fees by 50 per cent is certainly appreciated by all, as well. The slogan

leaving money on the kitchen table has been used a lot, but let's look at some of the hidden taxes.

The payroll tax, for instance. We as Manitobans are one of the few provinces that collect a payroll tax. And, by the way, we also collect the highest—at the highest rate. Who pays the payroll tax and where does it go? All Crown corporations pay, all provincial and federal agencies pay, all school boards pay and, of course, all businesses that have a payroll that exceeds \$1.25 million per year. What was it implemented and design—and designated for? And it was brought in in the Howard Pawley government days. And at that time, it was designated for health care and post-secondary education. Where does it go now? Well, it goes into general revenue.

What does that mean for Manitobans? Every Hydro bill you pay, you pay two taxes: one that you see and one that you don't. Your property tax you pay, plus school tax; one you see and one you don't.

It's much worse for agriculture, as they pay a school tax on all their agricultural land, higher than municipal taxes and property tax, plus on their buildings and their homes. Manitoba Hydro also pays a water usage tax, which is passed on to customers.

There are many, many more instances where rate-payers don't realize that they're being taxed besides their income tax. This is how we have become the have-not province of Canada and have received almost \$900 million last year in federal transfer payments and almost \$5 billion since we were elected.

We also said that there would be no front-line services cut. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Manitoba Curriculum Support Centre: I've had numerous calls in regards to the cuts in the service from parents and also teachers and, in some cases, who felt most vulnerable are those that do home-schooling.

I fully understand that the minister is challenged to cut so much from his Education portfolio, but he may not realize that not all rural and northern Manitoba has access to cell service or Internet and certainly not broadband.

So promises made, promises kept is a great slogan, and one that I believe all Manitobans believe in. The definition is appropriate.

I'm sure that there's a few who would disagree with the reduction in the PST from the 8 to the 7 per cent. However, we also said this would occur

through efficiencies in the system, and I believe there has been a thorough review done.

The raising of the basic personal exemption was long overdue and well-received, but there are other issues that we said that we would deal with: school tax, and we haven't been dealing with it at this point.

The promises made and/or not kept: stop the Bipole III. And, I know from personal experience, that it was past the point that it could be stopped, and so it had to go ahead. It was a poor judgment by the former government to even put it down the west side. I know that they don't want to take credit for it but, at the same time, it was too far long to stop it.

But there was another line being built. That line is Manitoba-Minnesota tie-in line that goes from the Riel station down to Minnesota. Now, that line, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it goes through private property, no different than the Bipole III did—goes through prime farmland as well.

And, in many cases, the people don't have a choice that they can move one direction or the other. They can only move to the west. They can't move to the east because they border the Sandilands and Crown lands.

People are opposed to that. They were opposed to that particular Hydro line and, at the time, Manitoba Hydro offered to municipalities 4-million-plus dollars to be used within the municipalities to, kind of, have them not saying anything against this particular line.

However, there was a group, a group of individuals that the line was impacting who came and met with the minister—the first minister of Crown corporations. And, at the same time, he was going to look into it. Actually, he just looked over it.

And, at any rate, then it goes to the Sustainable Development Minister to give a licence. She could've said at the time, we will move that line onto Crown land, where it would not impact the farmers and all of the people that it was impacting. But, no, it wasn't done.

\*(15:30)

And what's very disappointing is that just this last week, it was announced we're clawing back \$4 million that was promised to the municipalities and the reason being is that there was no contract.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, your word is your honour. The Crown corporation honour was at stake,

but that didn't bother the minister to pull that back. And so they pulled this back from the municipalities only after—only after—the line is going through on private land, where it could have gone like the other lines in that area had went on Crown land.

But further to that—further to that—the Crown corporations are now suing volunteer fire departments. Volunteer fire departments and volunteers are what rural Manitoba is made of. All of Manitoba relies on volunteers but, more importantly, the volunteer fire department and also the first responders.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just as a—just to bring this to a critical head, this last week an illegal border crosser was stuck in a snowbank. A pregnant young lady was stuck in a snowbank and went into labour and used her cell phone to call 911. Who saved her? The first responders, they were able to find her. But the RCMP didn't know where to look but because the first responders live in that area.

And that isn't the only job they have. They have a day job. This other is a volunteer job. But they knew where to go and they found her and everything turned out well. But had they not found her in time, would they have been sued as well?

I don't think this is right, and I think that the Crown corporation needs to rethink what they have done in this situation.

We said that all contracts would be tendered, and I went door to door doing that, saying the same thing—that all contracts would be tendered. But the minister of Infrastructure didn't tender two of the contracts, which—must have had a good reason or a directive from someone—or a directive from someone to do so. But, at the same time, to have the next Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler) come into this House and deny that it happened—that is unacceptable. Own up to what happened and let it be.

We also promised 1,200 personal-care-home beds. As we went door to door, we promised 1,200 personal-care-home beds. None have been built to date. However, the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) must feel bad today when two places have been announced that they will build them: one in Steinbach, at the former Health minister's jurisdiction, and the other in Carman. But when he stood in this House—the former Health minister stood in this House and chided the NDP for running out to Lac du Bonnet in their SUVs, their

Lincolns and whatever others, announcing to build out there.

Now, I know, I know for a fact that there was a contractor who was willing to build and finance the building in Lac du Bonnet. And it's not announced today. And he hasn't been given a contract or allowed to even bid on a contract there. But he said I will build it; my company will build it. But no, it's going to Steinbach and it's going to Carman. And I know, in Carman, they've worked very, very hard. Steinbach gets a new home every year there, it seems like. But at any rate, that was another promise not kept.

We said we would address the school tax on farmland and, as a matter of fact, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler) emphasized that at one of my AGM meetings—hasn't been addressed. It has a huge impact on agriculture; there's no question—a huge impact.

I'm also disappointed that there's no co-operation with the City of Winnipeg to end pollution to Lake Winnipeg from excess sewage whenever there's a half an inch of rain in Winnipeg and the sewage runs straight into the rivers here. We know that it happens. The NDP knew that it happened. They didn't address it. We have not even talked about it—we haven't talked about it.

We also know that there's flooding issues that's been caused by the Shellmouth Dam on the Assiniboine River that we had promised to address with many farmers who were flooded out as far back as 2012, and the NDP promised to pay them but they never did.

We promised to deal with it and we haven't to this date. We have not dealt with that flooding issue to the satisfaction of Agriculture—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Graydon:** —so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as an independent, I don't see much difference right now in the actions, and that is not acceptable—that's not acceptable at all.

We said we wouldn't cut the budgets for infrastructure. How much was the highway budget cut? Does anybody have any idea here? Anybody on that side of the House have any idea? Anybody on this side have any idea? By 50 per cent. By 50 per cent, we cut the highway budget in the Province of Manitoba.

At one time, we were able to dodge the potholes that were left by the NDP government. Now we have to jump over them and through them because they're only worse.

And one of the Emerson constituents said, you could be blindfolded in Texas and you will know exactly when you cross the border in Emerson that you're in Manitoba because of the condition of 75 Highway. That's an international highway and that is a highway that's used so much for our business back and forth. That's the busiest port west of Fort Erie, and the highway is in such disrepair that there is no mud will ever stick to a vehicle when you hit it.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are some very good things in this budget, but there are a lot of things that still need to be addressed.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Maloway:** And I was very pleased to hear the comments from the previous speakers. I learned a lot of new things about this government and really look forward to hearing more comments from the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon).

Now, the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) reminded me that, in fact, yesterday, I think, was my anniversary of getting elected to the Legislature, March 18th, 1986. And I remember at the time it was a surprise that we did as well as we did, but Gary Doer was first elected that day—member for Concordia at the time; Judy Wasylycia-Leis, that was her first election; Len Harapiak; Marty Dolin; Harvey Smith, Clarence Baker—I think I got them all.

\*(15:40)

At that time I was the youngest, but somehow that doesn't hold true today. And I know that, to me, it kind of feels like we're on the eve of an election here and so I guess that, you know, we can kind of talk ourselves into elections. It kind of starts out with the Premier (Mr. Pallister) himself kind of setting the seed at the end of the year, deliberately so, and then, of course, one announcement feeds on another, and the next thing you know we're into this election, whether we like it or not, a year, a year and a half, I guess, in advance when we should be.

But, you know, the government has been, in my view, anyway, somewhat surprising and particularly in our area of the city, northeast where the member of Concordia and I represent that area, and the fact that they would actually close the ER at Concordia

Hospital is just, like, baffling to us, you know. And the fact that we would be supposedly, you know, this close to an election as early as, I think, members opposite have told me, I think, the 23rd of April, which would be like just over a month from now or June the 11th, which would be called right after the flood subsides.

That would be in—under normal circumstances, a big surprise, but, you know, like, these—this Premier does some pretty shocking things, I found, you know, you know, stuff that—things that don't make sense at all. For example, you know, Concordia Hospital was—well, it's been around for 100 years, but at this particular location has been there since 1977. And, you know, it was justifiable at that time, and it served the area very well for all these years, I think, 44 years, something like that.

And the area has been growing in leaps and bounds. I mean, the—Transcona has huge developments out there. And so it's hard for the average voter in my constituency and in the constituency of Concordia to understand this. And I have, like, 60 pages here of comments, and I was planning to read some of them to you, but I, in the interests of brevity and time, you know, and being one that wants to be brief always, I will—I think I will hold back a little bit because we do have other members of the—of our caucus who want to speak to the budget.

But we felt, I think, when this was announced, that Concordia would be—ER would be closing, that it would only be a matter of time before the government would come to its senses, that no government in its right mind, unless it has absolutely zero respect for its members, and there are four members that represent the area: the member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield), the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma), the member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski), the member for River East (Mrs. Cox). And, you know, at least, I thought, having been here the first go-around with the Filmon government, when they decided to close Misericordia ER, they also announced a—overnight closure of Concordia. And, you know, that lasted, I think, maybe a few weeks at most because Bonnie Mitchelson was MLA, and by the way, Bonnie was elected the same day as me too, in 1986.

You know, Bonnie made her way over to the—Premier Filmon's office in a, I'm sure, a record dash, and, you know, within a few weeks, the premier was out there walking it back. Concordia was not going

to be closed overnight. So, based on that experience, you would think this Premier learned from history. You would think this Premier would have looked back to see what had happened at that particular time and, you know, just decided not to do this.

But—and, you know, blame it on, oh, the bureaucracy, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, you know, heading off on their own, and that's how he would've explained backing off on this issue. But that's not what happened. We have hundreds of people in our area who have certainly surprised me in that they have had lawn signs in their yard for almost two years, you know. And some of them say, well, Jim, when are these things coming down? You know, like, it's been a year. Then it was two years. You know, now, I mean, I guess it could take three years. I'm sure they'll keep them there because they have no intention of taking these signs down until the government backs off.

And, by the way, it's every level of our constituency that we get this from. You know, we get it from the doctors at Concordia Hospital, we get it from the nurses at Concordia Hospital, we get it from the—all the other workers at Concordia Hospital and, literally, from the residents, like, every door you go. And so many people have told me, you know, I voted Conservative last time, I voted Conservative for 40 years and now I'm not going to do it any more over this one issue.

So I guess maybe the Premier (Mr. Pallister) is a—is—wants to test his theories, right? But, certainly, it's made the position of the—of some of his MLAs very precarious, that he's prepared to, you know—and why are these members so silent? We know that, you know, members—constituents tell me that, you know, I phone the member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield), I phone the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma). I say, well, what do they say? You know, like, what are they doing to try to stop this?

And you would think that they would go and complain to the Premier about what it's going to do to them. And I think they have. I honestly think that the member for Rossmere, maybe the member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski) and Radisson have actually gone to the Premier's office, but I think they were probably shocked with the response when they were told to, you know, be quiet and go along. Take one for the team, you know, in this situation and go back and tell their—you know, try to explain this to their residents. But the residents are not buying this at all, and so the—either the Premier is going to be

quite shocked when he calls his election and you find out that he's going to be losing some seats.

And by the way, the latest—you know, the latest information regarding Concordia Hospital closure is that, you know, they were planning to close it on June the 6th, right? So June the 6th was their big closure day. And, you know, we've been herding—hearing that, well, you know, the election's going to be the 11th. Well, I mean, it doesn't look good to be closing an ER in the northeast corner of Winnipeg—what—six days before the election.

So, guess what? The word is they're putting it off now until the 26th. So the election will be over on the 11th and all of a sudden, two weeks later, they're going to close down the ER. And there is going to be absolute outrage on the part of the people of northeast Winnipeg when and if that were to happen because they right now are thinking that this will not happen. Like, it is not even believable to a lot of people in northeast Winnipeg that this is even possible, right? Like, you know—and, you know, so the Premier obviously is kind of, I guess, insulated himself and isolated himself to the point where if he thinks he can pull this one off, he's doing pretty good.

So, I know—I'm not seeing any obvious signs here that other members want to speak, but I know there's some more that have to speak, so I think that I'm going to close my speech now and allow for someone else.

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

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Budget 2019 proved to be a big disappointment.

In doing some readings to find some light on how 2019 budget fares with established objectives of this important government document, I came across the statement below.

\* (15:50)

Quote: the most important objectives of a government budget are reallocating the resources across the nation, bringing down the inequalities in terms of earning and wealth, paving way for economic stability, managing public enterprises, contributing to economic growth and addressing the regional disproportions. The budget of a given government can be viewed as a visible projection of its political, social and economic policies.

A government budget accounts for a long list of how needs and problems in the country are

approached and addressed. It is also vital topic of discussion in statecraft, development and progress, economics and sociology.

The merits of a budget are a signal of the effectiveness of governance. Through its budgetary policy, every government endeavours to reallocate the resources in line with the economic and social goals of the country, namely, maximizing the profits and public welfare. It does so through subsidies or tax concessions and by producing goods and services directly. Unquote.

Some of the key words in the above statements are, quote, reallocate resources in line with economic and social goals, maximizing profit in public welfare, unquote.

Sadly, Budget 2019 failed miserably, based on the above. Glaring omissions exist on resources for economic and social goals, and public welfare.

Two weeks and two days ago, a tragic incident happened in my constituency. We all know what happened to a very talented, courteous, loving 17-year-old boy. The grief, anguish and unspeakable pain of the parents are also shared by so many, including the policemen who attended to the crime scene and the 911 operator who received the boy's distress call.

Not too far from that scene of tragedy, on the same street and two and a half months earlier, a 34-year-old hard-working and caring group-home operator and foster parent was stabbed to death. These two deaths, and many more, are attributed to an ongoing and complex social problems due to drug addiction, mental health, poverty and family breakdown.

Sadly, what we can see here are two tragedies: the painful tragedy that befell the victims and their families, and the overlooked tragedy of the offenders—those who have mental health issues, addiction problems, among others, which caused them to bring so much anguish and harm to society.

For over two years now, my colleagues on this side of the House have been asking the Pallister government for resources and programs to stop the scourge brought by poverty, drug addiction, homelessness, mental health issues. How many more innocent lives will be lost; noble dreams unattained; extreme, undeserved pain and suffering endured by victims, families and communities before this government accepts that balanced budget is pyrrhic victory when supports for programs that

would have been helpful to address social inequality and offer opportunities to level the playing field for marginalized members of society—the elderly, women, young people, those with disabilities, those finding difficulty to make ends meet—are sacrificed or deliberately overlooked.

As the well-meaning former U.S. Vice President Hubert Humphrey said, and I quote: The moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped. Unquote.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have so much more to say, but I would want to hear from other members of our caucus. But suffice it to say, this budget sorely misses the mark of the hallmarks of a good provincial budget.

Thank you.

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** It's an absolute honour to stand before the House today as the MLA for The Pas to put down what my thoughts are on this budget. I absolutely agree and—with our NDP amendments to this budget. As I read through this budget, once again, as a northern Manitoba, I still do not feel included in this budget. This government claims to have a solid plan in place, but, Deputy Speaker, this plan does not include northern Manitoba.

For example, in our health system, we're still struggling with overcrowding of the ER in our hospital. My family and I had to wait there, and pretty much I had to walk out on hour five. This was because the walk-in clinic was closed for the whole month of March.

And, with that, to topple our health crisis in northern Manitoba, the Northern Patient Transportation Program is still quite the gong show itself. We're still being medevac'd out, and we still have clerks who are overriding our doctors' orders to determine whether we should have access to health care in Winnipeg.

And also too, there—it just seems like this: they're being given directives to save money more than save lives. That's how I see this. And also too, just catching the plane back and forth here to Winnipeg, I meet up with a lot of our patients at the airports, and we can agree on one thing, one constituent said, our health care is crazy, not better.

So, with that, I really want to emphasize on the topic that's close to me in my own backyard, as the MLA for The Pas. I want to address the lack of mental health resources for our children.

I've had the opportunity to visit Mary Duncan School. Mary Duncan School is quite a special place in my community, a place where my daughter went to school as well. When the other schools give up on our children, suspend them, expel them, Mary Duncan School welcomes our children and cares for them. My children was one of them. She needed resources for mental health; that school was able to accommodate, a bit.

But their call to help fell on deaf ears. I was the only one who came to their school and said, how can we help, how can we listen. I heard just tragic stories from our school counsellors and teachers within Mary Duncan School, describing our group of children that desperately need help from this government.

We have children who are lacking resources; once they get shipped out to Winnipeg or to Brandon, for suicide thoughts or even self-harm, they come back to our community with no plan in place for our children. So what is the point of shipping out our kids for seven days at a time, separate from family, adding to their stress?

And I personally know this. I can tell you for a fact, the last time I was medevac'd out, out of my community for my knees, I was suffering from mental health, guess what? We were driven very fast in the back of an RCMP truck cruiser from The Pas to Winnipeg in five hours. I have never made it to Winnipeg in five hours before; usually, it's six. But, God forbid, they fly us out, because the Northern Patient Transportation Program would have put that officer at risk of being stranded in Winnipeg. Never mind us; they made sure that he had a ride home. So that's another issue about our families having to get back once they're medevac'd out.

One of the counsellors described one of our children at that school, saying they were trying to get the child involved and interested in after-school programs, training that are coming up. But guess what this child said: I have no hope. I have no future. Why should this—why should I attend this?

These children are usually involved with CFS, poverty, addictions at home, addictions with themselves, depression and suicide.

So, with that, I promised our kids, I promised our families, I promised our community that I'd be an advocate to make sure that we have mental health resources available within our communities in northern Manitoba. And, with that, this absolutely ties in it to the CFS.

I just want to bring on record again which I heard today, that this government needs to stop saying and blaming 17 years of NDP for the seriousness behind the CFS system. We have to go back and look at the colonization, residential schools, that were clearly indicated in the Tina Fontaine report.

Even the peaceful protest that we had upstairs here, Bring Our Children Home, most of the members left. A lot of us stayed and heard. Did that make the news? No. The Premier's comments on a woman wearing high heels made news that day. Really unfortunate, in the society that we're in right now.

So, with the customary care bill, I had the opportunity to speak to it at a committee. And I recommended that counselling should be mandatory for parents, grandparents and children once they're apprehended. I know this. I'm living this.

\*(16:00)

In regards to the TRC report, it is no coincident that the first five calls of—calls to action are dedicated to child welfare. And again, these are echoed within the report, the late Tina Fontaine.

I just want to end by saying I had the opportunity to go home a couple weeks ago and I attended a education and TRC event that was hosted by the University College of the North. And, to my delight and honour, Mr. Phil Fontaine was there for closing remarks, and I had the opportunity to hear him, and he brought up about reconciliation—the true road to reconciliation is to—he brought up how to recognize indigenous peoples as one of our founding nations.

And I got up, had the opportunity to ask him a question. I brought up to the public and let them know that back in June 2017, we brought up a private member's resolution to urge this government to urge the federal government to recognize indigenous people as one of the founding nations, and it's so ironic—like, even the word indigenous, and we're not even recognized as a founding nation of this very land that we live on.

So, when I told Mr. Fontaine that we presented this, and it was totally shot down, not supported from this side of the House, I said it was very disheartening as an indigenous woman. Here we are, supposed to move forward to reconciliation—no.

So I asked him, how do you move forward from that? How do you penetrate this wall? How do you engage? Because we want to move forward; it's very important that we move forward in terms of reconciliation for Manitoba and our country. And this is probably the best advice he told me. He thought for a little while and he said, you know, Amanda, even though you're facing a wall, grab who you can, who's willing to listen, who has the same path, same care that you have to move on.

So that's what I would like to do. I would like to capture whoever wants to work with me, us, to move forward to better lives for Manitoba. And my message to this government is: You have that access. You have that access to the resources. You have that power. You have that power. Do the right thing. Think outside the box and work with us to make lives better for Manitobans. Thank you.

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to comment on what is truly a budget of accomplishment and progress. I want to congratulate the Finance Minister for his work, thank—through him—thank the staff who support him and his efforts, the people within our government services who have worked diligently to make this budget a reality, the people at the front line who make the services of government a reality for all of us.

I want to say thank you also to the members of our Treasury Board. We have, unlike the previous government, a functional Treasury Board, unified and focused on their work as opposed to on other tasks, internal struggles and things like that. And so it is in part because of that unity and that focus that we have been able to make the progress that we have with this year's budget. So I congratulate you—the Finance Minister of our province for his tremendous effort.

We, all of us, are people, and as human beings we all—all of us—make mistakes, and the important thing, and I appreciate the entreaties of the member who spoke just previously about the need for co-operative efforts. I believe, conceptually, that that is a wonderful idea.

I also believe that, and I have to take exception to her assertion we should ignore the 17 years of

the NDP government when it comes to their performance or lack of progress on a number of files, chiefly in Families, and I'm not saying that to place blame. I am saying that because we must learn from the failures of the past; we must not repeat them.

And so that is why we are making progress on many files, because we accept the challenges of change. We are not interested in anything but progress for all Manitobans, and we are deeply, deeply indebted to the people who have consulted with us in the preparation of this year's budget and previous budgets. Tens of thousands of Manitobans have been asked to be—participate and have chosen to participate in the building of this budget.

And this budget is particularly, I would say, Madam Speaker, a product of the will and the values and the involvement of Manitobans. I thank Manitobans for their involvement in helping us make the progress we've been making.

We have taken on the task, Madam Speaker, knowing that it is daunting after a decade of debt, of fixing the finances of the Province, and that is important, that I've heard the opposition member and several—leader and several of his members say that we care about money, as if it was something that we shouldn't care about. In my experience the only people who don't care about money are people who always had too much of it, and certainly that isn't descriptive of my life or the lives of many in this Chamber. We care about money because we know that we're managing the money of other people, so we must show respect when we manage the money we take from the kitchen tables of Manitoba families.

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

When I was given the honour by the people of Manitoba to assume the responsibilities of this position, I did not expect it to be easy. I did not, in fact, want it to be easy because, in my experience, I expected that the challenges would be great, and that is what involves most of us, I think, in public life: trying to achieve change and progress, as the member just spoke about. And I think it's important to understand that our challenges fiscally were enormous challenges. We were handed a mess by the previous government—a mess where they, in fact, didn't demonstrate they cared about the money.

Year after year after year they demonstrated they cared about it in the sense of taking it, but they didn't demonstrate they cared about it in the sense of getting value from it once they spent it.



And, Madam Speaker, that's not how public money should be spent. It should be spent with the care and the vigor and the regimen that people use on their own spending. It should be spent with the ethics of Manitobans in mind, something that wasn't happening with the repeated purchases without tender, of contracts of various kinds from people who did not prove and could not prove that they were giving value for money to taxpayers because they had never had to compete with anyone else in the provision of services. Year after year, contracts were given out to donors to the NDP without, without any accountability—in fact, not even with the proper reporting mechanisms being pursued, not even being placed on the library computer, as was the rule at the time—hidden from public view. That is not how we shop with Manitobans' money; we shop with respect.

And so it is because of that, Madam Speaker, that we are pleased. Knowing that we were handed a mess and knowing that the mess was getting worse with each passing year and knowing that the projected deficit for this fiscal year, according to Treasury Board officials at the time, just three years ago—less than three years ago that we came to government, the projected deficit was \$1.8 billion for this coming year. Congratulations to the Health Minister, Treasury Board officials, members of the caucus and all Manitobans who participated in helping us find a way to get that number lowered by about 80 per cent. Thank you very much.

Why is it important to fix the finances, Madam Speaker? That's a question that Manitobans, if you asked them, would laugh at. Manitobans in their own homes know they have to balance their books. Manitobans in little businesses around the province know they have to manage sustainably to survive, or bankruptcy is in their future. They know that. They know instinctively what they have to do with the money that they work so hard to get.

Governments, Madam Speaker, governments have to ask themselves—because they habitually, of all political stripes, get comfortable spending other peoples' money—why is it important to get better value for money? And the answer is clear: so we can leave more money on the kitchen tables of the people in this province—more money on the kitchen table.

I remember my dad doing a tax return. He didn't like doing them. He didn't enjoy doing them, but I remember him doing them out of a sense of duty,

perhaps, out of a sense of obligation, perhaps. But he did them like Manitobans do them.

\* (16:10)

And I remember him lamenting, he said, you know, son, when I put in the crop every year, when I work on the farm every day, these folks from Ottawa and Winnipeg are never around, but when the crop comes in and if we are lucky enough to make a little money, well, they're always around then—always around then.

Manitobans work for close to half the year—their kitchen table in their home in their little business. They work for close to half a year to pay the governments of various stripes. One pocket, one well-worn pocket produces the money that all our governments in this country like to distribute and spend and get credit for, as you'll see today with the federal government's budget, an election-year budget designed to curry favour using borrowed money taken from children and grandchildren who would deserve to have a better shot at their futures.

So, why is it important? It's important for tomorrow and it's important for today, too. This year's budget sees us expending, thanks to NDP overspending, over a billion dollars just on the interest—just on interest, Madam Speaker. What could we do with the interest? What could we have done in terms of investments?

And yet the members opposite responsible for that debt and responsible for that deficit annually and responsible for that debt service charge and responsible for not one but two credit downgrades, which have cost tens of millions of dollars to the people of this province, fail to recognize the failure of their mismanagement and they fail to recognize the consequences even today and, in so failing, they clearly demonstrate to Manitobans that they have not learned the lessons of the past.

We must not repeat those lessons. This government will not repeat those mistakes, Madam Speaker, because Manitobans will benefit from our management decisions. They will not suffer from a return to the old mistaken mismanagement of the NDP.

Who benefits when more money's on the kitchen table? Manitoba families do. And I remember in our family when we ran out of money before the bills were paid, and I didn't like it, and no Manitoba family likes it, but the fact is there are a lot of

families who are struggling right now in this province.

Meyers Norris Penny just released a study—national study—that showed that 56 per cent of households in our beautiful province have less than \$200 of disposable income at the end of the month after they pay their bills. Thanks to the NDP, it's going to be even less because of the hydro bills that will be accelerating in the future because of overspend and some of the most dramatic misjudgments in the history of our province, less money at the kitchen table because of that.

Less money, too, as various governments and school divisions decide to raise their taxes, Madam Speaker, and as those taxes go up, there is less money on the kitchen tables of families, less money for them to spend, less money for them to invest, less security for them, for themselves and their children and their grandchildren. And if that continues, we will have an even wider disparity, between those who are able to make it and those who are not, and that is not what we want in this province.

We want a stronger middle class; we want a chance for the province and its people to progress, and that depends, Madam Speaker, on the people being stronger financially, not on the people being made weaker by higher taxes.

The members opposite have a choice to make. They have decided that they will oppose our PST reduction. They have decided they would rather they had the money than Manitobans.

We do not agree. We believe that the money Manitobans work hard to earn and save is best managed by them and we will continue to believe in Manitobans where others doubt their abilities or capabilities.

The leader opposite has said that he would like not only to see a higher PST but that he and his party would like to see additional taxes brought in. He would like to see a tax brought in on estates. He has proposed that not only should Manitobans be taxed heavily in life, but they should be taxed in death as well.

We do not agree. We realize that there are two things that are indisputable—death and taxes—but we don't think they should be linked together, and the member opposite clearly does.

He also says that—and he and his party believe in this very strongly—there should be higher taxes on

success. They want to have higher taxes on the highest bracket. He said they're going to do that and the federal government's repeating that mantra.

The difference is, of course, that, Madam Speaker, this higher tax that they talk about would already be at the second highest level in Canada, and so in taxing professionals, like doctors, they would then overtax them and in this way discourage them from locating to Manitoba or expanding their practice here or, in fact, encourage them to go to Alberta or some other jurisdiction where they could join former NDP staffers the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) sent away after the rebellion that he organized for the NDP.

Madam Speaker, these things are not acceptable to us. We do not believe that exporting our professionals is a good idea. We believe in importing them.

That's why we've led, over the last decade—this is the second highest increase in the number of physicians and nurse hires that we have had in this province. That's because we're investing in improving health care for our province, and attracting more professionals to our province is a key part of making sure that our health-care system works going forward.

In terms of taxation, Madam Speaker, it is true that the members opposite are high-tax people in the NDP, but I did not expect that they would be exceeded in that attitude until I heard comments from the new Second Opposition Leader saying that the problem the NDP faced when they were in government wasn't over-spending at all or over-taxing; it was they should have done more of both.

And now we have a new, clearly staked-out position to the left of the left-leaning NDP that says more money should be taken away from Manitobans and higher taxes so that, well, the government that he would lead would be able to spend more of that money better than the people of Manitoba.

This philosophy, Madam Speaker, is not a philosophy Manitobans will support. They elected us with a mandate to fix the finances, and fix the finances we will, but we will not do it on the backs of Manitobans by jacking up taxes, and the fundamental difference between us and those who preceded us is this: where they made the commitment to Manitobans that they believed in the things that we are demonstrating we believe on, that is holding the line on taxes—where they went to the

doors and promised the people of our province they would not raise their taxes, when they made the solemn vow, eyeball to eyeball with Manitobans, they broke their word. We're keeping ours.

Departure from principle, Madam Speaker, internal chaos, protest, resignation, rebellion—these are not just the things of the federal Liberal government. They were preceded by very, very similar actions inside the NDP caucus when they were in government as well. The decisions that were taken by the members of the government of that day should serve as an example to all of us and all who enter public service in the future of how not to behave, of how not to become unfocused, of how not to demonstrate to the people, the citizens, your disinterest in their priorities by pursuing your own at their expense.

Madam Speaker, the lack of progress during the NDP regime that the member alluded to earlier in her comments—the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin)—is evident, but it is learning from that lack of progress that is the key. What do we learn when we study the events of recent days in Ottawa? What do we learn when we study the sad events that preceded the NDP rebellion and followed it? What we learn is, if nothing else, that principles matter, that the rule of law matters, that perceptual politics and overreacting to polls are ephemeral and short-term at best, but what is long-term is the North Star that should guide our decisions. The decisions we take and the decisions we make have impacts on other people.

As we progress to repair the services of our province, to invest over \$400 million in this budget alone more than the NDP ever did in health care, it is not just with that simple act that we mark our focus. It is with the better results we achieve through that investment.

There is much, much more work to do, Madam Speaker. We do not clean up 17 years of wasted opportunities in just three years. We have to continue to focus, as we have, on finding real improvements, in making real investments to get better results like shorter wait times, which the Canadian institute of health information has evaluated and commented upon, and which the members do not like—opposite do not like to hear or read about.

\* (16:20)

But the reality is that, with the work of our professional people—front-line and in management—we are achieving progress. Much more needs to be

done, but let it not be misrepresented that the investments are not being made, because they are. And let it not be misrepresented that we are cutting front-line people, because we are not. And let it not be misrepresented that the workplace will not improve for front-line workers because, Madam Speaker, it is, and it will because front-line workers in our health-care system, our social services and our education systems want to work in systems that work for patients, for vulnerable children and for our students—our children and grandchildren. And that is what is happening. Progress is coming. It is happening. It is occurring.

And that good news couldn't be possible unless we had a unified team of people ready to work together with one another, and that, Madam Speaker, I am proud to say, on this side of the House we most certainly have.

Madam Speaker, we've made many, many changes happen. I would argue that perhaps in the history of Manitoba there has not been a government that has had the courage to face more directly the challenges of change—whether it be in families, whether it be in terms of education, whether it be in terms of health care, justice, many other files.

But, Madam Speaker, courage is essential if one is to change things, and change we must. For having Manitoba rank 10th in most major files is not acceptable to us, not defensible by anyone in this House, and so learning from the past will give us greater confidence and motivation going forward. Learning from the past will mean we do not repeat the mistakes of the past, but rather we find new successes.

As we reform our civil service and make this workplace a safer one for all—not just for women, but for women and men in this workplace—a safer place, we move away from the tragic mishandling of the harassment issues that the previous government failed to deal with.

We recognize that these are painful and hurtful issues, and we do not want to see them repeated. We have taken steps—real steps—to make progress, and we are at the forefront across Canada of making a safer workplace a reality for all civil servants here in this government and in our Crown corporations and in the MUSH sector—so-called MUSH sector, as well.

This is really an important endeavour, Madam Speaker, because if we want to attract great people to

this workplace—and we do and we must as people—the baby boomers retire—then we must have a safe place for people to work—not just some days, but every day.

We will continue to stand up, Madam Speaker, for change where change is necessary, and we will also continue to stand up against the misguided positions that Ottawa occasionally takes. While we work with them on numerous files very effectively, we have been unabashed defenders of Manitoba's priorities on other files where Ottawa, we believe, was somewhat misguided in its positions. For example, when the federal government decided that they wanted to jack up taxes on small-business people and on family farms, we took the lead and worked with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, and other provinces followed and we were successful in achieving changes to the federal government position as a result.

Members opposite and the leader of the opposition say that we shouldn't scrap with Ottawa. Until recently, he had a bromance going with the Prime Minister Trudeau that was, well, interesting to watch, and his position that the federal government was right on all things was wrong in and of itself—on the issues of tax hikes for small business that would have been damaging to Manitoba's economy, on the issues of tax hikes to family farms, the things Ottawa was advocating would have been harmful to Manitoba's ag economy, which is essential to our progress and which is significant in its investments.

The investments that are occurring are leading the country, Madam Speaker, in value-added agriculture, and I commend our Ag Minister for his courageous work—conscientious work in achieving progress in the ag sector; 72 per cent of our new jobs in this province are because of the work of that minister and others to encourage value-added agricultural investments in our province.

When Ottawa has taken the position that we should have an escalating and increasing carbon tax, the NDP leader has said, bring it on, and more. When Ottawa has taken the position that they can threaten Manitoba by revoking the tens of millions of dollars commitment they had made to us previously on the low-carbon economy fund, the NDP member said, do it, and more; punish those people for standing up for Manitobans, they said.

What they are wanting to do over there is clear. They want to take more money off the kitchen tables of Manitobans. They want higher taxes on home

heating. They want higher taxes on transport of goods. They want higher taxes on people who commute to work. They want higher taxes on people who volunteer to coach soccer.

Madam Speaker, they just want higher taxes. Every problem posed to the members opposite ends up with the same solution, and that solution is higher taxes, every single problem. It doesn't matter what it is, the NDP think they can solve it with higher taxes. And, how'd we get into the mess this province got into after 17 years of NDP mismanagement? Higher taxes, exactly, higher taxes; that's what they believe.

And now the member for Minto's (Mr. Swan) going to take off, go to Ottawa, and he's going to fight for higher taxes. Exactly, and I've wished him luck before and I wish him luck again, Madam Speaker. How bad would it have to be in a provincial NDP that a member from Minto would want to go to Ottawa and join that, I don't know, but he's preparing to go.

No, Madam Speaker, the solutions aren't easy, and they never are for complex problems. And as we face these challenges together, we will do it with an open mind and we will do it by listening to Manitobans. But we will also listen to the experts, and this is something the previous government failed to do when it came to health care, also Family Services, reforming the delivery and investment priorities of Infrastructure and many other ways. They substituted political decision making in the areas of educational investments for logical 'prioritization' based on real need.

Madam Speaker, you know, fixing our system isn't easy. But we are getting it done by keeping our promises. We are building seven new schools; that is a record in the time frame we have had. But we are playing catch-up, and I think of the investments we're making in repairing health-care facilities, in repairing our infrastructure, in repairing our—and rebuilding our—schools and in building new ones. I think of these as paying great dividends down the road.

Some things don't cost in pay. Paying former NDP staffers to leave the province didn't pay; the NDP did it anyway. Paying NDP supporters with untendered contracts and giving them special favours didn't pay; it cost, cost an incredible amount of money. And the members opposite can't hide from their record. They have a record. It is a real record. It is not an enviable record. It is a record that cannot be covered up. It is a record that cannot be hidden. It is

a real record and a record which Manitobans are becoming increasingly aware of.

Madam Speaker, I stand proudly before you today and before my colleagues in the House to say I am very, very proud of the honest hard work that this team of people and this government have done, that I am exceptionally excited to see the real progress that will occur for the people of Manitoba as a result of that work.

I say to you, Madam Speaker, thank you for your work as Speaker. I know that you have faced the challenges, as well, of change, of encouraging change in the way we approach things here, and I thank you for that. This is—I say this is not an easy job. The job of Speaker is not an easy job, either. And so I would ask our colleagues to show appreciation for your work.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I just want to say thank you to you, thank you to the people of Fort Whyte for the honour of serving them as their MLA, thank you to my colleagues, thank you to all members of the House for their service to the people of Manitoba. Thank you to all of the members of this government for caring and for understanding that the values that Manitobans have, which we share, are a real thing; they are not pretend; they are real.

\* (16:30)

And when we stand for those values, in support of Manitobans, Madam Speaker, we stand proudly and we assure ourselves and all Manitobans that the only thing better than today in Manitoba will be tomorrow in Manitoba.

**Madam Speaker:** The hour being 4:30 p.m., in accordance with rule 34(10), I am interrupting the proceedings to put the question necessary to dispose of the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and all amendments to that motion.

Therefore, the question before the House is the proposed subamendment of the leader of the second opposition party, the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont).

Do members wish to have the subamendment read?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Madam Speaker:** I hear a yes.

The subamendment is as follows:

*THAT the amendment be amended by adding after clause (f) the following clauses:*

- (g) failing to ensure mining operations in Manitoba stay viable and threatening the economic viability of northern communities by delaying mining permits as a result of firing mining branch staff; and
- (h) failing to properly implement health system reorganization, causing crises in emergency rooms and primary care; and
- (i) failing to invest federal funding increases in Manitoba into crucial services and infrastructure for Manitobans; and
- (j) failing to support Manitoba's economic health and choking off growth by falsely inflating the Province's deficit; budgeting increased amounts in departments for which there is no intention of spending the increases and allowing Manitoba's GDP to slip below 1 per cent; putting Manitoba at risk of a recession; claiming it as the new normal; and
- (k) failing to ensure that wealthy Manitobans pay their fair share of taxes by defending tax loopholes that allow the wealthiest to pay a lesser tax rate than medium- and low-income Manitobans; and
- (l) failing to protect the public universal health-care system by reiterating plans for a grand bargain that would prioritize cheaper wine imports over the federal government maintaining its role in health care; and
- (m) failing to ensure Manitobans are earning a living wage by freezing wages, not increasing the minimum wage to a livable amount and prioritizing the needs of corporations located outside of Manitoba at the expense of workers; and
- (n) failing to cut from the top by increasing executive support for ministers by 2 per cent, which is well above increases to the health budget; and
- (o) failing to show any clear plans to improve emergency management and increased climate emergencies, indicating more increased floods, droughts and forest fires; and

- (p) failing to improve the health systems in Manitobans by completely stalling provincial increases to health funding and solely relying on federal increases to fund health-care cost increases; and
- (q) failing to support Manitoba by acting as a barrier to municipalities and First Nations to access much-needed federal infrastructure funding; and
- (r) failing to support children in the care of CFS by slashing funding under the guise of block funding for agencies; and
- (s) failing to meet or work with the trilateral methamphetamine task force; and
- (t) failing to allow jurisdiction over First Nations' children in CFS; and
- (u) failing to support Manitoba's incredible arts and cultural communities by allowing cultural infrastructure to crumble and freezing or decreasing funding to arts and cultural organizations.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

#### Voice Vote

**Madam Speaker:** All those in favour of the subamendment, please say aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**Madam Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Madam Speaker:** In my opinion, the Nays have it.

#### Recorded Vote

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (Second Opposition House Leader):** A recorded vote, Madam Speaker.

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

The question before the House is the subamendment to the budget.

#### Division

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

#### Yeas

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

#### Nays

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

**Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 16, Nays 38.

**Madam Speaker:** I declare this subamendment lost.

\*\*\*

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House now is a proposed amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) that the House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Do members wish to have the amendment read?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Madam Speaker:** I hear a yes. The amendment is:

*THAT the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after "House" and substituting:*

therefore regrets that this budget neglects the priorities of Manitobans by:

- (a) breaking the Premier's promise to protect front-line services by making deep cuts to health and education, despite unprecedented revenues from the federal government; and
- (b) continuing the Premier's attack on the health-care system by underspending on health care by \$240 million, cutting the health-care budget by \$120 million, continuing forward on the plan to close two

more emergency rooms while freezing mental health and addictions services during a methamphetamine epidemic and continuing to undermine health care for women and girls across Manitoba; and

- (c) reducing supports for students with special needs while increasing class sizes for the youngest learners and slashing support of daycare for children; and
- (d) reducing college and university education by millions while increasing tuition rates for parents and students, putting education and good jobs out of the reach of Manitoba's youth; and

\* (16:40)

- (e) failing to provide a comprehensive jobs strategy for the future, especially for northern Manitobans, that gives more families access to good paying, non-precarious jobs while cutting supports for apprenticeships and training; and
- (f) by continuing to cut over \$150 million in infrastructure spending from what was previously promised, cutting \$40 million from water infrastructure in the same year as flood forecasts have worsened while failing to offer any program to reduce greenhouse emissions and fight climate change.

As a consequence, the provincial government has thereby lost the confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Madam Speaker:** I hear a no.

#### Voice Vote

**Madam Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment, 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 Nays 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 now is a proposed amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding).

#### Division

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

#### Yeas

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

#### Nays

*Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, 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.*

**Deputy Clerk:** Yeas 16, Nays 38.

**Madam Speaker:** I declare the amendment lost.

\*\*\*

**Madam Speaker:** The question now before the House is the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

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

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Official Opposition House Leader—or, no.

The honourable Government House Leader.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader):** Recorded vote, Madam Speaker.

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

The question before the House is the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

#### Division

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

#### Yeas

*Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Pivniuk, 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.*

**Deputy Clerk:** Yeas 38, Nays 16.

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

\* \* \*

**Mr. Goertzen:** Madam Speaker, will you canvass members to see if it's the will of the House to call it 5 p.m.?

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to call it 5 p.m.? *[Agreed]*

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



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

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