

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

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ADAMS, Danielle	Thompson	NDP
ALTOMARE, Nello	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma	Union Station	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian	Keewatinook	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	Kildonan-River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Roblin	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GORDON, Audrey, Hon.	Southdale	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah, Hon.	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek, Hon.	Interlake-Gimli	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	Assiniboia	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya	Notre Dame	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	McPhillips	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
MOSES, Jamie	St. Vital	NDP
NAYLOR, Lisa	Woleseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REYES, Jon	Waverley	PC
SALA, Adrien	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SMITH, Andrew	Lagimodière	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Vérendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

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. Good afternoon, everybody.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Madam Speaker: Introduction of bills?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Justice Fourth Report

Mr. Alan Lagimodiere (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Justice.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Justice—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on April 13, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 26)** – *The Human Rights Code Amendment Act/Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne*
- **Bill (No. 58)** – *The Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la confiscation de biens obtenus ou utilisés criminellement*
- **Bill (No. 63)** – *The Petty Trespasses Amendment and Occupiers' Liability Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'intrusion et la Loi sur la responsabilité des occupants*

Committee Membership

- *Mr. BUSHIE*
- *Hon. Mrs. COX*
- *Ms. FONTAINE*
- *Hon. Mr. FRIESEN*
- *Mr. ISLEIFSON*
- *Mr. LAGIMODIERE (Chairperson)*

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record

- *Hon. Mr. GERRARD*

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020 and further amended on December 3, 2020, Rule 83(2) was waived for the April 13, 2021 meeting, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 26)** – The Human Rights Code Amendment Act/Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne:*

*Zainab Mansaray, Canada Sierra Leone Friendship Society Inc.
Shawna Finnegan, Private Citizen*

*Your Committee heard the following six presentations on **Bill (No. 63)** – The Petty Trespasses Amendment and Occupiers' Liability Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'intrusion et la Loi sur la responsabilité des occupants:*

*Norman Rosenbaum, Private Citizen
Bill Campbell, President, Keystone Agricultural Producers
Grant Melnychuk, Manitoba Pork
Carson Callum, Manitoba Beef Producers
Chief Dennis Meeches, Treaty One Nation
Catherine Kroeker-Klassen, Manitoba Egg Farmers*

Written Submissions

*Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 26)** – The Human Rights Code Amendment Act/Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne:*

Karen Sharma, A/Executive Director, The Manitoba Human Rights Commission

Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 63) – The Petty Trespasses Amendment and Occupiers' Liability Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'intrusion et la Loi sur la responsabilité des occupants**:

Chief Dino Flett, Island Lake First Nations

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 26) – The Human Rights Code Amendment Act/Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment

- **Bill (No. 58) – The Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la confiscation de biens obtenus ou utilisés criminellement**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 63) – The Petty Trespasses Amendment and Occupiers' Liability Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'intrusion et la Loi sur la responsabilité des occupants**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment, on division.

Mr. Lagimodiere: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery): Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to table the annual report for the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba for the fiscal year 2019 to 2020.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage, 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 her statement.

Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Awareness Day

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I rise today to acknowledge April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month and to mark the one-year anniversary when our government made history by proclaiming April 14th as non-consensual distribution of intimate images awareness day.

The non-consensual distribution of intimate images and videos can occur in various situations that involve adults and youth, including when relationships break down or a partner is seeking revenge or using the distribution of private images as blackmail.

The non-consensual distribution of intimate images is an act of cyber sexual violence that is devastating to the victims, impacting every part of their lives and futures. And added to the trauma, Madam Speaker, is that the reputation of the person who shared the images is often called into question, when the blame should really rest solely on the person who distributed those images without consent.

And with an increase in online activity during the pandemic, people need to understand that non-consensual distribution of intimate images is a serious crime here in Canada.

Madam Speaker, sexual assault is part of a larger issue of sexual violence, which includes any unwelcome sexual attention, whether it's physical or verbal, in person or online. All Manitobans have a role to play in supporting survivors of sexual assault and ending sexual violence.

And I'm proud of the actions our government has made to address sexual violence. Most recently, our government provided \$6.4 million to enhance supports and resources for victims of crime, with \$850,000 dedicated specifically to grassroots community organizations that offer essential services to survivors of sexual violence. And we released our gender-based violence framework to address gender-based violence in our province, a framework that is being used as a model even by the NDP government in British Columbia.

Our government amended The Residential Tenancies Act to enable tenants who have experienced sexual violence the ability to terminate their leases early. We also passed legislation to ensure that municipalities have stronger policies and codes of conduct in place to address all harassment.

And within the public service, we listened to the experiences of Manitoba employees, both past and present, and made changes in direct response to what we heard. We released a revised respectful workplace policy and launched a government-wide sexual harassment awareness campaign. Our government recognizes that we must lead by example.

But our work is not over. Sexual Assault Awareness Month is dedicated to sharing resources and information about sexual assault, emphasizing the importance of consent and working to end sexual violence across the province.

Together, Madam Speaker, we can end sexual violence and create a safer, more equitable Manitoba for everyone.

Thank you.

Ms. Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): Every Manitoban deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, particularly by intimate partners and other people they trust.

Today is non-consensual distribution of intimate images awareness day, and nowadays it has become all too common for intimate images to be distributed online without the individual's consent. This needs to be immediately addressed.

In 2018, 505–555 cases of non-consensual distribution of intimate images were reported in Canada. And as with every other crime of a sexual nature, these statistics are very likely an underrepresentation of the real number of cases. Many victims don't come forward due to reasons such as shame, guilt, a culture that blames victims, fear of violence from a partner, and more.

In Canada, one in 10 ex-partners has threatened to release sexual images on the Internet. And if shared, these images can follow people around for their whole lives and can severely impact their mental health and future opportunities. And as many unfortunately know too well, it is very difficult to get something removed once it is shared on the Internet.

This disproportionately impacts young Manitobans, women and 2SLGBTQIA+ Manitobans. Today is International Day of Pink, which raises awareness about discrimination towards 2SLGBTQIA+ people. And this year's theme is cyberbullying.

This government needs to update our schools' sexual education curriculum to include media literacy and to teach our kids that sharing photos of others

is not acceptable and is, in fact, illegal. In many schools today, photos are traded like hockey cards, with no regard for the people who might be harmed. Many young Manitobans also feel pressured by their partners to send intimate images, which is unacceptable and does not constitute consent.

Too many of our schools lack any sort of policy or protocol to deal with sexual harassment, which means victims all too often go unsupported and have to continue going to school with their harasser. I hope this government will take meaningful action on this important day to help schools to develop the necessary policies to support students who are victimized.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

* (13:40)

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I ask for leave to speak in response to the minister's statement.

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

Ms. Lamoureux: I would like to thank the minister for bringing forward this ministerial statement on non-consensual distribution of intimate images awareness day. The sharing of intimate images without consent is a form of sexual assault which we recognize to build awareness every April. This act must be treated as a serious form of sexual assault and must not continue to go unnoticed.

There is a website, Cybertip.ca, that is a tip line that serves as part of Canada's strategy to protect sexual exploitation on the Internet, and according to their 2018 data, and I quote, they receive an average of seven direct requests for assistance every week from youth in crisis tied to the non-consensual sharing of a sexual picture.

Madam Speaker, chances are this number has gone up since.

Now, the sharing of intimate images occurs at all ages, but it is especially dangerous when it involves children and youth. I'd like to recognize a few organizations which do great work to combat the non-consensual distribution of intimate images.

The Toba Centre for Children and Youth, which was previously known as Snowflake Place, has its mission to restore the health and well-being of those affected by child abuse through the co-ordinated community response.

And, Madam Speaker, there's also the Canadian Centre for Child Protection located here in Winnipeg

that does great work to support individuals affected by non-consensual distribution of intimate images.

The government needs to be proactive on this issue. We should all strive to do more, as this government has an obligation to combat this issue. More ideas can include teachings on consent in our public services like our education, health care and other social services, Madam Speaker.

And with these few words, I would like to thank the minister again for bringing forward this important ministerial statement and thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to it.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Yazidi Community in Manitoba

Hon. Sarah Guillemard (Minister of Conservation and Climate): It gives me great pleasure to rise today and acknowledge an inspirational group of individuals living within the Fort Richmond constituency.

As Canadians, we often take for granted the many rights and freedoms that we are afforded by the Canadian constitution, including the freedom of religion.

The government of Canada website has a definition of section 2(a) of the freedom of religion that reads: It is the right to declare religious beliefs openly and without fear of hindrance or reprisal, and the right to manifest religious belief by worship and practice or by teaching and dissemination.

Madam Speaker, the Yazidi community was not afforded these same rights in their homeland. In fact, they have been violently persecuted and traumatized because of their faith for many years, and yet their faith and culture has endured.

I am in awe of the Yazidi community's resilience, perseverance and path to healing that is evident every day in Fort Richmond.

Mr. Hadji Hesso, leader of the Yazidi Association of Manitoba, reached out to let me know that today, April 14th, is the Yazidi Easter and New Year celebrations. The community are celebrating safely by following the health orders and look forward to returning to traditional events in the years to come, hopefully with new Yazidi arrivals.

Mr. Hesso asked me to highlight how his fellow Yazidi community members are proud to be Canadian and grateful to be a part of our city and province.

Madam Speaker, the traditional Yazidi Easter celebrations include a large community gathering with delicious food, joyous music and dancing well into the night. Another tradition that might seem familiar to many is painted eggs. Eggs are dyed to represent new birth and used in various fun games for the children.

The Yazidi community wishes to extend blessings for a healthy, prosperous New Year and a happy Easter to each member in the Chamber today, as well as to all Manitobans.

I ask all the members of the House today to join me in returning these kind wishes to the Yazidi people in Fort Richmond and around the globe.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Thompson Boys & Girls Club

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): Today, I would like to honour the Thompson Boys & Girls Club for their important work that they do for youth in the community.

The BGC Thompson is a community grassroots organization that offers recreational, nutritional, educational and vocational programming for children and youth at risk.

The club has created and maintained a safe, structured environment where people work together, where their minds and bodies can maintain health, happiness, and where they keep each other positively motivated about themselves, their community and their future. The BGC serves youth from many different backgrounds, but majority are high-risk high-youth with high needs from marginal families within the community and surrounding areas.

The BGC hosts the Youth Build program which is nearing its 15th year anniversary. This program focuses on providing opportunities for youth, underemployed or unemployed adults who need to rebuild their lives with the commitment to work, education, responsibility and family. Many of the people who access this program are Indigenous youth who have to leave their communities for Thompson and try and make a better life. However, when they arrive they are still faced with such barriers as limited employment opportunities and access to affordable housing.

Youth Build empowers 24 youth at risk by helping them develop solid life foundations by learning effective life management, problem solving skills through a life skills component. Afterwards they

move into an educational component where they have an opportunity to obtain their GED and programs in a vocational component in basic carpentry and construction.

These programs help youth develop the skills they need and use for the rest of their lives and play an important role in Thompson.

Please join me in honouring the Thompson Boys & Girls Club for all of the good work they do in our community.

Thank you.

Marjorie Hadaller

Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Today, I have another opportunity to honour yet another remarkable Dawson Trail resident.

It gives me great pleasure to recognize Marjorie Hadaller, a resident at Anola Sunrise Lodge who recently celebrated her 100th birthday. Born and raised in Portage la Prairie, Marjorie received her degree in 1940 and accepted a teaching position in Rossmere near Hazelridge. It was there that she met her husband, John. Marjorie and John were married in 1947 and resided on their farm east of Anola where they raised eight beautiful children.

Marjorie taught at various schools in Springfield, including McDavid School in Anola, Richland School and Beatrice School. She also served as a substitute, taught Discovery Time at Anola School and worked at Anola daycare until retiring in 1986.

Unfortunately, due to COVID, it was not possible to have a normal birthday celebration for her milestone birthday, but she did have window visits from family.

Marjorie was thrilled to receive greetings from Queen Elizabeth II, as well as letters from other dignitaries and many greetings and well wishes from Anola School students and staff.

Marjorie says that her secret to longevity is a positive attitude and feeling truly blessed, along with living on her farm well into her 90s.

Madam Speaker, it is my honour to add her today to a growing list of Dawson Trail heroes. Please join me today in wishing Marjorie a happy 100th birthday.

Municipality of St. James

Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James): Madam Speaker, this year marks the 100th birthday of the municipality of St. James, a community which was settled on

Treaty 1 territory and on the traditional homeland of the Métis nation.

The municipality of St. James has a rich and interesting history which goes back to 1850, when the Hudson's Bay Company granted land along the Assiniboine River to establish the Parish of St. James.

By the 1870s, St. James was being described as the finest locality in the province. It boasted a school, a flour mill, a post office, many stores, a brewery and a small Anglican church which still stands in the same spot today. The fifth premier of our province, John Norquay, was one of the first to teach at the local community school.

As the years went on, the population of St. James grew exponentially as more settlers came from eastern Canada and abroad. The bumpy wagon road running along the Assiniboine, once known as the Portage Trail, later turned into Portage Avenue which would be used to parade soldiers who were returning home from First World War.

As the community matured, neighbourhoods started to be built around some of the landmarks in the area such as the Deer Lodge Hospital, the St. James Anglican Church and Linwood School. And, in later years, the community would become home to one of the largest aerospace clusters in the country with a regional airport, a Canadian air force base, as well as a number of aerospace firms and manufacturing businesses which offered good, family-supporting jobs to members of the community.

* (13:50)

Today, the community of St. James remains a wonderful place to live and raise a family. It is also fast becoming a much more diverse and culturally rich place to live, and it makes me incredibly proud to see this diversity reflected in our schools, in our community centres and in our local businesses.

I want to thank all constituents, both past and present, for their immeasurable contributions to the community and for making St. James what it is today.

Madam Speaker, I ask all members to join me today in congratulating the community of St. James on a happy 100th birthday.

Birthday Wishes

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): Madam Speaker, my four-year-old son, Mark, cannot wait to turn five. He's counting down the weeks and the days. But he knows his daddy's birthday has to happen first, so this

morning he was super excited to learn that today was that day.

Yes, Madam Speaker, it's my birthday and, completely coincidentally, I've been given the opportunity to make a private member's statement.

I remember being young and counting each and every year and yearning to get to the next. Eventually, the years didn't matter as much, but the decades sure seemed to. Well, now I've gotten to the point where my age is a full half-century. And whether you wish me one or not, I can assure Madam Speaker that I am having a happy birthday.

There is, however, one thing about finishing your first half-century, and that is that you can be reasonably assured you likely will not finish your next one. Yes, Madam Speaker, I'm not intending to be the harbinger of doom, but we are all going to die. We sometimes act like that day will never arrive, but death is inevitable.

My dad taught me that when something is inevitable, you'd best be prepared for it. Now, some of you might be thinking, well, if you're going to meet your Maker, you'd—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Teitsma: —want the good things you did to outweigh your bad, or to be able to say that I'm basically a good person.

Well, I've got news for you: that's not likely to cut it.

Just as criminals deserve to be punished whether they gave to charity or helped granny across the street, so everyone here on earth does fall short when it comes to living the way we should. I'm not trying to make you feel guilty; I'm trying to convince you that you are guilty. And so am I.

Now, if you really want to meet your Maker, I believe you need to turn to Jesus, confess your sins, and ask for forgiveness, and depend on Him to give you undeserved grace and then commit to living your life in His thankful service. When you do that, you'll be able to celebrate not just for another 50 years, but for 10,000 more.

So, Madam Speaker, the blessed assurance that it is well with my soul is probably the biggest reason that I'm having a happy birthday. And my birthday wish for you and for all those listening is that they can enjoy the same.

Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout Appointment Booking System

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, apparently, let me be the first to say happy birthday to the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma), Madam Speaker.

Manitobans are disappointed as to why this government just can't ramp up the vaccine campaign. Now, one Manitoban, a woman named Mary Macdonald, saw first-hand just how sluggish the government can be. Now, Mary booked an appointment at the Morden supersite just as soon as she became eligible. But when the weather forecast showed snow and dangerous driving conditions, Mary started trying to reschedule. Then she found out that if she cancelled her appointment, no one else would be able to step in. The appointment would simply be lost, thereby slowing down the vaccination campaign.

Now, for Mary, somebody who cares deeply about getting this campaign rolling as quickly as possible, the news made her consider getting in a car and driving through a storm just to avoid that waste.

Why is Mary more concerned about a slow rollout than the Premier?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, I'm sorry for Mary's inconvenience, but I am pleased that, as of this morning, 299,821 doses of vaccine have been administered to Manitobans.

And we also know that our vaccine teams have been working very diligently. We also know that they have now reduced the age for eligibility to 59 years or older, and for First Nations people 39 years or older, and I encourage all Manitobans to get their vaccine when their time comes to get it.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, you know Mary's story tells you a lot about the dysfunction of the government's vaccine rollout. Mary had the sense to check the weather forecast and plan ahead, but apparently this government does not.

Now, the PCs went and told the media one thing, but then they turned around and told Mary quite another. Mary was told that they had the technical capacity to give out last-minute appointments, but that the higher-ups wouldn't give the permission to the booking agents to do so.

Now, that's not the fault of the hard-working public health staff, that's the fault of the Premier and the Cabinet. It's the fault of a government that simply can't plan ahead, whether it was failing businesses in the first wave, failing to prepare for the second wave or failing on the vaccine rollout now that we're in the third wave.

Why can't the Premier put a plan in place so that no appointment is wasted?

Mr. Pallister: The seven supersites—going to open in Steinbach in May. I just encourage all the folks in that area of the province to take advantage of that, or sooner—if they're eligible sooner, they can use a number of other locations.

There's a telephone town hall scheduled for tomorrow night. There was one last night. So Manitobans can call in if they has questions that they want answered.

And I guess I'd remind the member opposite that this is a historic pandemic without precedent and that he is the leader of a party that took us to 10th out of 10 on health-care delivery when they had the chance to fix that.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, it's because of this Premier that our vaccine campaign is as sluggish and tired as his government. Now, Manitobans need a campaign that can spot obstacles up ahead and quickly pivot and adjust course to be able to accommodate them. But this Premier waits for catastrophe to hit before taking action.

In an emergency, Manitobans want to see leadership that's decisive and smart, that adapts to evolving realities. But in this third wave emergency, the one public health officials have been warning about for months, the Premier is standing around, satisfied, with his hands in his pocket.

When will he start to treat this like a real state of emergency?

Mr. Pallister: Well, Madam Speaker, again, in response to the partisan comments of the member, I can only say that he has more experience in causing emergencies than in solving the problems around them.

This government has been facing the challenge of solving the problems and will continue to do that.

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

COVID-19 Financial Assistance Support for Small Business

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, Madam Speaker, I recognize that it's a tough day for the Premier and that there is more bad news to come. But we're talking about the issues that affect Manitobans.

Small businesses are still struggling to get back on their feet after the last lockdown. And now with the rising case counts and the potentiality of further restrictions, businesses are worried about being able to keep paying their—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —bills and their employees.

Now, the Premier asked businesses to make sacrifices and to shut down during the second wave. We were supposed to be in a lockdown to buy time for the vaccines to show up. Well, they're here, and the Premier is not getting them out to Manitobans quickly enough. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: The Premier's had time to plan and prepare for a third wave, so what business supports will the Premier put into place to help small businesses right across this great province?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): You know it's a tough day for the Leader of the Opposition when he ventures into the land of talking about something he knows nothing about, Madam Speaker—and he does that most days. But small businesses have had the best supports from this government of any provincial government in Canada, bar none.

And I know it's a tough day, too, for the Leader of the Opposition when people begin to look at his personal record, Madam Speaker, and they note that his commitments to change for something better haven't happened. In fact, he's repeating the same failed habits of the past: disrespecting health orders, harassing civil servants, arguing for blockades of the Legislative Assembly.

The member is demonstrating his train-recklessness with every passing day.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, I know the Premier is advertising for a new communications director. And, clearly, after a failure to communicate like that one, I don't think that help can get here just soon enough.

But when it comes to the things that are actually affecting Manitobans in Manitoba, outside of the Premier and the clerk of the Executive Council's bubble, we need to look at helping small businesses.

* (14:00)

We have small businesses right across the province who have been suffering for the past year. Some of them haven't even been able to reopen as a result of the restrictions. Now, what we need from the government is a smart, proactive plan to help these businesses before the next crisis hits.

Madam Speaker, we know that Dr. Roussin has been talking about further restrictions, so it seems like it should be a question that the Premier is well prepared to answer.

What is the plan to help small businesses if the restrictions impact them further?

Mr. Pallister: That plan's been put into action and continues to be put into action since the outset of the pandemic, with the largest supports for small business in Canada, Madam Speaker. And they were opposed by the NDP, sequentially, each time.

And, Madam Speaker, that reflects the same attitude they had towards small business when they were in government when they raised the PST on benefits, when they raised the PST on property insurance, when they jacked up the cost of hydro, when they kept raising the costs on small businesses and when they pilloried them with higher and higher and higher taxes; the NDP showed no concern for small businesses then.

This side of the House has always shown its support for small businesses in a real way with the most strong and substantive supports for small business during this pandemic and policies that will encourage small businesses to continue to grow in our province, Madam Speaker, as they have for five years under this government's watch.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, you wouldn't have to look at the media over the last 24 hours to know that the government treats workers very, very poorly.

However, Manitobans are looking for solutions, not just more problems and disrespect.

So what we would like to see is a proactive—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —and detailed plan to help small businesses make it through what could potentially be much more difficulties when it comes to the spring.

After failing the workers at Hydro, after failing the workers of small businesses, when will the Premier finally come up with a real plan to support small businesses as restrictions loom?

Mr. Pallister: Well, I know the NDP record on treating their former staff was about three quarters of a million dollars in severance payments, Madam Speaker, which they then covered up.

So if that's how they like to treat people well, Madam Speaker, they're forgetting about the general public where the taxes are paid, where they come off—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —the kitchen tables of working families, where the money is taken from people who work for it. The NDP doesn't understand that, the—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —leader doesn't understand it. He's never struggled. He never understood how low-income people need an extra break on the kitchen table, how seniors need help.

They—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —don't need people stealing their money, Madam Speaker. They don't need somebody stealing their money. What they need instead is more money on the kitchen table—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —to help them find their way.

That's what we're doing with our small businesses, that's what we're doing with our most vulnerable, with the strongest supports of any province in Canada.

Health-Care System Nurse Staffing Levels

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): Madam Speaker, there's a nursing shortage in Manitoba. That's what Manitoba's chief nursing officer told residents in Altona just this week. That's the first time an official from the Province has made that admission.

Ms. Siragusa says that nurses definitely have options to go wherever they want to go and that there's not enough staff to this point in the province.

Certainly, years of disrespect and frozen wages have taken their toll. The Altona emergency room is just the recent facility to face diversions for critical cases.

I ask the minister: Will she acknowledge this nursing shortage and will she take meaningful steps, like a fair deal for nurses, to ensure our health facilities are staffed up?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): We are taking meaningful steps, Madam Speaker. Just recently, we had 36 new graduates of a nursing program that will be able to come into our acute-care system.

But what I will say, and I will say again, Madam Speaker, for the member opposite, the recruitment and retention of clinical staff in rural communities is a challenge across the country and has been for many years. The NDP knows full well, as many of their previous ministers of Health have also stated.

So we'll continue to work with the regional health authority, Madam Speaker, and the community to ensure that Altona and the surrounding area have the services they need now and into the future.

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

MLA Asagwara: Madam Speaker, Ms. Siragusa goes on. She says, maybe—maybe—we need to have more nurses graduating. Yeah, well, no kidding.

Madam Speaker, maybe the Province shouldn't have cut 75 training spaces for prospective nurses in 2019. Maybe the Province shouldn't have cut incentives for graduating nurses that encourage them to work in Manitoba. And maybe, just maybe, they shouldn't call nurses heroes while refusing to negotiate a fair deal with them.

In Altona, the Pallister government has had to use paramedics to fill the gaps.

Will the minister acknowledge the nursing shortage and make investments to keep Altona emergency room fully open?

Mrs. Stefanson: Maybe, just maybe, the member opposite should listen to the answer, because I just stated that 36 new graduates in nursing—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mrs. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, members opposite can continue—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stefanson: Members opposite used the same fear-mongering tactics in—the community of Roblin was facing challenges in its emergency. Today, Roblin's emergency department is open and is, in fact, providing 24-7 service, which is even better than it was doing under its temporary service suspension, Madam Speaker.

We will continue to work in collaboration with the regional health authority, with Shared Health, with others in the community to ensure that the 24-hour service is reinstated in Altona.

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

MLA Asagwara: It's so strange: like, 36 isn't 75. But anyway.

Madam Speaker, the Pallister government cut health care to the bone. As we—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

MLA Asagwara: —previously discussed, six weeks before the pandemic struck, important areas of our health-care system were understaffed: critical care at Grace, 26 per cent vacancy; critical care at HSC, 31 per cent vacant; emergency care at St. Boniface, 28 per cent vacant. Through freedom of information, which I table, we now know that the Province has spent \$2.6 million in agency staffing in just 11 months in Winnipeg to try to fill the holes that they made. As the members opposite like to say, this is not sustainable.

Will the minister acknowledge the nursing shortage, and will she make investments to reduce reliance on agency staffing, yes or no?

Mrs. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, we are continuing to train even more nurses for these positions.

And I want to commend those who work in our health-care system: all of our nurses, our doctors, all

of our health-care aides, Madam Speaker, all of those working during this unprecedented pandemic that we're facing.

I do know, when it comes to Altona, we needed to make a decision based on safety. This is in the best interests of the safety for those in the community. This is a temporary change, Madam Speaker, and we know, because we want to set in place—the member opposite talks about sustainability. As we did in Roblin, we will continue to do the same thing in Altona to ensure that those people in that community have the long, sustainable health care that they need, want and deserve closer to home.

Manitoba's Workforce Paid Sick Leave

Ms. Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): Madam Speaker, as we see cases of COVID continue to increase day after day in Manitoba, Manitobans are very concerned.

Not only are Manitobans concerned for their lives and their health, but they're also afraid about losing their jobs—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Marcelino: —or their income if they fall ill. Universal access to paid sick leave would play a major role in protecting Manitobans, both individually and in terms of community health, as it would limit the spread of the virus.

Will the minister commit today to implementing a paid sick leave for all Manitobans?

* (14:10)

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): Our Province is very proud of the fact that we are one of the first provinces—in fact, the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) one of the ones that initiated that with a NDP premier from BC, to get the federal government at the table in terms of a federal sick leave program. We think that's important. We passed legislation here to complement the legislation that's there.

We've also provided many supports, financial supports, to over 350,000 individuals in Manitoba here to give them direct support during the financial pandemic.

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

Ms. Marcelino: Madam Speaker, according to a report from Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, 58 per cent of working Canadians do not have access—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Marcelino: —to paid sick leave, and 70 per cent of low-income earners do not have paid sick leave.

For many essential workers, the report found that this absence of paid sick leave translates into an increased risk of exposure to COVID-19. The absence of paid sick leave in labour and health-care legislation can result in life-threatening consequences, especially as we see increases in COVID cases and variants.

Will the minister do what's right to protect Manitobans and implement paid sick leave for all?

Mr. Fielding: To repeat, we took a lead in terms of convincing the federal government in terms of the sick leave program. We think it's important; the program that's in place is there.

We're also proud of the fact that we worked with business, we worked with labour to establish programs like the Risk Recognition Program that provided upwards of 80,000 individuals upwards of about \$1,500 of support during the pandemic. These are individuals that were working on the front line.

It's important to provide a lot of support to Manitobans. That's exactly what this government did. Over 360,000 Manitobans were supported in the pandemic. And, Madam Speaker, we're not done yet.

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

Ms. Marcelino: Madam Speaker, on this side of the House we recognize that paid sick leave is important to work towards reducing health and economic inequities.

When people know that they will not lose their income or their job if they stay home when they are sick or have symptoms, there will be a lower risk of spreading this virus. And we also know that there are ways to implement a paid sick leave that reduce the burden on small businesses.

Will the minister commit today to implementing a paid sick leave and working towards a more equitable approach to health care for all Manitobans?

Mr. Fielding: Our government has taken in a lead in that, in terms of working with other governments from

different levels, whether they be NDP, Liberal. We want to get what's done right for Manitobans, and that's why we pushed this at the national level.

We provided a lot of support, even through Workers Compensation Board, where, up to March, over 1,200 individuals were supported if they got COVID claims as it related to different items like that.

Our support for individuals and Manitobans is second to none in the country.

Tax Relief in Budget 2021 Renters and Small Business

Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry): Madam Speaker, I'd like to apologize to the House.

Last week, it was reported that the Premier will receive \$4,011 in property tax rebate for his \$2.5-million property on Wellington Crescent. That's a mistake, Madam Speaker. In fact, the Premier will receive many thousands more.

There's also his second home in the country, at High Bluff, and his commercial property in Portage la Prairie. All in all, it's \$7,000 or more for the Premier while regular Manitobans get wage freezes and cuts.

We can see from this, Madam Speaker, that the only kitchen table the Premier is concerned about is his own.

I ask the government: Will they apologize to the tens of thousands of renters they are leaving behind while the wealthiest benefit?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Legislative and Public Affairs): The good people of Fort Garry made a mistake when they elected that individual as their representative, Madam Speaker. I have rarely seen an MLA sink to the levels that that MLA has been sinking to in the last several weeks and particularly today.

This is a government that is providing tax relief—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Goertzen: —for all Manitobans, in stark contrast to the former government, which raised taxes on everybody, Madam Speaker.

This individual will have an opportunity to apologize to the—Manitobans when he tries to take away the tax relief for the individuals in his constituency who should never have elected him as a representative—that tax relief, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Wasyliw: In 2019, the Pallister government greatly increased property taxes on those living in very modest homes. The education property tax rebate continues this government's attempt to make taxes less fair in Manitoba.

This year's budget is made for landlords, and to quote from the budget papers, landlords of buildings and not renters will benefit. Renters are missing out. While the Premier puts \$7,000 in his own pocket, tens of thousands of renters will actually lose benefits.

Why is the Premier focused on his own needs and the needs of landlords over the needs of working Manitobans during the worst financial crisis of our lifetime?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Didn't get into politics for the money, Madam Speaker. Didn't get into politics to help myself. Got into politics to help people who are vulnerable, to have a chance to come up the way our family did, the way many families in this House have, a chance for people to rise up and succeed.

Saved for 30 or 40 years; started a small business; invested. Part of that was investing in real estate to support that business. That's what that—those savings come to people who invest in their home too, Madam Speaker.

The Winnipeg 1 trustee that just asked those two questions raised taxes in one of the hardest areas in the province to succeed in, raised taxes, as a trustee, by 40 per cent—by 40 per cent—in just seven years. Boy, is he in the right party.

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

Mr. Wasyliw: Not only renters are losing out in this budget. Many small businesses that rent won't get a benefit. But it's renters who've been most impacted by the pandemic and the financial crisis. They work at essential workplaces, they provide the goods and services we need, but the Premier is leaving those people behind while giving thousands to himself and to other landlords.

While our front-line workers make sacrifices, this government is completely detached with the financial reality facing tens of thousands of Manitobans.

Will he apologize to the renters and small businesses he is intentionally and wilfully leaving behind?

Mr. Pallister: Never wrestle with a pig, Madam Speaker. The pig just enjoys it more.

I'll only say this: a two-year rent freeze helps those—*[interjection]*—a two-year rent freeze helps those, Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —who rent, and lower taxes on property, education taxes on property, help those who own. But what doesn't help is when school trustees raise taxes by 40 per cent in seven years. That hurts people a lot.

And, Madam Speaker, that's the kind of hurt that we're trying to undo with these measures, and we will because Manitobans deserve a break, not only during COVID but all the time, and they never got one from the NDP, but they'll get one from us.

Infrastructure Spending Government Record

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, for the first time in the history of this province, the Pallister government is withholding its third quarter financial report, unlike every other province in the country. They've done this because they know it will clearly show that it—there are many promises which are unfulfilled when it comes to building schools, hospitals, roads and bridges in this province.

In fact—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wiebe: —the so-called strategic infrastructure has been underspent each and every single year that this government has been in office. And now they just don't want the public to see how badly underspent they have done this year.

Madam Speaker, why is the government continuing to break these financial norms and not releasing the financial report for this upcoming year?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): Well, Madam Speaker, I got a message for the member of Concordia: you've got mail, because an email came out the day of the budget that released the third quarter, the same as we have done in numerous other years—last year, we did it a little different—and that talked exactly about our financials. We're projecting

over \$2 billion this year. We're making some added benefits—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: Madam Speaker, in this year's budget, 650,000 Manitobans are going to get a 50 per cent reduction on their education property taxes over the next two years, as well as renters. Our rent—our program, in terms of support, in terms of rent control—will be better off than the NDP status program.

* (14:20)

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

Mr. Wiebe: Well, I guess I shouldn't be surprised, Madam Speaker, that they wouldn't let the Infrastructure Minister actually stand up, because he knows he's underspending the budget once again.

Madam Speaker, this Finance Minister knows clearly that the infrastructure spending is not in this year's budget because it's—he hasn't tabled that report for last year. This minister refuses to stand up and tell us how much he's going to underspend this year.

This is the first time in the history of this province that—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wiebe: —a court-ordered financial report hasn't been released to this House, and I'd like the Infrastructure Minister to get up and tell us exactly how much he's going to underspend in the Infrastructure budget this year.

Mr. Fielding: Well, Madam Speaker, I don't know what to say.

The member is talking about strategic infrastructure—that somehow it's not part of this year's budget. It is, in fact, Madam Speaker. It's gone up to \$2.1 billion, the most of amount in Manitoba history. It includes a commitment—*[interjection]*—it includes a commitment of \$500 million a year for highway, road construction. That's a three-year horizon on that. That's an important number: \$500 million.

It also commits to carry over any dollars that wasn't spent in the year before. We know what the NDP did: they underspent Infrastructure budgets every year except for the election years, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Wiebe: Well, a lot has changed in the world over the last year, Madam Speaker, but apparently this government's cuts have not.

This is the opportunity that this government had to invest in this province, to invest and put people back to work, and yet this Infrastructure Minister won't even stand up to defend his underspending year over year over year. It's the same tired minister with the same tired notes talking about the same tired plan. These are promises that are going to be broken.

Why won't this government simply admit that they're going to underspend this year the same as they do every year?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: I just feel I have to just make a mention that banging on the desks is considered a bit of a health hazard to our translators and to Hansard that have to be listening to this very carefully. And because our mics are so sensitive, that noise is quite a detriment.

So I'm asking people again—or, reminding people that it would be a great idea not to bang on desks.

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Well, Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank the member for Concordia for asking a finance question and the Finance Minister allowing me to answer it.

Madam Speaker, in 2021-2022, our government's committed to spending \$500 million; 2022-2023: \$500 million; 2023-24: \$500 million. That is \$1.5 million over three years.

Let's compare that to the NDP, Madam Speaker: 2000-2001, \$98 million; '01-02, \$93 million; '02-03, \$111 million. They didn't spend in one year what we're—[interjection]—they didn't spend in three—[interjection]—what we're spending in one—\$1.5 billion.

Hold onto your seat. Move your Lexus. Move your Beemers. We're building this province.

COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout Appointment Booking System

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): On Monday, this government told Manitobans to drive through a blizzard to a vaccine clinic in Steinbach that was closed. They received multiple reminders despite the cancellation.

We checked the vaccine appointment line and we were told that they were working with PetalMD, a

Quebec-based company whose website shows they're providing services to the Manitoba government. We've heard these operators aren't trained and are working in call centres in other provinces, which would certainly explain why they don't know the difference between Morris and Morden or Stonewall and Steinbach and why they're telling Manitobans to drive over icy highways in a blizzard to clinics that have been shut down.

Is this latest life-threatening snafu because this government outsourced calling to an out-of-province company to save a few bucks?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I can only suggest to the member that, if the federal government had provided us with more vaccines across this country, we wouldn't be ranking in 40th place, as we are right now; we'd have a lot fewer casualties as a consequence of the COVID pandemic; people would be healthier and feeling better about our recovery; but they didn't do that.

And so I would just simply remind the member that right across this great country there are teams of people working diligently to distribute vaccines as fast as they can, as best they can, but we'd all love to have a lot more.

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

COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Vaccinations for Police Service

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): Still on vaccines: I've been getting emails from constituents who are wondering why police are not on the priority list for vaccines. As one constituent—a teacher—wrote, quote, firefighters and paramedics have rightfully received vaccines as emergency personnel. Police are enforcing health orders, respond to emergency calls, deal with people in crisis and often accompany people to hospitals. End quote.

I wrote to the Minister of Health, who wrote back saying the government is following the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, or NACI. But NACI's guide—which I table—has first responders, police and firefighters all in the same group in stage two.

Why is this government ignoring the national vaccine priority recommendations they say they're following? Are police front-line responders or not?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Our government is respecting the recommendations of our health leaders throughout this pandemic; we'll continue to do that.

I would encourage all of us to make sure and give our support and encouragement to these folks who are undertaking an historic task, not just the health leadership, in terms of Dr. Roussin and his team, but also the vaccine team. This is an incredibly stressful time for them—as if it for all of us—but they have undertaken to do something that's never ever been done before in the history of this province.

It's a lot harder than running a newspaper, for example, or being in opposition.

Home-Care Services Constituent Case Concern

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes. Madam Speaker, last week, the Minister of Health asked me to write to her with personal concerns which are brought to me.

My question today is about a person who's very disabled and needs home care. The concern is so serious I have written five times to the minister during the last several weeks, yet there has been no action. Since March 26, she's been suffering and unable even to have a bath because she's been without the home care she so desperately needs. This woman has written to the Ombudsman, has filed a human rights appeal.

When will the minister make sure Manitoba's home-care system is working properly so this woman can get the home care she needs?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): Certainly we are aware of the issue, and I know that I've asked our department to look into this and work with this individual to ensure that she gets the home care that she needs.

We want to ensure that all Manitobans get the appropriate care that they need in their homes, in their communities and wherever they live, Madam Speaker. And I know that our officials will work diligently with this individual to ensure that the situation is rectified.

Accessibility of Services Government Initiatives

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): We know that our government is committed to ensuring services throughout the province are accessible and inclusive to all Manitobans.

Can the Minister of Finance update the House on our government's latest investments in this area?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): Our commitment to 'Manitoomans' has been put forth in the budget, where we're making massive commitments in terms of tax relief for individuals, making massive investments in infrastructure, making massive investments in things like health care, protecting Manitobans under COVID-19, making sure the supports are in place to make sure that Manitobans are protected.

We're going to continue to do that, Madam Speaker, to make sure Manitobans are protected, as well as laying forth a plan to advance Manitoba to make sure we have a plan, once we're through the pandemic, to grow the economy here in the—Manitoba.

* (14:30)

Community Safety Programs Funding Concerns

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): In this year's budget, the Justice Minister decided to cut funding to community safety by \$2.6 million. These are cuts to crime prevention, community corrections, the IJU and the Family Resolution Service, among others, Madam Speaker.

However, I'll table a document which shows that, at the same time the department's doing these cuts, they're actually hiring three new full-time staff at the cost of almost \$300,000 to create a new regulatory accountability unit that will focus on finding ways to reduce red tape, Madam Speaker.

This is at the same time that the minister is cutting funding to important community safety programs.

Why is the minister spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on so-called red tape exercises while underfunding and cutting—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Nonsense, Madam Speaker.

I was pleased last week to be joined by the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations (Ms. Clarke), the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Cox) to make another \$6.4 million in investments to third parties who are committed to and carrying forward plans to enhance victims of crime services, provide funding, provide counselling and services.

Just one and—another example of how our government is making excellent investments in Justice and other departments.

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

Ms. Fontaine: The Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his Cabinet are ignoring the real needs of Manitobans and, instead, are investing in what is their real priority, Madam Speaker, which is counting regulations.

And we know what this means. This government has put forward five different omnibus red tape bills in the last five years. Each of these bills have been an attempt to hide shameful changes that avoid scrutiny, Madam Speaker.

This government considers The Adult Literacy Act—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: —to be red tape. They consider the 'appendersip' employment opportunities act to also be red tape, Madam Speaker.

Will the minister stop focusing on arbitrary red—reduction and costs—cuts, and instead focus on funding community safety?

Mr. Fielding: No. To answer the member's question directly: absolutely not. We will not stop looking to reduce red tape in this government. We think that, under the 17 years of the NDP government, there's more red tape where individuals and businesses were—wrapped themselves into a bow because of all the NDP red tape.

Whether it be things like child care, whether it be things like other important services, we take great pride in the fact that we've reduced red tape. We've won international awards from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to reduce red tape, to make it easier for businesses, as well as customers to use and consume our products.

Madam Speaker, we're very proud of that.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson.

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): No petitions.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie). No.

The honourable member for Elmwood.

Diagnostic Testing Accessibility

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Until recently, diagnostic medical tests, including for blood and fluid samples, were available and accessible in most medical clinics.

(2) Dynacare blood test labs have consolidated their blood and fluid testing services by closing 25 of its labs.

(3) The provincial government has cut diagnostic testing at many clinic sites, and residents now have to travel to different locations to get their testing done, even for a simple blood test or urine sample.

(4) Further, travel challenges for vulnerable and elderly residents of northeast Winnipeg may result in fewer tests being done or delays in testing, with the attendant effects of increased health-care costs and poorer individual patient outcomes.

(5) COVID-19 emergency rules have resulted in long outdoor lineups, putting vulnerable residents at further risk in extreme weather, be it hot or cold. Moreover, these long lineups have resulted in longer wait times for services and poorer service in general.

(6) Manitoba residents value the convenience and efficiency of the health-care system when they are able to give their samples at the time of the doctor visit.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately demand Dynacare maintain all of the phlebotomy blood sample sites existing prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency, and allow all Manitobans to get their blood and urine tests done when visiting their doctor, thereby facilitating local access to blood testing services.

And this petition is signed by many, many Manitobans.

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

The honourable member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses)? The honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Sandhu)?

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): No petition, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv)? The honourable member for Concordia?

On petitions, the honourable member for Concordia.

Public Child-Care Grants

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background for this petition is as follows:

(1) The pandemic has further emphasized the need for quality, affordable and accessible child care and has demonstrated that the government has failed to ensure child care is accessible to all Manitoba families.

(2) Over 90 per cent of Manitoba children receive child care through non-profit, licensed centres, yet funding has been frozen since 2016. These cuts have resulted in many early childhood educators leaving the sector.

(3) While child-care centres have faced increased costs associated with lost parent fees due to COVID-19 closures and spent thousands on PPE, when open, to keep kids safe, the provincial government has provided no additional financial support.

(4) The government spent less than 1 per cent of the \$18-million temporary child-care grant, and instead gave KPMG double their contract, nearly \$600,000, to conduct a review that will raise parent fees and lay the groundwork for privatization.

(5) The provincial government's cuts to nursery school programs is doubling parent fees for hundreds of families, making child care less affordable and accessible.

(6) The provincial government passed bill 34, the budget implementation and tax statutes amendment act, which removed the cap on child-care fees for private sector businesses.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse changes to the nursery school grants and to end the freeze on child-care operating grants while committing to keeping child care—public child care affordable and accessible to all Manitoba families.

This petition, Madam Speaker, is signed by many Manitobans.

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): I'd like to announce that the following bills will be considered at the previously scheduled meeting of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development on Thursday, April 15th, 2021: Bill 33, The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act; and Bill 34, The University College of the North Amendment Act; and to remove Bill 47 from that same scheduled meeting.

And I'd like to announce the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Thursday, April 15th, 2021 at 6 p.m. to consider Bill 47, The Early Learning and Child Care Act.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the following bills will be considered at the previously scheduled meeting of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development on Thursday, April 15th, 2021: Bill 33, The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act; Bill 34, The University College of the North Amendment Act; and to remove Bill 47 from that same scheduled meeting.

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* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Legislative and Public Affairs): During second reading debate of Bill 29, I took as notice questions from the honourable member for Notre Dame (Ms. Marcelino), and I'd like to table responses to that question.

Also, Madam Speaker, on that same second reading debate, I took as notice questions from the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont), and I'll table the responses to those questions.

And I took as notice questions from the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), and I will table the responses to those questions.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, appreciate the tabling from the Government House Leader.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Could you please call for debate—resumption of debate on the budget.

* (14:40)

**BUDGET DEBATE
(Sixth Day of Debate)**

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

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): It's great to get up again on the next day, and first of all, again, I can't say it enough, how great a privilege it is to represent the people of the Dauphin constituency. We're quite a diverse and large constituency and it's indeed an honour to represent them and to be a representative in this House representing them, so.

First, I want to start, the first priority of Budget 2021 is to continue to protect Manitobans. And, of course, over the last year, you know, that's been an issue that has been top of mind for many, many, many Manitobans, and it's great to see that the government is making that a priority in this year's budget.

And it follows a year of exceptional leadership by the Pallister government and a year that saw this government follow through on its promise to balance the budget at the beginning. But, of course, that began early on a year of unprecedented disruption and change and adaptation for everyone in the province, so.

Since the pandemic started, the PC government has done an outstanding job of reaching out to Manitobans, has kept everybody informed on the decisions being made to ensure public safety; programs to help small businesses, parents, schools, caregivers, to say—to name a few; and to reinforce and support the efforts of Dr. Roussin and Manitoba's economic response team through challenging times.

So, I know, over the year and leading into this budget our Premier (Mr. Pallister) took the lead on many provincial and national issues, and it was reassuring that we had that kind of leadership.

And I'd like to—just, in summation, just recall that we're having a—we had a great 2021 budget and we

look forward to the fulfillment of the promises, that this government is known to keep its promises.

And I thank you for your time, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): It's an honour to put a few words on record on the budget, which has been recently brought forward by this government.

Before that, I would like to wish everybody today the Day of Pink. And let's commit with ourselves to strongly stand together against bullying of all kinds, my friends.

And also yesterday was a very important day for the East Indian community in Manitoba, which was Vaisakhi and Khalsa Day. So, belated happy Vaisakhi, belated happy Khalsa Day.

Coming back to the topic—budget—there is a story that there was an author who wrote a 500-page book, and the title of the book was, how do the horses run? He organized a ceremony, a book release ceremony, invited a chief guest, and the chief guest looked at the title and put a few words—shared a few words with the people present at the occasion.

He was praising the book, saying, a wonderful document on horses that would create an opportunity for the people to know more about animals. It would connect our next generation to the equine industry and its contribution to agriculture, to transportation and so on.

The speech ended with an applause. He went back home and the chief guest opened the book. To his surprise, all what the 499 pages said was tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck. This is how the horses run. That's why they say do not judge a book by its cover.

So this is the document that we are talking about today. This document is entitled protecting Manitobans and advancing Manitoba. This is the title. Rather than just looking at the title, we need to understand whether this budget document really protects Manitobans, as claimed on the title. Does it really advance Manitoba? We need to look at that.

So when you study this document, you think about, first of all, post-secondary students. Does this document, this budget, protect post-secondary students? Does not. If you think about the health care of our CancerCare units, our emergency rooms, does this budget really protect these facilities, these organizations? It does not.

Historically, during the pandemic—we've been fighting with this pandemic for so many months now, over a year now—this government failed to protect our EAs in the schools, sub teachers in the schools, drivers in the schools. Does this budget offer anything that protects these people, these hard-working Manitobans? It does not.

And when you talk about seniors, we have witnessed that so many Manitobans, during this pandemic, they lost their senior family members. Just one example—just one example—is Maples Personal Care Home. Eight residents died in 48 hours. That's painful. Fifty-five seniors died at this facility. Not only 153 residents were tested positive, but also, 62 staff members were tested positive for COVID. And this is a personal-care home which is run by a private organization.

Manitobans called on this government, NDP called on this government, to take over this facility and save the lives of our seniors who have spent all their lives to build Manitoba, to build our economy, but this government simply failed to do that.

A few days back, we started witnessing IBEW workers honking around the building where we are sitting—virtually myself today—around our Legislature. This government failed to protect their wages, and this government failed to protect the wages of bus drivers of Winnipeg School Division. They were out on the picket line.

* (14:50)

But, again, the title of this document nicely claims that it's about protecting Manitobans and advancing Manitoba.

I'm critic for Agriculture. So when I talk to the farmers, when I think about the farming community, when I think about the ranchers, when I think about those agricultural offices that are in the rural area—rather, that used to be there in the rural area—then I think, is this government making any efforts to protect that infrastructure, to protect that service for our rural Manitobans? No, they are not. And this budget does not offer anything, even a single dollar, to protect those offices in the rural areas.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

When you think about our children, when you think about daycares, we get to know that this government simply thinks that these organizations are shops. That's a market. Daycares are opened to make profit, like running a business. This is a very basic

human right for every family, to have affordable child care. But, unfortunately, this government fails to protect our publicly funded child-care centres.

It's been over a year that I have been talking to Crown land leaseholders. They're upset. They're upset with the latest changes this government made. They were looking at this government and they were expecting something good in this budget that would offer some support to these ranchers.

But, unfortunately, this government and this budget failed to protect our ranchers. They tell me there are examples, that the people who were just paying \$6,000 a year as Crown land rent, today they are paying over \$24,000 for the same piece of land that they lease. And for the information of everybody, you need to know that these lands—most of these lands—are marginal lands. They are not very, very productive lands.

So, I don't see anything in this budget that protects Manitobans, as claimed, advancing Manitoba. Did this government advance the federal funds they received for education? Did they advance those funds to schools? Not sure.

Did they advance funds to AgriStability to support the producers who have been hit by this pandemic? Our livestock producers, they were impacted badly due to supply chain disruptions. Nothing was advanced to them—no funds, no support was advanced to these people. They were left at their own.

Now, everybody talks about vaccination these days. How is the vaccination going on in Manitoba? Are we even close to the target that the government announced a few weeks back? Not even close. This government failed to advance money, funds, resources towards our vaccination program.

But you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? What this government is trying to protect is—they are simply trying to protect themselves at the cost of Manitobans' suffering, at the cost of common people suffering. They are simply trying to protect their jobs. And one thing that they want to advance is the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) rating in the research polls, but unfortunately they are failing.

So when I look at this nice title of this document, I read it as protecting 36 Manitobans. That's what it sounds like. It's not about protecting Manitobans because this government focuses on their political agenda. And as the book and the example said, the 499 pages, tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck,

tuck, this budget document says money, money, money, money, money, money, money, money, austerity, austerity, austerity. It doesn't talk about people.

The recently conducted Probe Research survey, it tells clearly that this Premier (Mr. Pallister) is failing due to the way this government handled the pandemic, due to the way—due to the manner this government treated Manitobans.

Those producers who used to come to my office when I was working with Manitoba Agriculture, they would have to drive double, triple the distance that they used to drive to get public extension services. I got a chance to talk to a few employees in Manitoba Agriculture, in Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation, the people who have been driving 10 minutes from their home for the last 20 years. With the latest closure of Ag offices, a few of them would be driving 60 minutes, 50 minutes from their home. What's the impact?

The impact is that they are choosing to retire early. This is the impact. This is indirect firing of common people, common employees.

This government, they sent out a survey of feedback under Engage Manitoba, and they wanted to listen to the Manitobans what they want to see in this budget. There were six predetermined budget priorities, and the people responded to it: 95 per cent, they thought that health care is the top priority; 85 per cent thought that education and child care is the top priority for them; 82 per cent of them, they wanted support for people and businesses affected by COVID; and 78 per cent of them, they wanted to increase support for mental health and addictions.

Among them, lowering taxes was at the bottom, No. 6th. And only 52 per cent of the respondents, they thought that lowering taxes is something good that could be done in this budget. And this government chose to pick that and brag about it.

As we've been hearing in the question period that a flat tax reduction that favours the wealthier Manitobans, it takes money out of the revenue and sends it back to the people having homes and properties worth millions of dollars. So simply this move helps the wealthier people, wealthier Manitobans.

* (15:00)

And now, when you save money, the people like myself—common people, who are getting, maybe, \$300 or at the most, \$375 or \$400 as a tax relief—these

common people would be spending—their kids' sports. They would eat out. Dine out. They would spend on groceries. But the people who are getting tens—\$10,000, \$12,000, \$7,000 as tax relief, they would be spending it somewhere near Nicaragua. What that means is we are taking money out of Manitoba and spending somewhere, there, away from Manitoba. So we need to understand the intentions behind this budget.

When I talk to the teachers, they are so upset about this Premier who says that teachers spending on school supplies from their own pocket doesn't bother him at all. At the same time, he claims to be a relative of the people who are schoolteachers. Well, that means nothing.

If my brother is a Ph.D. in agriculture, I can't claim to know what he knows simply because he is my sibling; that doesn't make any sense. On the flip side, Premier's family members could claim to know all about politics because their family member is the Premier of Manitoba.

What this Premier and this government needs to do is really protect Manitobans; really advance some support to all walks of life, to all departments and to common people; and take steps that really, really protect Manitobans rather than protecting their own government and their own jobs.

And people say that, hopefully, this budget is the last budget this government has a chance to bring—

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

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): It is my honour to put few words on the record regarding Budget 2021, which I will not be supporting, but I will be supporting the amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to talk a little about my constituency, The Maples. It is located in the northwest of Winnipeg. I think it is the most diverse constituency in Manitoba.

Seven Oaks hospital is just located north of us in the McPhillips riding. In 2019, the Pallister government made cuts to health care and closed the emergency room at Seven Oaks hospital, making it harder for people to get health care close to home. In 2020, during the pandemic, the Pallister government closed CancerCare outpatient treatment at Seven Oaks hospital, again making it harder for people to get health care close to home.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Maples Personal Care Home is also in my riding. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we lost so many of our loved seniors at Maples Personal Care Home because inaction of this government.

We on this side of the House know that the second wave of COVID-19 is coming. Doctors knew the second wave of COVID-19 is coming. Family members of our seniors at Maples Personal Care Home knew the second wave of COVID-19 is coming. We all raised questions on this to find out what this government is doing—was doing to protect our seniors.

What this government was doing? They were doing nothing. Were they preparing for the COVID-19 second wave? No, they weren't preparing for the second wave. They were busy spending money on ready, start, go advertisement.

The previous Health minister said these deaths at personal-care homes are unavoidable and said doctors are causing chaos. This raised the question, why the Pallister government making life harder for everyday Manitobans? Because they only care about the bottom line and their wealthy friends and the donors.

We in the northwest Winnipeg are still waiting for the Chief Peguis Trail to be completed from Main Street to Route 90. Sometimes I just wonder, did the member from Kildonan-River East and member from McPhillips ever raise the issue regarding completing Chief Peguis Trail to Route 90 in the caucus or with the Premier (Mr. Pallister)? This will create lots of jobs.

Let's talk about what we have in northwest Winnipeg. For the record, Chief Peguis Trail from Highway 59 to Henderson Highway was completed during NDP government.

And also, Highway 59 and the Perimeter interchange construction started during previous NDP government and it created 600 jobs during the construction of the interchange and Highway 59.

Another project that I want to highlight in northwest Winnipeg is CentrePort Canada, which was created in 2008 by the previous NDP government. Also, CentrePort Canada Way was opened to traffic on November 22nd, 2013.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you must be wondering why I'm highlighting these projects. It is because I don't see any project that the Pallister government started in the

northwest Winnipeg—all of the projects completed and started by the previous NDP government.

Let's talk about Budget 2021, Mr. Deputy Premier—Deputy Speaker, sorry. This government claimed to be investing in health care but in numbers—numbers don't lie. The funding they're claiming to increase is all below the rate of inflation, meaning de facto cut. They actually decreased the budget for acute-care emergency services by \$13 million during the pandemic.

They also froze both the physician recruitment and retention program and the nursing recruitment and retention program initiatives. This is at a time when we can see that we're *[inaudible]* and we desperately need to encourage more health-care workers to stay in our province.

There's also no mention of Maples Personal Care Home or the review and recommendations that followed. There's actually no mention whatsoever of care-home outbreaks in Manitoba.

The Pallister government cut long-term care and left seniors especially vulnerable to this pandemic. Personal-care homes have seen the basic cost of accommodating rise by over \$5,000 a year.

Yet, personal-care home funding was cut a total of \$2 million over two years. And even during the pandemic, when they should have been shoring up long-term care, they choose to cut it, including a \$586,000 cut from the northern region and \$1.6 million from the southern region.

* (15:10)

There's other horrible effects of the virus in other jurisdictions too, yet they failed to reinforce support for seniors during the summer when they had a chance. The result was tragic. Vacancies in many personal-care homes were in crisis when the virus struck. We saw alarming reports, including a location where the majority of positions were vacant.

Vacancies in home care were just as dire, including 15 per cent in Winnipeg, 27 per cent in southern and 26 per cent in Prairie Mountain. Long after the virus struck, the Parkview personal-care home, the private operator was still co-locating infected and infected patients, separated only by end tables.

And we will never forget the tragic loss of life at the Maples Personal Care Home. Dozens of ambulances were called to tend to the sick and dying because the understaffed facility was on the brink of

collapse. The Pallister government then voted down our motion to take over operations of Revera care homes.

The Premier (Mr. Pallister) is cutting deals with insurance brokers at the expense of MPI and the interests of ratepayers. Leadership of MPI wants to move some of its simple transactions online, allowing MPI to work directly with customers and saving ratepayers over \$23 million over five years.

Through freedom of information we received reveals that the Pallister government directly intervened, ordering MPI to renew a contract with IBAM and move \$23 million of Manitoba ratepayers' money to brokers. Two days after MPI signed the deal with IBAM, the Pallister government demanded a two-year wage freeze for MPI employees.

The Premier is also setting a bad precedent by indicating that he will remove the ability of MPI to negotiate freely by ordering everything to a conciliator. This interference is costing Manitobans money—\$23 million to be exact.

This government continues to interfere in Manitoba Hydro, with a goal of breaking it apart and selling it off bit by bit, raising Manitobans' rates. They sold off Teshmont, a profitable subsidiary. They have ordered Manitoba Hydro International and Manitoba Hydro Telecom to adhere to a stop sell, effectively privatizing the services. This privatization comes despite MHI reaping over \$100 million in revenues since it has [*inaudible*]. They raised rates on Manitobans in the middle of the night in December, just before the holiday season.

Among the western provinces, Manitoba has the highest revenue and net government income per capita from the sale of alcohol beverages while also doing the most to mitigate the harm done by alcohol. MBLL's profits are around \$280 million every year. That means higher public investment, good jobs and less harm for—from alcohol. Despite these known facts, the Pallister government is moving ahead with allowing the private sale of liquor.

They're underspending on education, while not keeping up with the inflation and enrolment. And last year they underspent their Education budget by \$8 million. How can we trust this government to spend all of this money when they underspend the federal funds they were given by—given for education?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier refused to provide the real Crown for investing federal dollars in schools and the Province still has not spent the

majority of the \$85 million of federal funds for schools, while our schools are at critical stage of teachers, substitute and EAs. This money will not likely be allocated appropriately to divisions as needed, since the government's new model aimed to level the playing field and ensure that all schools get similar funding. This will affect—this will impact schools with additional needs.

For the first time in a generation, education funding is not keeping up with the student enrolment and growth in the economy. Provincial funding for the 2021 school year was increased by 0.5, despite an increase in student enrolment by 1 and 2 per cent increase in inflation.

Instead of meaningful supporting teachers, this budget provides a 15 per cent rebate for teachers who purchase school supplies for their students. When questioned about whether it bothered him, the teachers have to purchase school supplies themselves, this was the Premier's response. I quote: It doesn't bother me at all. I just think this is a good, fair initiative to encourage other teachers to do the same. There is a lot of room for initiatives and the teachers have initiative.

The government held the K-to-12 education review because they knew Manitoba will stand for cuts to education. And now the Pallister government has introduced Bill 64, The Education Modernization Act, and is trying to pass it through without a consultation during a pandemic.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, instead of investing money to keep our schools safe, the minister is setting aside \$5 million to implement his cuts. The newly introduced Bill 64 does nothing to improve our children's education and to keep classrooms small. There were no commitments made to provide more support for teachers in the classroom or hire more teachers or EAs to ensure our students have more one-on-one time and the support they need.

The intent of Bill 64 is to take control from school boards and hand it to an elected appointee of the Pallister government. The entire bill ignores impact of poverty on education. A simple first step in working toward ending child poverty is implementing a universal breakfast program, but the Premier and his caucus think feeding kids is a bad idea. The bill will now allow the minister and his appointee to have direct control over what principals are appointed. That's disturbing—political interference in our schools.

This government continued to balance their books on the backs of workers, even during the pandemic.

Since they have taken government, they have cut thousands of public service jobs and frozen the wages of thousands more.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they made \$860 million in cuts, grants, Manitoba's public sector. The provincial government asked public sector workers to cut labour costs by up to 30 per cent, resulting in mass layoffs. The Pallister government left business to fend for themselves and when they finally introduced supports after a mass public backlash, they were inadequate and left out many businesses.

* (15:20)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, over the spring and summer, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) shamed Manitobans for collecting federal supports. Then, they underspent their own program by 14 per cent overall, leaving Manitobans without support. This government let local businesses close for good rather than support them when they needed it most.

PST will no longer be charged on haircuts over \$50, manicures and pedicures and tattoos starting in December 2021. While these may be welcome changes for some, they do not benefit all Manitobans, and certainly not low-income Manitobans struggling to lift themselves out of poverty in the midst of the pandemic. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just really wonder who spends \$50, \$60 or \$70 to get their hair cut. I get my haircut done for \$15.

The budget will grant property owners a 25 per cent tax rebate as the Province phases out the property tax. To offset—renters, they will not experience rent increases in '20 and '23 unless landlords apply for above-guideline rent increases. This doesn't mean much, since this government approved a 100 per cent—increases in 2019.

If the education property tax is phased out, where the money will come from to make up the shortfall? The tax should not be phased out if this money is going to come at the cost of cuts to the other programs and services, especially the education.

This Premier is ideologically focused on cutting taxes that he is forging ahead despite the massive pandemic deficit Manitoba's currently facing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the 2019 election, he promised to begin the phase-out in the last two years of his mandate to complete over 10 years. Maybe they are just trying to win back votes after seeing recent polls. Manitobans—

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

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): Manitobans are frustrated. They want a government that will prioritize their needs like a speedy vaccine plan and access to quality, affordable, accessible child care. They don't want a government that's going to raise their hydro rates in the middle of the night.

I don't know who the PCs are working for, but it isn't Manitobans, and it is shown clearly in this budget. The PCs have continued their cuts to programs that Manitobans rely on. Despite a global pandemic, the PCs continue to put money ahead of people.

In this budget, they are continuing the freeze on child care. This freeze has been hard on child-care centres. This government has gone out of its way to hurt public, non-profit child-care centres in this province.

What is striking about their idea of child care is the rest of the country is moving away from the idea they're trying to force us to.

This government is trying to bring private child care into Manitoba and we know what that means. We know it means higher costs for parents, lower wages for staff and it puts the good, quality child care we have at risk.

Why are they doing this? Because their donor friends think they can make money off the hard-working Manitobans that rely on child care, and that is showing clearly in the KPMG review that they tabled the other day.

Even before the pandemic, this government was failing parents and child-care centres. Child-care centres have had their operating funding frozen for the past five years despite growing costs. These—it's frozen yet again. They have cut ISP funding for children with disabilities; they've laid off child-care co-ordinators on multiple occasions. The former minister told the public one thing and had the staff tell child-care centres another thing.

This government, instead of giving child-care centres the money from the federal government, on the—they created an \$18-million fund that has spent less than 1 per cent of its money. Instead of saying the program was a failure, they've doubled down and added more money to the funding to their failed home daycares.

This—the PC government is failing early—Manitoba's early-childhood educators. They are

highly trained people who work hard every day for our youngest citizens. I know from my children's experience and from other families' experience in child care that their teachers go above and beyond for them. They work with kids while potty training. They—they're learning how to share and how to work with the world around them. They're working with them while they are having big feelings and showing them how to deal with them.

While they are doing this every day for our kids, this government isn't there for them. They have left them to figure it out for themselves. They are—there are many centres that are at risk of closing due to this government's budget funding freezes.

I ask the government to stop being ideological with their approach to child care and make real investments in child care today.

On health care, the PCs have abandoned the North. They have sold off Lifeflight's planes. They can't even tell us how many Lifeflight planes are in the province.

The vaccine rollout has been plagued with issues because the government isn't listening to communities. They first tried a Vaxport in Thompson that many people didn't have access to; then they went, oh, wait, we're going to be doing pop-up sites. But they haven't been giving much notice for these sites, and the dates have changed and there's been cancellations, and this is unacceptable.

How does this relate to the budget? It's because it's a pattern. This government's lack of investment is putting lives at risk. Our health-care professionals need supports from government. They need to know that their government has their back, and this isn't happening. They have been dismissed and had their motives questioned by the former minister of Health. We know we are heading into the third wave, and the PCs aren't doing anything about it. They keep saying, well, we're better than: pick a province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Well, what the PCs don't seem to understand is the current case count is from exposures from a few weeks ago. There are always—they're always weeks behind in what needs to be done, and that's because they're unwilling to make investments Manitobans needed to have, and that is shown in this budget.

This budget doesn't make a real investment in northern health care. The funding—where is the funding for northern patient transport and telehealth? Many communities are struggling with staffing issues.

We saw that over the summer, when Leaf Rapids had to close their health centre due to a staffing shortage. Thankfully, that didn't happen because MKO stepped up, not this government. They still haven't said which community is going to be the health-care hub for the North.

I'd like to call on the government to stop pitting Manitobans in communities against each other and make real investments in local health care so people can get health care closer to home.

With long-term care, they've—the lack of investments and—has had a real impact on the North and Manitoba. They've cut funding to home care. It's unacceptable that they haven't addressed the needs of long-term care, despite the increasing need. Families need to know that their loved ones are safe when putting them into a personal home, and we have seen their inability to act on this issue during the pandemic with the amount of personal-care homes that were at risk. And the former minister's response was, well, it was inevitable.

Well, it's only like that when you're not willing to make the investments needed.

The PCs are not meeting the needs of our children, and have left school divisions out in the cold and have made them—to figure it out on their own. But because our school divisions have local teachers and want what's best for our kids, and they know how to respond without the least amount of disruption for our children, teachers prepared homework packages and hand-delivered them to students and regularly did home-checks to make sure the kids weren't falling too far behind.

We need to thank our teachers, but the PCs aren't doing that. They're putting teachers at risk. I wrote a letter to the minister asking to have northern teachers get access to rapid testing and the minister said that they were looking at opening the 'rapiding' testing site in Winkler. I don't know about you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I don't know how many teachers it—from northern Manitoba would be able to access a rapid-testing site in Winkler. That just shows how out-of-touch they are with northerners.

* (15:30)

This government created—has created a mental health and addictions minister, but the new minister didn't even have responsibilities for The Mental Health Act for the first two months of her appointment. This is only because pushback from my colleagues and my colleague from Point Douglas.

And this responsibility was—needed to be done immediately, all while the situation is spiralling out of control.

Their approach says it all. They created a minister but didn't provide the funding needed to address the concerns. Meth-related deaths have doubled. The opioid deaths—related deaths are now at an all time high. The Winnipeg Free Press and the paramedic services have reported they've administered 550 doses of naloxone just in the first half of 2020, and that was—still the government was making naloxone an unscheduled—was unwilling to make 'lanoxone' an unstruggled drug so Manitobans could have access to it when we need it.

Now it's—safe consumption sites. We know they help; we know they save lives, and that is something the PCs aren't willing to do. Safe consumption sites work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They reduce fatalities and rates of addiction and help with—treat vulnerable struggling people with dignity and kindness. The data backs it up. All you need is a few Google searches to find that out. The Premier (Mr. Pallister)—had better than that. He instead closes and abandons safe consumption site reports and dismisses it's findings. The government has failed beyond—failed beyond compare with the addiction crisis.

In the fall of 2018, the children's advocate released a three-page letter sharing severe concerns about this government's poor response and lack of supports for children and youth with mental health and unwillingness for addictions treatments. She echoed the statement with the letter, and the government questioned her motives.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is not without purpose. These services Manitobans need now. When the government has devoted money to Manitobans' mental health, they did it wastefully, inefficiently and—results that didn't work for Manitobans. They paid \$4.5 million to Morneau Shepell to build a mental health phone line that was staffed by people who don't even live in this province. This unrelatable program only served 4,000 Manitobans.

I heard from many northerners that phoned the line that they didn't understand the North, that many people can't just come to Thompson for supports. Many have to drive hours to get to Thompson or take a bus or a plane or a train. It's just unsustainable, and for people who aren't from here, who don't understand the North, don't understand the isolation that people feel. And with the lockdowns that were happening, Morneau Shepell was not able to adequately support

their needs, and this government doubled down on this. They said it was a success, and it wasn't.

The Premier chose to fund that program, at the same time cutting funding to passionate, effective community-driven non-profit projects who have community ties and understand the realities of Manitobans.

In contrast to Morneau Shepell programs, many organizations only cost a fraction, and the government still wasn't willing to provide the supports needed, despite the efforts of my colleagues in the NDP. The government maintained their funding, and this was—and left it up to the federal government.

And that's just not what Manitobans want. Manitobans want to know that their government is there for them and that their government will support them whatever their needs are. This government isn't taking a Manitoban approach. They're not putting Manitobans first; they're putting their rich friends and donors ahead of Manitobans, and that's unacceptable.

They've regularly underspent on our education. I don't see how that helps our children. I am hearing from concerned parents that schools are doing the best that they can, but their children need more supports. I'm hearing from teachers, principals, EAs and others that want to do more, but they're only one person. The government needs to step up and fund our schools and ensure our kids are safe, our teachers are safe and everybody who is in the education system are safe and are able to get the supports and funding that they need.

And that is just not what is happening, which doesn't surprise me when they are attacking workers in this province with their anti-labour agenda. These attacks won't help. Manitobans want their government to work for them, not their rich friends and donors.

They have introduced Bill 16, which impedes an employee's ability to fairly negotiate with their employer and makes it easier for employers to fire workers who are engaged in their right to strike, which is protected. They've interfered in a myriad of labour negotiations, including schools, the Winnipeg bus drivers, Manitoba—the—Manitoba Hydro, MPI, the University of Manitoba.

They've increased their ratio from one to one to two to one. This will compromise learning and safety. The NDP government previously had introduced a one-to-one ratio in the early 2000s because we want to protect our young workers in Manitoba. I ask the government: How are they planning on protecting Manitobans if you can do two to one and you are at

one location in Thompson and you have somebody else who is under you and is working out of Gillam? How can you help both people at the same time when you're hours apart?

That just doesn't work for Manitobans. And this government continues to show contempt for workers, and they do it through the bills that they've introduced and through this budget.

They've reduced the number of workplace safety inspectors. How is that helping? This budget is making cuts, and they're implementing those cuts through this legislation.

They've introduced Bill 55, which removes a policy that requires apprentices to as—are hired to work on all public projects. These changes will make it harder for young Manitobans to complete their apprenticeship hours and become certified journeymen in Manitoba—journeypeople in Manitoba. This is unacceptable. These people are working hard to better themselves and are going to—when they're done they'll have good-paying jobs, and that is something that this government doesn't seem to prioritize. Manitobans want good-paying jobs; unfortunately this government doesn't seem to want to help them with that.

These changes have sparked outcry from unions and labour groups across the province, and rightfully so. These attacks on labour are unprecedented. Why? Because they don't want—they don't like labour because it costs their friends more money.

And what they don't seem to understand is when they're making cuts, they're cutting communities; they're cutting income that is going out into the community. Every time they cut a dollar from somebody, that's somebody that can't spend a dollar in their community. How does that help Manitobans?

Their interests lie with their business owners and those profits, not Manitobans. They're not in this for Manitoba.

We have seen how they've used wording. They say they're not selling parks. Well, they are not saying they're not selling the services for parks. Why? Because their rich friends can make money off those services, which means it'll be harder for us to maintain our parks, because those—the income generated from those services help maintain our parks. So they're putting our parks at risk, which is not okay. Manitobans need to have our parks.

They're doing the same thing with Hydro. They're setting the stage to try and sell Hydro. We know

Manitobans have seen this before. The Filmon government did it when they sold MTS. And what happened? Costs went up and service went down.

When they—that was when they were more—they were happy to sell—they were happy when Bell bought MTS. But it didn't help Manitobans. What happened to Manitobans? We've seen higher rates, less service and fewer options for carriers. That doesn't help Manitobans. That costs Manitobans money.

With housing, they've not made a real investment with housing. They're trying to sell off Manitoba Housing stock, and they're trying to move towards a model with only private landlords. Why? Because it benefits them. We have seen in other provinces and countries that have that model, that they are trying to move away from it, and it's hard because they've already sold off those stocks.

During the pandemic, there was money available, and they have—they put it in for isolation, which is really great, but there was not—no money available and put in for people that struggle with housing after they were done isolation, which is how we ended up with people sleeping in bus shelters. Housing is a right; it is not a suggestion. I call on the government to stop putting themselves first and start making a real investment into housing solutions.

They have made life more expensive for Manitobans by increasing—by allowing all rent-increase requests. How does that help Manitobans? They are saying they're going to freeze rents. Well, we have seen what happens, that this government will just approve any and all rent increases. They haven't seen a rent increase they didn't like.

*(15:40)

This budget doesn't address—doesn't have an increase for EIA rates. People who are on EIA need support from their government. Their costs have gone up due to the pandemic, and the rates do not 'affect' the new reality that is COVID. It has been several years since the government has announced that there was going to be changes for the EIA disability. Well, once again, it's not in this budget.

They cut the Portable Housing Benefit, saying that they were changing EIA disabilities. But that hasn't happened. That's what the PCs do: they cut a program, saying they're going to create a different program, but never actually replace it.

The Province decided to claw back EIA from those who received CERB and immediately began an

active campaign to recoup every penny that was audited by all EIA recipients from March 'til September, even those who had already been through their annual audit. This clawback was—is being applied to all CERB replacement benefits, including the Canadian recovery benefit. That means that this increase will be an expense because of the pandemic.

Many of our poorest citizens weren't able to pay their rent, put food on the table, leaving them at greater risk for being homeless. COVID-19 has made it harder for many people to get by. The cost of essentials have gone up and there has been additional expenses that must be incurred to access basic services.

For example, for several months Winnipeg and other communities either cancelled public transit or had severely reduced their capacity, making it harder for considerable—and more expensive for anyone who didn't have a car to get to the grocery store, doctors appointments or access any other essential services. So, many agencies that helped people before, providing—such as food banks, soup kitchens, thrift stores, showers and other—even counselling services were closed due to the pandemic, leading to an increased need for recipients, and this government hasn't increased their rates. And that is unacceptable.

We know people experiencing poverty and homelessness are disproportionately people of colour, Indigenous people, single parents, women, trans and non-binary people with—and people with disabilities. Neither the federal—the provincial government didn't provide any supports for groups. Government offices and libraries were closed, and a lot of people relied on these libraries and other government buildings to get paperwork printed off that they were needing.

Families are struggling to buy simple things as clothing for their children. As their costs have gone up, their rates have not gone up. The government must ensure people can live with dignity, stable housing and a living wage. That is something government—the government can do.

Even before the pandemic, they were trying—they're privatizing Manitoba Housing. They've left over 1,600 units empty with thousands and thousands of people on the wait-list. It doesn't help anybody if units are empty with thousands of people on the wait-list. And we know they are doing this because they're trying to move away from a model that actually helps Manitobans, and it'll only help the people that they are—

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

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): I appreciate the opportunity to rise in this House and put a few words in the—on the record in regards to this budget.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the words of my colleagues, all of my colleagues on this side of the House, who have spoken to the budget have done so with eloquence, with grace and with their constituents and Manitobans in mind and on their hearts. And I'm really proud to be a part of a caucus that does so, that has those values. And I've learned from my colleagues who have put words on the record, in terms of the budget, as they've shared from their own perspectives and from the voices of their own constituents what the concerns are in regards to what this government has put forward. And so it's with that in mind that I'll do my best to not be redundant, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I—my colleagues have done a tremendous job of outlining a lot of the key concerns.

What I will do right kind of out of the gate here is make explicitly clear that I do not support the budget because, quite frankly, this budget does not support Manitobans. This budget does not adequately support the very Manitobans who so desperately, in the midst of this pandemic, need the full backing, understanding and support of their government.

It's interesting. There's been a few times in this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where members opposite have made comments to the effect of, that they're the folks who will listen to anybody, regardless of their political belief or where they stand on an issue; they'll listen to everyone. And what this budget does is it lays out very clearly that, in fact, that those statements aren't true; that in fact, if they were listening to everybody, to all of those folks regardless of how they vote or how they navigate the world, if they truly were listening to those voices, those voices and the needs of those citizens would be reflected in this budget.

And I don't say that flippantly; I say that very seriously. I've had the privilege in this role to hear from people from all walks of life, all backgrounds, certainly in a much greater capacity than ever previously—even working in health care where you see folks from all experiences and communities, socio-economic statuses, et cetera. And it's because of those folks coming to my office, coming to me, coming to—you know—our team and sharing their experiences and their concerns and their needs—some folks, their pleas

for help—that I'm deeply deeply disappointed by this budget.

I think that this is a time, during this pandemic, where we are faced with unprecedented challenges, that we do need to see unprecedented commitment to matching the ways in which Manitobans have risen to the occasion during this COVID-19 pandemic. And this budget fails to do so.

I've heard from folks who are unsheltered, folks who are homeless. I've heard from sex workers; I've heard from folks who live in abject poverty, folks who are facing every form of systemic discrimination you can possibly imagine. I've heard from those folks about what their needs are around housing, around access to vaccines, around education, around child care, around how they're going to navigate the recovery that some people are so quick to talk about on that side of the House before actually addressing the very needs that folks are facing today.

Those folks aren't reflected in this budget. Those needs aren't reflected in this budget. It's incumbent on us to make space for—in the work that we do—those communities and those folks who are facing challenges that might make it a little bit harder for them to get the information to us, maybe those folks who don't have the ability or the resource to come to committees, to present on the issues. We have to do the job of bringing their issues into this House and work collaboratively to address them.

I know that we brought those issues forward; I know we've written on those issues; I know that we've raised these issues, and I know that this government hasn't been listening—and again, because it's not reflected in the budget.

I did touch on vaccines in my comments there and I will say that, you know, we're going to continue to make recommendations in terms of how this government can improve the vaccine rollout. It's critically important that this government invest more resources into the rollout, making sure that people who are homeless, who are unsheltered have access to the vaccine, making sure that folks who have severe and significant disabilities have access to the vaccine in a way that is barrier-free.

We have to get the vaccines to people. We have to get those vaccines to Manitobans. We cannot expect for all Manitobans to be able to get to supersites or some pop-ups when they eventually show up in Manitoba. That's inexcusable that we don't have dedicated funds and a strategy in this budget to

make sure that those folks with the most barriers get the vaccine.

The lives of those citizens are just as important as everyone else, and that must be reflected in the decision-making of this government. It is not too great an ask to say that vaccines should be wholly accessible to all citizens. And, in fact, here in Manitoba, we had an opportunity to make sure that our plans—right out of the gate—reflected that, and this government has failed.

* (15:50)

The other area that—I don't need to get into in detail in terms of long-term care and older adults, because my colleagues have done a tremendous job, I have to say. My colleague for The Maples has said previously—you know, shared his thoughts on what needs to happen in long-term care. My colleagues have reflected with data and anecdotal information as to how this budget fails older adults, seniors, those in long-term care. I don't need to reiterate that, only to just, explicitly, for the record, express my absolute disgust with the fact that there is no significant investment made in that area. What a disservice to all of those families, who have just navigated Easter, who are moving forward throughout this pandemic, marking every occasion with the memory of a loss of a loved one in a long-term-care home that was completely preventable.

That is—it's shameful in a way that I'll never be able to fully articulate in this House, that this budget fails to meaningfully—in any way—address those issues. And I will thank all of those citizens who continue to raise their voice on this issue. I will thank each and every member of this House, regardless of what side of the House they're on or whose party they sit with, who raises their voice on this issue and demands better of this government by way of resource into long-term care, into the care of older adults in this province.

One area that I did want to talk about is mental health. Everybody in this House knows that we will see a true mental health crisis in this province if this government doesn't commit to investing adequately in mental health services. And this budget, unfortunately, at a critical time for such investments, again, falls short.

I'd like to thank my colleague, the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith). Recently in the House she talked about a local organization that provides mental health services, I think, to the sum of maybe

around \$100,000, and all of the people that they support. And I apologize, right now—I had the name, it's escaping me.

This organization provides greater resource, supports more individuals and families with mental health resources for—the cost of just over \$100,000 versus a huge private corporation that was awarded a 4.5-plus-million-dollar contract by this government during COVID-19. She drew the comparison so beautifully, showing how, if we invest in local mental health-based resources, how far those dollars will go, how many families and people and communities those resources can help. And, unfortunately, that isn't reflected in the budget.

I've heard from so many therapists, counsellors, mental health clinicians throughout this pandemic how disappointed they have been, that they haven't been provided the adequate financial support and resources to provide care.

And I think that's a really important thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for folks to understand and to be reminded of, that health-care providers during this pandemic have wanted one thing: they have wanted to make sure that Manitobans are well and healthy and cared for. And yet, this government continues to under-resource our health-care providers and prioritize services and private corporations that just simply cannot and will not and have not delivered the same level of care.

I've worked on multidisciplinary teams, you know—multidisciplinary teams meaning when you work in health care, you work with folks of different health-care backgrounds—they have different roles—as part of a team to provide the best care possible. And it's a really positive experience. I loved working in multidisciplinary teams. I loved learning from psychologists and psychiatrists and occupational therapists and physiotherapists and recreational therapists, you know, environmental staff—everybody's a part of the team in providing good care. And something in—here in Manitoba that we need to come to terms with and we need to rectify, quite frankly, immediately is the fact that psychologists, who are a crucial part of our mental health-care system, our health-care system, are in a position where they're stretched beyond their limits, quite frankly, because we don't have enough psychologists here in Manitoba.

Manitoba, I believe, is 10th in the country in terms of psychologists per capita, which is a complete disservice to Manitobans. It would've been great to see something specific by way of investment and strategy

in the budget to address this glaring disparity here in our province. We need more psychologists. They are an invaluable mental health service in the province that, unfortunately, folks don't know enough about, and we have to do a better job of educating folks about what they bring to the table, what they bring to our health-care system, and we've got to work with psychologists we have here in the province to ensure that we can get more folks accredited and in our health-care system.

I know it's something that the minister for Mental Health and Recovery is aware of, because she's made mention of it in the House. It would be ideal, and I hope that the minister is advocating with her government to see real dollars invested in that way; otherwise, as I've already stated, we are going to see a crisis, a further crisis, of unmet mental health needs and acute mental health issues here in Manitoba.

In my last couple minutes here, I do want to address something that's happened in this House, something I think the Speaker, at times, has maybe tried to touch on, but I don't really feel like, quite frankly, that the Speaker has really addressed this specifically. But it's something that was—has been brought to my attention multiple times by citizens ranging in age from about 12, 13 years old, by way of their parents, all the way through—I'm not going to guess how old some folks were because I'd need to try and guess their age. You know, the lack of targeted and marginalized communities being centred in any of this government's decision-making is also reflected by the attitudes and actions of some members in this House. I have been misgendered in this House repeatedly. I have been misgendered by many members opposite, a couple of which have apologized to me, and I have appreciated that. But I've been mocked. The member of McPhillips made a joke at my expense in this House. He did rise and apologize after a matter of privilege was raised. He's since then misgendered me and seemed to think it was neither here nor there for him.

And while I'm fine—even with all of the harmful, racist comments that are made in this House, all kinds of comments that are discriminatory made by—I've heard made by members opposite in this House, I'm fine. I'm fine. Great supports, rock-solid fine. But the people that I've heard from, the citizens that I've heard from: not so fine.

And so what I would ask of members of this House is to be mindful of the fact that people are watching. People are listening. And the things that are

said and the way that they've been said, and the flippant attitude towards identities in this House matter. They impact people. And like I said, I know it because I've heard from citizens who've reached out to me and have watched the proceedings in this House and have felt like this must be a government that doesn't see them as a whole person worthy of respect and dignity, this must be a government that doesn't think of them at all when they draft and pass legislation.

And so I would ask members to think about that, to think about their words, their choices and how it impacts citizens and recognize that we have to do better and overall, that this budget should've done better.

Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Any further—Minister for Legislative Affairs.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Legislative and Public Affairs): Yes. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on the budget this afternoon.

* (16:00)

You know, I want to begin by acknowledging the very challenging time it's been for so many in Manitoba over the last year, and the list would be endless, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to go through it. Those that are the most obvious, of course, are those that are working in our health-care system, who have been working tirelessly. Well, I shouldn't say tirelessly, because they probably are tired at times, but they've been working to ensure, you know, that we are safe.

Those who are operating businesses who have had disruptions that they could never have imagined, Mr. Deputy Speaker; those in the faith community, in the variety of different faiths that are practised in Manitoba, who've had to nurture those who are in their care in different ways. They have really sacrificed in incredible ways.

And again, the list would be endless to go through it—the year-long sacrifice that so many have gone through.

But it's also worth acknowledging, and maybe we don't do it enough sometimes, but elected officials and their families, I'm sure, have also had to make significant sacrifices. And I know we don't like to speak about, perhaps, our own individual sacrifices, but it shouldn't be ignored. And I would say that there isn't a member in this House, I'm sure, who hasn't had

a family member or somebody close to them who has significantly had an impact or who they've had to rely upon during this past year. And we should acknowledge those individuals because we are living through a pandemic, as well.

And, yes, we have special responsibilities and with those responsibilities, you know, come special expectations, but we are not unimpacted, of course, by these things. And I know, in speaking to table officers, members of the Assembly, talking to other elected officials, talking to staff through this building, I've heard the individual stories of how difficult it's been for them. And we should remember that and have a special honour for those who are supporting us.

And in that light, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would say in my own life I want to acknowledge my wife, Kim, especially, who over the last year, like many Manitobans, has gone through some work disruption, and that is more than stabilized now in the occupation that she is in.

But as the spouse of somebody in a community where we are fairly recognizable, she, of course, bears much of the brunt of questions, as that would be true for the spouses or partners of others in this House.

And I'm very, very appreciative of her and I don't say it often enough. And I'll say it more clearly in the days ahead, but how thankful I am that she is not only willing to take on some of those burdens that come with elected life, with someone in the family, but particularly during this time. It has been remarkable to see the steady hand that she has provided within our own household.

And I would also then add to that my son, Malachi, who entered high school this past year, of course, in a very different way than we might have expected. And he has shown himself to be a remarkably mature young man. And, of course, I'm a little biased, being his dad, but he has adapted to the incredible changes. Of course, some of them are obvious, you know, having to wear masks in school or social distancing, but he has become a bit of a leader in his own right within his school, and trying to ensure that the right things are done in the right way—and not without facing some criticism among his peers himself. And I'm very, very grateful to be able to—even in this difficult time, I am grateful to be able to watch how he has excelled during the pandemic. I'm very proud as a father.

And so, even in a tough time, when so many people are struggling in so many different ways, there

are opportunities to stop and to look at how people are doing remarkable and incredible things and excelling in these very, very difficult times. And it is important to look at those things and to go that, but for the fact that we're going through these really tough times, we might not have seen that; we might not have seen the best in some of those people; we might not have seen how people around us, you know, will respond and how much they care about us and will work to try to support us.

And then, of course, we have that responsibility to support others, as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I hope that that will be the enduring memory coming out of the pandemic that we all hope will end sooner than later, but that that will be the memory that we take of the things that we've seen. For me it will be watching my son handle such difficult circumstances as a young man, and now I'm assured that he'll take that on in his adult life, and my wife, the way she's rallied around to ensure that our family and those around her are supported, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Those are good things to take from a pandemic. Those are good things to take from a difficult time, and I know that all of us have those in our lives who've been able to do that.

So I would say to members of this House, take the time, as you have it, to reflect upon, even in these challenges, those who are close to you, those who are dear to you, and to reflect upon the things that they have done for you, and then to tell them that, and to thank them for being there for you and for being strong and resolute with you during this difficult time.

We all rely upon that support from our family and from our friends and from our neighbours, and even when this very difficult time has ended, I hope that that is the thing that people will most remember, is how they saw that from people who are near to them, others who drew near to them, not always physically, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but drew to them in the way that they could.

I commend this budget, of course, to the House. I'm speaking on the budget and of course support the budget, but mostly I commend the goodwill and the good nature of Manitobans and members of this House and their extended family to continue to persevere, to continue to push on. The finish line isn't quite there yet, but we can see it, and let's finish strong, and let's finish united, and let's finish together as Manitobans.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): To my colleagues, to all of us in the House today, this is a significant year, obviously, an historic year, and it's a time of tremendous stress on all Manitobans, and I think it's important to recognize the stress and the hardship that COVID has caused most certainly.

Everything that we have done in preparation of this budget, everything has been designed to do what we can to alleviate those stresses, to alleviate the concerns that Manitobans have for their own futures, for the futures of their families, for the very future of their community and their province, in fact, their country and this world.

This is an historic time. We recognize in everything we do as a government that Manitobans work hard for their money and we respect the fact that they do. And we know that they are careful, also, not to spend beyond their means, because they know that, should they do that, they jeopardize all their financial goals and those of others they love and care for. And they know, too, that in order to advance in this world, they have to have security and they need security.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

For too long, the previous government spent well beyond its means, and that meant taking away the security from people as they grew older, as they grew more vulnerable, and, in particular, I think young people, like the people who serve as pages in this House, for example. That uncontrolled spending resulted in higher debt. It also resulted, at the same time, in significant tax increases. Those tax increases took more and more money off the tables of Manitoba families and their homes that they would not have left to spend.

I remember my father preparing his tax return. He didn't like math, but he did work meticulously to prepare his tax return. And I remember him also paying bills at that kitchen table in our home. It means a lot to me—those memories mean a lot to me. They're family memories that we all have.

But I remember this man struggling to calculate how much was left after each bill was paid, and I remember the sense of relief on his face when he realized that the last bill had been paid and there might be a little left—not a lot left, but a little left. That little bit left, that's a big deal. Let's hope that's maybe something you had wanted to buy for your children that you couldn't afford before, or something you want to set aside to save to do, maybe a trip with your family or maybe a child's education someday.

* (16:10)

These were the things that, for our family, were priorities. The educational savings that my mother did, especially from her teaching income—which wasn't high, especially in those early years in small country schools—those were savings that went to build a better future for us, just as Manitobans work hard to find the savings in their homes, to advance their lives, to advance their security and seniors, too, Madam Speaker, as you well know, as you've worked so long for many years with seniors. You know the struggles they have financially, especially those who are living on limited resources and on fixed incomes. Those folks value very much the measures that can put a little more money on their table.

That wasn't happening for a long time and when the difference between sink or swim is razor thin, the previous government took that razor and made it harder for people. Kitchen tables were plundered, our rainy day fund was plundered. Manitobans knew that was wrong. It was wrong of previous—the previous government also to raise taxes on families at the same time as they were making waits longer for health care, as they were raising the fees to use an ambulance, as they were allowing Manitoba to become the child poverty capital of Canada.

This was wrong and it was wrong also to raise taxes on small businesses year after year after year, making it harder for small businesses to create jobs and to compete in an increasingly competitive business climate. And wrong when out-of-control spending moved our summary debt from \$10 billion to \$21 billion, doubling it—more than doubling it in just eight years—the last eight years they were in government, while tripling Manitoba Hydro's debt at the same time.

And it was wrong when budget expenditures went far beyond the rate of inflation and, year after year, budget expenditures far exceeded what the budget said they would be. We take seriously our budget and I commend our Finance Minister, our members of Treasury Board and all our ministers for their preparatory work, and thank their departments and their officials for the tremendous work.

Manitobans are people who do have values and those values are important to reflect when we make our decisions. And they deserve prudent and responsible government because these are prudent and responsible people we take money from, Madam Speaker, so that we can serve them, and others, as well.

And they knew they deserved a better approach than spending more each year and getting less from it. And they knew rainy days could come, and come they did. And the COVID pandemic has presented us with new challenges, even greater than most of us have ever experienced before.

Budget 2021 is how we meet those challenges. We've been living with this pandemic for over a year, but our focus as a government has been unwavering. Our No. 1 priority has been and will continue to be to protect our most vulnerable citizens, ensure that the health-care system is there for them when they need it, not just during this pandemic, but on a sustainable basis going forward, well after—into the future. And we're committed to creating an environment, as well, Madam Speaker, for growth to occur, for recovery to occur.

Getting back into balance is a big challenge, Madam Speaker. As you know, we—our expenditures will be creating a great deficit; the second greatest after this current year will occur in the coming year and that will be necessary. But we made a vow to Manitobans that we would fix, repair and rebuild this province and we kept our word. And last year we succeeded in doing what we promised we would do, balancing the books. And we did that while maintaining the highest level of support on a per capita basis of any Canadian province for health care, education and social services.

Before COVID hit us, Madam Speaker, we were investing \$6.9 billion on health care, a great issue. That's three-quarters of a billion dollars more than the previous government ever invested in health care. We invested \$4.5 billion in education the year before COVID hit. That's almost half a billion dollars more in education than the previous government ever invested and \$2.1 billion on families. That's a quarter of a billion dollars more than the NDP ever did.

Budget 2021 supplements that record spending in health care, in education, in families with an additional \$1.5-billion investment, just in time to face the biggest fiscal and public health challenge in our province's history. And it invests over \$2.1 billion in strategic infrastructure, including highways, health care and housing.

That's not all, because always we are, of course, hoping for the best—we all should—but we are preparing for less than that. And so Budget 2021 also includes \$1.18 billion for this year alone for additional COVID costs, including things like personal pro-

tective equipment, vaccine deployment, future pandemic needs. These investments are planned investments to shore up our health protection.

And we also know that this pandemic has brought high levels of stress and anxiety—people all over this province, including our staff here, our civil servants throughout government and of course all of us as well. Isolation and loneliness and the social stresses that this COVID pandemic has wrought are tremendously difficult for almost all people, Madam Speaker, to accept. Early in the pandemic, we partnered with AbilitiCBT; it's a free digital therapy program and I'm proud to say that more than 4,000 Manitobans were able to access that service to help alleviate their mental health challenges, their anxiety.

There's much more to do, Madam Speaker, and we are ready to do it. Manitoba is the only province in the country with a dedicated minister for mental wellness and I welcome that minister to her responsibilities. In Budget 2021, we'll be investing in new mental health services including an initial \$350 million for programming and services within the new Department of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery.

But I should say, Madam Speaker, that all these things I refer to, besides coming from working people, families, small businesses all over this province, are only made possible by the way in which we have managed that money over the last five years. And I want to say to my colleagues, congratulations on next Monday, celebrating our fifth anniversary as a government here in Manitoba.

It is important to prepare for the unexpected. My grandmother's adage—we all, I hope, have fond memories of our predecessors, our ancestors—for me, my grandmother was a mentor and guide and she said to help the needy of the world, sonny; be sure you're not one yourself. In other words, get to work, go to school, do things to make sure that you can help others. And I think that that message is a wonderful message, a simple message but true.

For us in this Chamber, we know how important it is to prepare for the unexpected because we're given—as elected officials—the responsibility to address so many issues that are unpredictable. Floods and the forest fires and the issues we've—crop failures that we have had to deal with as a province in our history are things that will continue. And it is important to fortify and strengthen ourselves against those realities that those changes and those challenges will

occur; they have occurred in the past, they will continue to.

But it is that fiscal prudence, when exercised well, that has enabled us as a government to be able to focus on the priorities of Manitobans. It has enabled us as a government to keep our commitments to Manitobans, just as they keep their commitments to one another.

And so, it will help us in the future to ensure that Manitoban families are able to be assisted by this government and by its decisions to move past this pandemic, to advance past it, not without having learned the hard lessons this pandemic has taught, but with the ability to move forward and use all their assets, all their personal skills and gifts, all their blessings, to advance and grow in their lives, and to advance each other and, through that exercise, to advance all of us as well.

We take—we took measures seriously, Madam Speaker, to make sure that we put more money back into the hands of Manitobans who earned it, who worked so hard to save it. And we made a commitment in the last election to put 2,020 more dollars on the average Manitoba kitchen table.

We did that because we understand, Madam Speaker, that life can be a challenge and that financial challenges are among the greatest for many, many families and individuals. We did that, we kept that promise one year earlier than expected and we did it by indexing the basic personal amount, which the NDP did not do, and by eliminating bracket creep, which the NDP did not do, and by removing the PST on home insurance, which the NDP imposed, and by removing the PST on professional tax preparation, which the NDP imposed, and by removing probate fees on estates and removing the PST on the preparation of wills, which the NDP imposed, and by reducing vehicle registration fees not once, but twice, which the NDP raised and raised and raised again and again and again. And, by removing the PST on personal services in this year's budget, we will also put more money back in the hands of Manitobans whose money it is, who earned it in the first place.

* (16:20)

These steps are important. These steps—and others—are why we are predicted, as a province, to lead the country of Canada in recovering from this pandemic, because disposable incomes matter.

We began increasing the disposable incomes of Manitobans by reducing the PST. We reduced the PST, which we promised to do, from eight to seven—

the NDP raised it from seven to eight after promising they would not. This stands in clear contrast—I think our government's actions, which have followed our promises, stand in clear contrast to the actions of previous government, whose actions did not follow their commitments.

When we move forward this year, we will also begin the phase-out of the education tax on property. We will do this for residential property owners by 25 per cent in the first year; by 25 per cent in the next. And, Madam Speaker, no application is required.

This is our way of letting people who work hard to build up their family's well-being and to invest in their homes to actually get some of the money back that they have been paying for education on their property, when no other province relies to the degree that Manitoba did under the NDP. No other province relies on this archaic and wrong way of raising revenue. We are moving forward to leave that money in the hands of the people who earned it in the first place because it's the right thing to do.

A recent survey of homeowners across Canada found that those who entered the housing market with lower household income levels are stretched to make ends meet because of this pandemic. Those who are most stretched—two groups came out of this study: those with household income levels under \$50,000 say they had absolutely no wiggle room whatsoever. These are the folks who are in danger of losing their homes.

The second group is seniors over 65 who live on fixed incomes. These two groups will be the groups that will benefit profoundly—most profoundly from this tax reform. It is long overdue that we leave that money in the hands of those families who struggled.

The education property tax rebate is going to make sure that fewer people—not more, fewer—need food banks to feed their children. And not only will we be delivering real tax relief to property owners and giving them a little bit more at the end of each month, but we're also going to institute a two-year rent freeze to protect renters and to protect tenants as well, and we're going to add \$22 million to the Rent Assist program, the most generous program in the country.

We—Madam Speaker, we sincerely and genuinely want Manitobans to have a little more left after the bills are paid, after the children are fed, because that is what hope is.

Let's talk about education reform for a second. What we have had for too long in Manitoba is a top-

heavy K-to-12 educational administration. And that had delivered bottom-of-the-barrel results for our children—50 per cent more costly than the province to the east of us, Ontario.

Those days are done. In days past, trustees and administrators consumed a lot more of the resources than needed to be the case, and those resources were not put in the classroom where the children were being instructed; they were not benefitting the children of our province. Those days are done.

In days past, trustees and administrators used to go on expensive trips—taxpayer-funded trips, with surprising frequency. Madam Speaker, in just a two-year sample, more than \$1 million was spent on travel alone. We found one trustee, for example, went on a dozen junkets in that period of time: Halifax, Washington, Vancouver, Toronto, Nashville, Ottawa, Washington, Toronto again—liked Toronto a lot—Norway, Los Angeles, Fredericton. Those days are done.

We're going to redirect more than \$40 million from the top-heavy education system right where it can help our children, right to the classroom. This budget highlights the difference between our government and the one that preceded it. It highlights it very, very well.

It is still evident and it's very clear, as a consequence of the bills that the opposition has decided to delay and postpone, which is better than a blockade. We would have to agree. It's still evident that they have not changed. They want less money for classrooms and students and teachers, more money for trustees and administrators. They want less information for union members so that union members won't know what their dues are buying. They want less choice for consumers when it comes to alcohol purchases and higher prices, too. And they want to continue encouraging smoking on reserve. No other province has rules that allow smoking on reserve.

But the thing that the—one of the members here missed when she was shouting racist and colonialist at our minister was she missed this: our province respects Indigenous governments, and our province, our provincial government, has a rule that allows for any First Nation who wishes to pass a band council resolution to allow smoking—that they can. I hope no one does this.

But when you speak about colonialism, understand you're talking about nine other provincial governments that have eliminated smoking on

reserve. But the NDP didn't have the guts to work with Indigenous leaders and do it, and we do, and we did, and we're going to keep working with Indigenous leaders to make sure there's better health, as was recommended in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, by the way; partnerships on working on reducing smoking among youth in particular.

So, we are different from the members opposite in this respect and in others, I suppose, Madam Speaker. They want higher hydro rates because they want to continue the archaic practice every other province has departed from of having rate hearings every—biannually, which, over the last decade of NDP government, cost over \$100 million. MPI and hydro rate hearings: \$100 million. If that doesn't push your hydro rates up and your Autopac rates up, what will?

Every other province has moved to four- or five-year rate settings. That benefits ratepayers. It benefits the owners of Manitoba Hydro, who are people outside of this Chamber, outside of the NDP caucus room. We know that and they do not.

What we stand for, Madam Speaker, is more money; more resources for classrooms, for students, for teachers; more choices for consumers; equal health protection for all of us in Manitoba; lower hydro rates; not weaker finances, but healthier finances; not poorer, more expensive services, but better services that give better value to people; and no, not higher taxes, but lower taxes. I encourage all members to support this budget. It is a historic and worthwhile budget, one that deserves the support of all members, and I thank all members for their attention.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is the proposed subamendment of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard).

Do members wish to have the subamendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the subamendment?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I declare the subamend—

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the subamendment, 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.

I declare—

An Honourable Member: On division, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Okay. The—I declare the subamendment lost, on division.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The question before the House now is the 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.

* (16:30)

Do members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Okay.

And the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition in amendment is as follows:

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) refusing to learn the lessons of the pandemic by further reducing health-care funding and holding it to below the inflation rate, compromising bedside care and failing to prepare for a potential third wave; and
- (b) cutting emergency acute-care funding while spending millions on the health transformation office to cut nurses and other front-line health-care workers and close rural ERs; and

- (c) failing to invest in rural and northern health care to ensure all Manitobans have access to the care they need close to home by freezing doctor and nurse recruitment efforts; and
- (d) cutting the health capital budget, which means less investments in services, such as a seizure clinic, a new technology and refusing to invest in training for front-line health professionals, such as nurses, to help Manitobans get quality care; and
- (e) failing to improve long-term care and home care for seniors after the Maples and Parkview Place tragedies by cutting long-term-care funding; and
- (f) failing to provide any funding or details on addressing the failing vaccine rollout, while freezing funding for the Emergency Measures office which assists with logistics and planning; and
- (g) compromising the Crown corporation, Manitoba Hydro, by trying to influence Manitoba Hydro operations and continuing their unconstitutional ways-wage freezes, by refusing to repeal bill 28, which has caused a strike for members of IBEW; and
- (h) failing to be transparent with Manitobans with its plans to increase hydro rates this year after raising their rates in last year's budget; and
- (i) failing to be transparent with its plan to privatize Manitoba Hydro; and
- (j) providing millions in funds for insurance brokers, but refusing to pay a fair wage to employees of Manitoba Public Insurance; and
- (k) jeopardizing access to rural broadband by pursuing privatization, and failing to provide investments to ensure rural and northern communities can get connected to high-speed Internet; and
- (l) continuing to reduce education funding, cutting literacy and learning supports and supports for children with exceptional needs, compromising children's success and their ability to catch up after the pandemic; and
- (m) requiring educators to pay out of pocket to meet the educational needs of children because of inadequate educational funding; and
- (n) failing to implement a universal school breakfast program and cutting supports for food security in the North, to ensure every child succeeds in the classroom; and
- (o) refusing to provide menstrual products in schools, to make sure no student is subjected to period poverty; and
- (p) continuing to cut funding for post-secondary institutions which will raise tuition, making education less affordable and accessible, cutting supports for apprentices and adult literacy, hindering Manitoba's economic recovery; and
- (q) failing to provide any additional aid for small businesses or communities suffering job losses to ensure their success and economic recovery during and after the pandemic; and
- (r) failing to adequately fund public child care after five years of funding freezes and opening up public dollars to for-profit centres, all while cutting subsidies for families; and
- (s) refusing to invest in local mental health supports and ignoring the addictions and homelessness crisis, while refusing to invest in supports such as a safe consumption site or building new social and affordable housing units; and
- (t) failing to address climate change by continuing a court challenge on carbon pricing, while cutting its own Climate and Green Plan Implementation Office; and
- (u) charging people more fees for government services, such as park passes, during a pandemic when more Manitobans are trying to get outside; and
- (v) refusing to fund improvements for the North End Sewage Treatment Plant to help save Lake Winnipeg; and
- (w) cutting funding to municipalities, compromising their ability to fund services and priorities such as transit; and
- (x) failing to support agricultural producers during what is anticipated to be a year of drought, by cutting risk-management and

support programs and cutting funding for Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation; and

- (y) failing to provide support for women, BIPOC, newcomers and low-income Manitobans to fully assist in a social and economic recovery from the pandemic, including training and credential recognition; and
- (z) failing to provide targeted supports with racialized, workplace and geographic data in mind, while refusing to implement a living wage for Manitobans; and
- (aa) cutting Indigenous and Northern Relations' budget by millions, compromising consultation and reconciliation efforts and freezing supports from community economic development fund and refusing to include representatives of the Métis nation in its pandemic response; and
- (bb) cutting the Sport, Culture and Heritage budget by millions, including the Status of Women, which further jeopardizes economic recovery for women and recreation opportunities for children; and
- (cc) failing to match the commitment of Manitobans, who have worked together heroically and sacrificed collectively to fight COVID-19; and
- (dd) failing to have any members of the provincial government caucus stand up against his budget.

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: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: 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 the 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.

All those in the House in favour of the amendment, please rise.

Division

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

Yeas

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliv, Wiebe.

Nays

Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Gordon, Guenter, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 20, Nays 35.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly lost.

* (16:40)

Madam Speaker: The question now 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.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Recorded Vote

Ms. Fontaine: A 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 (Mr. Fielding) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Division

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

Yeas

Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Gordon, Guenter, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé,

Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliv, Wiebe.

Clerk: Yeas 35, Nays 21.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly passed.

* * *

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, is it—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Goertzen: Is it the will of members to call it 5 p.m.?

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

As it has been agreed, this hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS		Tax Relief in Budget 2021	
Committee Reports		Wasyliw	2401
Standing Committee on Justice		Goertzen	2401
Fourth Report		Pallister	2401
Lagimodiere	2391	Infrastructure Spending	
		Wiebe	2402
Tabling of Reports		Fielding	2402
Gordon	2392	Schuler	2403
Ministerial Statements		COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout	
Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images		Lamont	2403
Awareness Day		Pallister	2403
Cox	2392	COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility	
Marcelino	2393	Lamont	2403
Lamoureux	2393	Pallister	2404
Members' Statements		Home-Care Services	
Yazidi Community in Manitoba		Gerrard	2404
Guillemard	2394	Stefanson	2404
Thompson Boys & Girls Club		Accessibility of Services	
Adams	2394	Morley-Lecomte	2404
Marjorie Hadaller		Fielding	2404
Lagassé	2395	Community Safety Programs	
Municipality of St. James		Fontaine	2404
Sala	2395	Friesen	2404
Birthday Wishes		Petitions	
Teitsma	2395	Diagnostic Testing Accessibility	
Oral Questions		Maloway	2405
COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout		Public Child-Care Grants	
Kinew	2396	Wiebe	2406
Pallister	2396		
ORDERS OF THE DAY			
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS			
COVID-19 Financial Assistance		Budget Debate	
Kinew	2397	(Sixth Day of Debate)	
Pallister	2397	Michaleski	2407
Health-Care System		Brar	2407
Asagwara	2399	Sandhu	2409
Stefanson	2399	Adams	2412
Manitoba's Workforce		Asagwara	2416
Marcelino	2400	Goertzen	2419
Fielding	2400	Pallister	2420

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