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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALTOMARE, Nello, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 7, 2023

The House met at 10 a.m.

The 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, and 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.

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Nehethowuk nations. And we acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): I'd like to call Bill 201, The Manitoba Emblems Amendment Act for provincial stone, second reading, please.

The Speaker: It has been announced that we are going to call Bill 201, The Manitoba Emblems Amendment Act (Provincial Stone), for second reading.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 201—The Manitoba Emblems Amendment Act (Provincial Stone)

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I move, seconded by the MLA for La Vérendrye, that Bill 201, The Manitoba Emblems Amendment Act (Provincial Stone); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les emblèmes du Manitoba (désignation de la pierre provinciale), be

now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ewasko: It gives me great pleasure this morning to stand, rise and bring forward Bill 201, which is an important amendment to The Manitoba Emblems Act in order to recognize our provincial stone. Which is better known to people not only in Manitoba, Canada and around the world, but it is also known as Tyndall stone.

We want to give a brief history, Honourable Speaker, on Tyndall stone. Of course, being the MLA for the Lac du Bonnet constituency which takes in the communities of Garson and Tyndall, where Gillis Quarries—the quarries are located. I want to get into a little bit of a history.

In 1823, Major Long of the Hudson's Bay Company first noticed an exposure of limestone along the banks of the Red River near Selkirk, Manitoba.

This stone, unique due to its mottled appearance, was used to build the walls and warehouses of Lower Fort Garry, in 1832. And, in 1845, St. Andrew's Anglican church—the oldest stone church in western Canada. Both buildings remain today in a perfect state of preservation along the picturesque Red River drive through St. Andrew's situated 18 kilometres just north of Winnipeg.

Around 1894, farmer John Gunn encountered a deposit of this same limestone while digging a well on his land approximately 30 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg. Gunn and other area farmers kept small quarries, but it is not clear whether they actually quarried it themselves. It is known that Gunn did lease his land on royalty to other companies, and people in the area have suggested that Gunn was responsible for the building of the historic lime kilns, still standing at the Gillis Quarries right in Garson, Manitoba.

William Garson opened the first large quarry in 1898, even in its infancy the quarry produced nine-tenths of the stone used for the building industry. A small community grew out of the stone workers and their families who settled in the area to work at the quarry. The village, known previously as The Hill, due to the great mounds of ground that were scrapped off to expose the limestone bed, renamed itself Garson

after their employer William Garson ran the quarry until his death in 1911.

Peter Lyall bought the company after William Garson's death, and in 1912 re-opened the quarry under the name Wallace Sandstone Company. A grateful community dropped the name of its founder, Garson, and adopted the name Lyall, and so it remained until 1927 when it was changed back to Garson.

By 1914, three large quarries were in operation in the Garson area: the Wallace Sandstone Company, which employed 250 workers; the G.W. Murray Quarry, which employed 60 workers; and the Tyndall Quarry Company, which had 62 workers.

August Gillis, with his sons Charles and Joseph, started cutting Tyndall stone in a small shop in Winnipeg in 1910. In 1915, he purchased quarry property just 1,000 feet west of the Western Stone Company in Garson. The company incorporated in 1922 into quarries limited. Tyndall stone continued to be cut in Winnipeg until a new plant was built at the quarry in 1968. Charles Gillis, who continued to run the business when his father died, was succeeded by his two sons, Bruce and Frank.

And today, Bruce's children, Keith and Donna, are the fourth generation of the Gillis family to operate Gillis Quarries Limited. I am pleased to say, Honourable Speaker, that we are joined today in the gallery by Keith Gillis, Christine Gillis, Donna Gillis, Harry Kopeschny, Diane Gillis and Jeffrey Dolovich. Thank you for being with us here this morning, everyone up in the gallery.

Honourable Speaker, for over a century, whether its been a silent ambassador on the Canadian embassy in Berlin, the mountain of knowledge we climb at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights or the Hall of Honour at the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, we see every night on the evening news Tyndall stone.

Being a distinct, natural resource indigenous to Canada, has played a very significant role. Honourable Speaker, I had the pleasure in May to be selected out of the 22 Education ministers in this great country of ours, to represent Canada at the G7 in Japan.

And, in Tokyo, the Canadian embassy, it too has tons and tons and tons of Tyndall stone right in that over-40-million-person city.

* (10:10)

Honourable Speaker, 41 years ago, two young students became friends in the basement of a mining

building at the University of Toronto, locked up in the paleontology lab. Well, not really locked up. Eight years ago, these two friends, now long-time colleagues, Dr. Brian Pratt, professor of geological sciences at the University of Saskatchewan, and Dr. Graham Young, curator of paleontology at the Manitoba Museum, collaborated, initiating a dialogue regarding the nomination of Tyndall stone for a global designation.

Last year, on October 28, 2022, the International Union of Geological Sciences certified that Tyndall stone, Canada has been designated as an IUGS Heritage Stone.

This year, on September 13th at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the owners, the staff, the alumni, contractors, architects all came together and celebrated this wonderful acknowledgement and dedication, and I had the extreme pleasure of attending.

Honourable Speaker, an IUGS Heritage Stone is designated natural stone that has been used in significant architecture and monuments recognized as integral aspects of human culture. This places Tyndall stone on the world stage alongside Carrara marble, used to build ancient Rome; Portland stone, used to build London; and Makrana stone used to build the Taj Mahal. Tyndall stone is now the only Canadian stone on a worldwide list of 32 stones.

This designation celebrates science, architecture, history, natural resources, culture, heritage, research and education. The presence of fossils have played a large part of the distinction of Tyndall stone and in the designation.

I do want to add, of course, many of us all know that this wonderful building that we have the pleasure and the honour of coming to each and every day to represent Manitobans here at the Manitoba Legislature, you walk around and there is so much—tons and tons and tons of Tyndall stone. And before the members of the government side ask me a question about how many tons of Tyndall stone there are that went into the great building of the Manitoba Legislature, I'm just going to say right now I don't know that answer. So, we'll check that one off your box.

But as you stroll around, we've had many tours from—visitors from all across this great world of ours, including our great province, coming to the Manitoba Legislature, checking out the various Tyndall stone and then actually going around the building and

checking out the various different fossils that are found in Tyndall stone.

One very interesting fact that I had heard actually at the WAG, at the event, was the fact that many people—and Honourable Speaker, I've actually had my family, my parents and my grandparents actually have used Tyndall stone in the construction of their homes, and the home that I grew up in actually had two Tyndall stone fireplaces, which were just absolute incredible, incredible monuments. You know, it's just a pleasure to be there and stunning, and the fossils and the craftsmanship and the workmanship was absolutely great.

But the fact that I had heard at the WAG is that actually earlier days, when they would be mining the Tyndall stone, some people actually didn't want the fossils. So they would actually have to work quite diligently to get the fossils off. And now, I think it's one of those things where it's highly sought after.

So, Honourable Speaker, it's a great pleasure to bring forward 201. I look forward to it passing unanimously on to committee stage so that we can hear from presenters at committee on Bill 201, on designating Tyndall stone as the provincial stone. I know that, unfortunately, we were not able to put the word Tyndall stone right into the bill because of trademark topics and that, but we're—I look forward to this moving forward.

I know that we're going to have a robust question-and-answer period here for the next few minutes, and I look forward to hearing what others have to say and passing this bill to committee prior to 11 o'clock this morning.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Questions

The Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any opposition or independent member in the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic—sorry about that; let me start again.

A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from another party; this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question and answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Thank you to the member from Lac du Bonnet for bringing this bill forward.

So, as he said, mottled dolomitic life-limestone has been used in the construction of landmarks across Manitoba. It was used in the construction of Lower Fort Garry, construction of this Legislature, obviously, and the Canadian human rights museum more recently.

So, I just want him to expand a little bit more, if he could, on why is this stone so often used in the construction of our landmark buildings here in Manitoba. What makes it special?

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I'd like to thank my colleague from Waverley for that very thoughtful question.

I think it's because it's—Tyndall stone is germane to Manitoba. And I think when—because of its vast history, being a long-standing stone here in Manitoba, I think it's highly sought after with the—not only the construction trade, but our architectures—our architects; being able to design and put them into our various different architectural buildings throughout the city, and also our great province of ours.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you for—thank you to the member for Lac du Bonnet. My question is for the member.

Tyndall stone is an extremely unique fossil-laden limestone unique to Canada but only quarried in our great province.

The stone is symbolic to much of the greatest architecture in Manitoba that surrounds us in the Legislative Building we sit today. Not only does Tyndall stone have a significant presence in our province's most recognizable buildings, it is also been recognized with a global designation for broad significance to humanity.

Therefore, my question is: Once recognized as the official stone of Manitoba, how can we help to educate children in our schools about its significance?

Mr. Ewasko: I want to thank my great, wonderful colleague, the MLA for La Vérendrye, for that very thoughtful, thoughtful question.

Education's the key. Education is the key to absolutely everything that we do, not only in this Chamber, but across Manitoba. And I have to give a bit of a shout-out to my former colleague and current superintendent of Frontier School Division,

Ken [*phonetic*] Klassen, who had worked with Gillis Quarries to bring forward some tours and times when students could actually go to the quarries.

But I see this even more than that. We have our various social studies curriculum, we have our—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): We're fortunate in this province to have many mines and quarries with so many different rocks. Why did the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) choose mottled and 'fossiliferous' 'dolom'—oh, good grief—dolomitic limestone as the provincial stone? It's early. Sorry, folks.

Mr. Ewasko: I appreciate the question coming from my honourable colleague across the way. Honourable Speaker, when we have something this distinct and this wonderful in the province of Manitoba, I have found for years and years and years, that we don't always necessarily toot our own horn as far as the good things that are going on in Manitoba.

* (10:20)

And when I had the pleasure of being invited to the Winnipeg Art Gallery to celebrate the event where Tyndall stone was designated the IUGS Heritage Stone, I really felt that we needed to do something right here in Manitoba, and bring forward this bill so that—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I would like to thank the member for Lac du Bonnet for bringing this very important bill forward to this Legislature. The history that is enshrined within this bill alone, not only for Manitoba, but across the world, as we've heard.

So, my question is to the member from Lac du Bonnet: Who have you consulted with on this legislation?

Mr. Ewasko: You know what? That's a great question because right here in Manitoba, part of our democratic process when we bring forward a bill, you know, you bring forward an idea, you speak to the drafters. There's a process to get it on the Order Paper.

You do first reading; second reading, as we're doing today, then we're going to pass it from second reading, and we get a chance to go to committee. In Manitoba, we actually have—the public are able to come to committee and have those conversations.

In—to specifically answer that question: Indigenous groups, architects, geologists, the owner groups and various different other people within this great province of ours. And outside the province as well.

The Speaker: Time has expired.

MLA Pankratz: So, throughout this session—the PCs opposite have been advocating for greater affordability measures throughout this session. And you know, affordability measures, I might add, that they never thought to put in place themselves over the last seven years.

And so, I just—I ask the member opposite: Why was this bill your first and only bill of this legislative session?

Mr. Ewasko: Once again, as I spoke in favour of the amendment to the Throne Speech—not the Throne Speech—but I did put on the record that I welcomed all of our new and returning members to the Chamber, and some of it is a learning curve.

And so, to the new member from Waverley, this is our first actual private members' hour for opposition, which is today, Thursday, the last day of session. And so, this bill is very important to bring forward in regards to recognize Tyndall stone, moving forward, as one of our emblems.

And in regards to affordability, I guess we will see if—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): Thank you to the honourable member from—or the member from Lac du Bonnet for bringing forward this very important bill, for a very important natural resource in our province and of course, a very important part of our history.

So, my question to you is: Can you tell us why the bill doesn't include the name Tyndall stone? Instead you've got mottled dolomitic limestone.

Mr. Ewasko: I want to thank my colleague from Lakeside for the question.

So, it's pretty much because Tyndall stone is a trademarked name and that's why, within the bill to represent it as the stone, we had to talk about the actual, scientific, geological name.

And to just finish the question for the member from Waverley (MLA Pankratz)—this is private members' time. I know that the deputy premier from St. Johns was heckling me a little bit, but just to educate the

House: this is private members' time. We're not able to bring forward a private members' bill that considers money. So that's why today, this morning, this bill is being brought forward.

And I'd like to thank my colleague, the member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz) for that question, the previous, previous question.

Thanks, Honourable Speaker.

MLA Cross: Many provincial emblems have come out of long debates or even national conversations. In the creation of the flag of Manitoba, the great Canadian flag debate was heated with imperialist nostalgia and strong feelings for Canada's independence.

The province has had to consult Manitobans on how they wish to be represented as a province.

I'd like to ask the member opposite: Who did you consult in choosing this symbol for our province?

Mr. Ewasko: I appreciate the question coming from the member opposite, which was a repeat of a question earlier.

But as you know, we are bringing this forward to committee stage, and I have already answered as far as some other organizations and groups that I have had the pleasure of consulting with on this, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Balcaen: To the member from Lac du Bonnet, I imagine, as this is mined or quarried in Manitoba, there will be financial implications for Manitoba on this for the people that are doing this.

Could you speak to that in this House?

Mr. Ewasko: I'd like to thank my colleague from Brandon West for that very thoughtful question.

Again, not only talking about Tyndall stone but also talking about the impact it has on the hundreds of not only employees but families directly and indirectly that are serviced by Gillis Quarries and the manufacturing and the construction trade of Tyndall stone, Honourable Speaker.

This is impacted. I have had many friends and family that have grown up in the area of the Tyndall-Garson area, and they are just an absolute pillar not only to our area, not only to Manitoba, but to Canada.

Honourable Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity this morning to bring forward—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The time for question period has expired.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is now open for debate.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): I am very happy to rise here on the last day of the—*[interjection]* Sure—no, you—yes, thank you. Appreciate that, yes. Thank you.

So on this last day of the 43rd session—43rd Legislature, the winter session, I am very happy to rise to speak on fossiliferous dolomitic stone from the Ordovician Red River geological face. So I appreciate this. *[interjection]* Thank you, yes.

So, I mean, obviously, we are steeped in history and tradition here in this building. And, you know, you look around, you walk through this space and you're overwhelmed, especially as a new MLA.

And just before I continue on, I just want to quickly shout out to my rock star compatriots here on the government side. And that was a bit of a dad joke, I apologize. I will bring a few more of those into it, yes, for the exceptional work that everyone has been doing so far.

So, as I was saying, I was walking through these halls, I was completely overwhelmed my first few days. And, you know, that is this job that we have been given, this incredible sacrifice that everyone has made to be here and then the ability to go and speak for Manitobans and people in our constituencies.

And then there's the actual building itself, right? So filled with Tyndall stone, with this fossiliferous dolomitic Red River stone that is native here to Manitoba.

So last night, I was actually speaking with my kids. They were asking me, you know, what are you up to at work, Dad? What's going on right now? And we were playing some Ping-Pong and I started explaining, well, there's been this bill that's been brought forward, and we are going to be debating whether we should make Tyndall stone the official stone of Manitoba. And I got a little—can you tell me a bit more about that? And I was, like, well, of course, let's talk about it.

So, in our history here in Manitoba, we actually—we were covered—and many of you likely know this already, but parts of our province were covered in a blue sea, sometimes a stifling blue sea that covered us—maybe in our more recent history. And within that

sea, it was lifeless, actually, at the beginning. It was completely lifeless. *[interjection]* I appreciate that.

* (10:30)

But eventually, as David Attenborough would say, life found a way. And diverse life started to enter into this blue lake that was covering our province. But over time, sort of the—this lake pushed things down. They pushed it down over and over again, and started compressing—*[interjection]* Yes, it started compressing at the bottom of this blue lake that was covering our province.

But what ended up happening is that all of that life coalesced and it actually started coming together and getting stronger and harder, and then it created these different levels. And in that level was this—there's actually an orange hue to it too, I believe, if I'm correct. And that was—

An Honourable Member: Very little.

MLA Pankratz: A little bit, though, there was a little bit. And it was a—this was part of this dolomitic layer in the Ordovician phase of the Red River Valley.

And so my kids, at this point, were utterly baffled. They had no idea what I was talking about, obviously. And—but ultimately, what happened was, we had this blue lake that, you know, left Manitoba, and we were able to find this incredible, diverse stone that was covered with all of the history of Manitoba.

And now, we're able to use this. It's called fossiliferous dolomitic stone, or Tyndall stone, as we know it. And it has built all of these buildings and now it fills these buildings with diversity and excitement and beauty, right?

So, that was the story that I told my boys, and—in the middle of this Ping-Pong game. *[interjection]* No, it was a game of Ping-Pong. And they were thrilled. They were really excited about this new bill that has been brought forward, that sort of honours Manitoba's history and the exciting new government that we have here in Manitoba.

So, I also wanted to just talk briefly about some of the history. And, you know, it's—we didn't get too much into the science. I was going to ask the member opposite about the context of this stratigraphic layer where this stone comes from, but we ran out of time, unfortunately. Maybe we can talk later about that.

But it was actually at that time when life started to come in. The sea, it was inhabited by a number of different creatures which make up—you can actually

see them around the Legislature now, which is unbelievable. They're fossilized within this stone, and so, there were nautiloids, there were corals, there was—what was it called? The crinoids, the trilobites, gastropods, bivalves and there's even a calcareous algae that you can find if you walk through the hall over on the east side, I believe.

And so, it's been fun to actually walk through and see all of this. And the fact that it actually is from Manitoba, and has been mined by some incredible folks up here at the quarry—and I think I have a colleague here who's going to speak to her family's history with quarries—is really amazing. And it has this national, international presence, this special stone.

So, I just want to conclude by saying that I think that this is a really interesting and important bill.

Some Honourable Members: More, more.

MLA Pankratz: More? Okay, yes, I actually—I have—I do have a bit more time. Sure, yes.

So, I mean, one thing that I will say is that over the last few years, my kids and I loved to—and I know this is really, I'm getting my kids involved in this speech a lot, but they're the most precious thing to me.

So, we walk from The Forks all the way over to Omands Creek. We love doing this sort of stroll together. And often we'd walk by the Legislature, along the river, and they would look up at the Golden Boy and the tower. And they would ask me about the work that goes on there, as I spoke about, and the incredible building and who built it and how was it built.

And now, you know, having the chance to work in this space and actually see the Tyndall stone every day and being able to go home and explain to them that, you know, this is the important work that we're doing in this important space, is really special.

So, they actually came into the building. We got a full tour of this space, just last week. And they were completely overwhelmed by the size of it, by what actually goes on here.

And we went all the way up into the tower, and they got to see—they were pointing out fossils as we went with the Tyndall stone that graces these halls.

And, ultimately it was this beautiful moment—full circle—where, you know, we used to be skating along the river, walking on this path and looking up and wondering what sort of work was going on.

Now, I was sharing it. So I was sharing this space with my kids, and being able to talk about this stone

that is mined here in Manitoba and sent out to the world internationally and is known the world around—and used by artists, mind you, all over the world.

So, that is also something that is very close to my heart.

You know, the other thing that we should talk about too is mining is a really, really critical component of our economy, and dolomitic limestone continues to be a very important part of that industry.

So, we are committed to creating sustainable mining practices here that are actually co-developed with Indigenous nations. And, what I'm really excited about is for some of my colleagues to speak a little bit more on that shortly, because I am going to run out of time. I won't be able to speak on that specifically.

But I'm very excited about some of the initiatives that our government is going to be coming forward with to—I mean, first of all, we're dealing with a bit of a deficit, as a lot of people know, so we need to really, really get our economy moving, and mining is going to be a big part of that.

So, sustainable mining practices. And I just know for a fact that our Finance Minister is going to be able to deal with this and work with the province's industry to make sure that we really get moving in the right direction.

So it has been my absolute honour to stand up and speak on this bill. And I am just absolutely—it is such a pleasure to be here with all of you, and I look forward to all of the amazing work that we're going to do together here in this space.

Thank you.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today, to speak in favour of this great bill, and the contribution that Tyndall stone has made to the architecture across Manitoba, Canada and the world.

With its unique characteristics, the Tyndall stone is like no other limestone. As a result, the desirability in architecture across our country has been significant.

The significance that Tyndall stone has had on Manitoba architecture since its discovery deserves the recognition that this bill sets out to achieve.

As we walk up the stairs of this very Legislative Building, we are surrounded by the beautiful detail that this Manitoba stone possesses. The Tyndall stone holds the global heritage designation for broad significance to humanity.

It is the only Canadian stone on the worldwide list, which contains only 32 stones across the entire world. This prestigious recognition is included together with stone as widely recognized as the Carrara marble used in ancient Rome.

Tyndall stone has primarily been used as a building material, and can be seen in construction across Manitoba for 200 years. It was first discovered in 1823 by Hudson's Bay Company employees who noticed an exposure along the banks of the Red River, near Selkirk.

Some of the very first buildings to see the unique stone was Lower Fort Garry in 1832, and a short while later, the St. Andrew's Anglican church in 1845; both of which still stand today.

At this point in time, the limestone, unique in beauty due to its fossils and modelling, was not recognized by the name Tyndall stone.

The name Tyndall stone came after the discovery of a major deposit in Garson, Manitoba, in 1894. The quarry we know today was opened in 1898, and the stone got its name as a result of rail shipments being sent from the nearby community of Tyndall, Manitoba. This first quarry was opened by William Garson, who has been said to produce 90 per cent of the stone used in the building industry at that time.

* (10:40)

Mr. Garson ran his quarry until his death in 1911. At that point, Peter Lyall bought the company and operated it as Wallace Sandstone Company. By 1914, the industry was booming and included three large quarries in the Garson area.

Between three companies, nearly 300 people were employed. And by 1915, a fourth company was in operation and turns out to be the sole company in operation today, which we have the owners in the gallery with us today, and we thank them.

This company, a Winnipeg stonecutting shop, which opened in 1910, was owned by August Gillis, specializing in cutting Tyndall stone. By 1915, August and his sons were able to acquire their own quarry, and today the Garson quarry is still owned and operated by the Gillis family.

August Gillis and his sons, Charles and Joseph, were able to acquire the surrounding quarries, and today the Gillis family still owns and operates this Gillis Quarries Ltd.

It was this quarry deposit that supplied the stone for many of the notable buildings across Canada, including the Legislative Building, which we sit today, along with the Manitoba Legislature, the Hudson's Bay store downtown, Winnipeg City Hall, the Manitoba Museum, Manitoba Law Courts, Westminster United Church, Union Station, St. Boniface cathedral, the Civic Auditorium, Winnipeg Art Gallery, the Manitoba Law Courts and, most recently, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, have all been constructed using Manitoba's unique Tyndall stone.

The distinguished sites, playing host to our unique stone, doesn't stop in Manitoba. The Canadian Parliament building in Ottawa have also been proud to showcase the unique characteristics of the Tyndall stone in its construction.

Other notable buildings across the country include the Canadian Museum of History, the Saskatchewan Legislature, Banff hotel and the Empress Hotel in BC.

Outside of Canada, Tyndall can also be seen at Canada House in London, the Canadian embassy in Berlin and many other private and public buildings of distinguished architecture.

Although the greatest recognition can be made in the large public buildings I have listed, Tyndall stone has had significant contribution to many other buildings across our province and country. Through the prairie landscape of Manitoba, where wood wasn't as readily available, it is common to see many turn-of-the-century houses and community buildings built or furnished with its details in Tyndall stone. And we're very proud today.

Thank you.

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): I'm ready to rock.

I'm actually excited to get up and speak to Bill 201, because I have a very personal connection to this stone.

I'm going to storytell again. I've been really lucky to stand up and actually speak a lot about the maternal side of my family, but I haven't had the opportunity to speak about the paternal side of my family. One of the things that I noticed that it was noticeably missed in this bill: the mention of bricklayers, journeymen bricklayers.

And the reason that I want to speak to that is because I was raised by a bricklayer. My uncles, both of them, are bricklayers. My family purchased and

spent a great deal of time at Gillis Quarries. I grew up helping my father pick up his Tyndall stone for the jobs he was going to do, and I'm proud to say that I can drive by many structures throughout Winnipeg and Manitoba and see my father's work.

And I actually want to mention his name, my father is Bill Mirka. He owned a company called B. Mirka Masonry, and that company afforded my mother the ability to be a stay-at-home mom for my sister and I and for me to have my very first job. My very first job was as a bricklayer's helper. Can you imagine that? Sixteen-year-old girl.

I'm not sure if the members who are here today remember my dad. They do; very nice. I'm very proud of my father and the work that he did. I think he was one of the better journeyman bricklayers in the province. And in fact, he, at one point, was asked to help create the bricklayers exam, to rewrite it—for the new group of bricklayers coming in.

But growing up, oftentimes, hey, we're going to go for a drive to the quarry or to Gillis Quarries on Wenzel, at the time. We went to Wenzel quite a bit, where they had a location. And I—you got to be really careful when you go to these places, there's a lot of stone pallets being moved around, but one of the things that they afforded the journeymen to do was to actually go in and pick their stone.

And that was something my dad took great pride in, that he wouldn't just call and order the amount of stone he needed, but he actually went there and picked it himself. Made sure that the colour matched, made sure that the stones looked really good for the job that he was doing.

My father not only built—worked on large buildings. His very first job, actually, was for A&M Masonary [*phonetic*]. He worked for a bricklayer named Andy Funk, who they probably know well, who recently passed away and had a very big business. My uncle, John Bodnar, worked for that company, my uncle, Nick Mirka, worked for that company. And they built some very large structures across Manitoba using Tyndall stone from Gillis.

And so, moving on, when my dad eventually decided to be a small-business owner, one of the biggest things that he was called for by customers was to do stone house fronts. And so, you know, I'm sure many of us drive around, maybe don't notice those houses that have Tyndall stone fronts. I still see them and admire them. I think they're a really classy look to homes. I think it really shows the artistry and the

technique and the ability, the skills of a bricklayer to be able to lay that stone.

It's not as simple as you might think. You have to make sure that not only does your stone look good, but you have to have cement that matches properly, your concrete to seal it. You have to make sure that's level. You have to cut that stone into shapes and angles that you couldn't even imagine, including making little arbours for lights to fit into.

And so, it's such a sense of pride for me to stand here today to be able to talk to this bill, because it is so intimately connected with my upbringing. I often drive by certain places—my parents had moved away from Manitoba for a period of time, and I really missed them, so one of the things I thought was really lucky that I could do was drive by the places my dad built.

And so I know the—how important this stone is to Manitobans, but I also know that if we are not going to include the mentioning of journeymen bricklayers in this bill and the contributions they've made to actually laying the stone on these buildings that the masons did for many years, we're doing a great disservice to folks who were a part of this industry.

And so, I would encourage the member across to maybe look at that and find a way to include that in this bill somehow to honour those folks. It's important to honour where the stones comes from, it's important to honour their history, but it's also important to honour the folks that work with it on a daily basis.

And sadly, we've moved away from using this kind of stone in that industry. One of the things I hear oftentimes is that, you know, talking with my dad nowadays, bricklayers aren't really doing the same kind of work that they used to do. Nowadays, it's a lot of cultured stone, or it's a lot of units that are just kind of screwed onto a building where it really doesn't require the work anymore.

So I can't imagine, you know, how different it is for these folks who operate this business nowadays where maybe people aren't purchasing and using this stone quite as often. But I encourage members to take a look at maybe redoing their homes.

One of my wishes had been for my father to actually do a Tyndall stone front on my house, but sadly it just didn't happen. Unfortunately he retired too soon to have that opportunity.

You know, as a teacher—I'm going to shift a little bit because I just talked for five minutes about my

personal connection to Tyndall stone and to this great business. *[interjection]* Thank you.

* (10:50)

But, you know, my colleague across is a teacher, as well, and I was a grade 4 teacher for four years. And so in grade 4, in our science unit, one of our clusters that we have to teach is rocks, minerals and erosion.

And so, for me, it was really important to be the type of teacher that I could connect learning to something close to home, to make it authentic for students; to make their learning meaningful, to—for them to have the ability to go outside and look for rocks that we talked about. And so, one of the focuses that I had, and one of the projects that I did with students actually was tied to Tyndall stone.

Students had to create a list of places that included these stones. But prior to that, you know, as our member—the member before me spoke, he talked a little bit about the creation of this unique stone to Manitoba, that over a half a billion years ago we were covered by an ancient ocean: Lake Agassiz. And, all the, you know, fossilized life within those stones, you know, developed over half a billion years.

And I—but I think it is important to also look at this in terms of—if we are looking at this as an emblem of Manitoba, we have to look at the history, deeper than the 1800s.

We need to look at different worldviews about stones. We need to understand that not everybody sees stones as inanimate objects. In particular, when we look at Tyndall stone and we—even just to walk around this building, I think there's even a scavenger hunt you can do to find all the fossils.

Well, just looking at those fossils, we oftentimes forget those were living creatures. Those were not inanimate objects, and so—just another quick story.

I had a colleague of mine whose daughter was in grade 4 and came home and said, Mom, I'm so mad at you, you lied to me, how could you do that? And she's like, what are you talking about? And this is an Indigenous family.

She said, I had my test on rocks and when the teacher asked, I had to choose: is rock a living or non-living thing? And the student had put down that rocks are living things, because for Indigenous people, rocks are living things.

They have spirit, they have energy, they give off energy, they take in energy. They are so meaningful

in so many ways. Well, the teacher, unfortunately, marked her answer wrong because she called a rock a living thing.

And so, I think if we're going to look at creating emblems, we also have to look at world view around those emblems. We have to understand how others feel about them. We need to make sure that we include all these worldviews, not just a Western worldview where we're minimizing, you know, peoples', like, thinking around this.

And so I—my hope would be that we look at curriculum, especially in grade 4; rocks, minerals and erosion is a whole unit on rocks. Let's include more about Manitoba's favourite stone, or Manitoba's most important stone.

But let's also include those worldviews so that we can understand how other people think. Imagine being a little girl who is so, like, she was so determined and wanted to do so well, but being told you're wrong, because a person's worldview didn't reflect their own.

And so, I think it is important that we acknowledge that, and include that in everything we do. And so, I'm really happy to be able to rise today and speak to this, because of my personal connection, not only with this but with this family that, you know, has been selling this stone for so long in Manitoba.

Thank you.

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): I think this is an important bill.

Obviously, you know, we haven't had much time to look at it, but I think we need to continue to discuss it. I have got a particular interest in this bill, from a natural and geological point of view, from a trades point of view and from a historical point of view.

First of all, from a natural geological point of view, I think it's important to recognize that, you know, the province of Manitoba is enormous. From the 49th parallel to the 60th parallel, the geology of Manitoba is very diverse.

Geology from, you know, the Prairies is very different from the North, from the boreal forest, where we find a lot of granite, to even the tundra, which is further up north.

I've worked for Parks Canada, actually, for four summers. I was actually fortunate enough to work at the Lower Fort Garry for three summers where I was the blacksmith. My character was William Drever. I wish I would've been the stone mason,

Bellonie Guibeault, the French stone mason who actually had a hand in building the Lower Fort Garry in 1832.

And I'd like to, you know, recognize that actually, the Lower Fort Garry was the administrative centre for the Hudson's Bay Company for—up until 1870. I'd also like to recognize that the Upper Fort Garry was also built out of limestone. And the Upper Fort Garry, just to remind everyone, was actually the birthplace of Manitoba where the act of Manitoba was first proclaimed.

So, I think it's important that we take the time to recognize that, you know, yes, we have limestone in southern Manitoba, but in the boreal forest and for much of Manitoba, in the North, we also have a lot of granite. And we know this because as farmers and from a family of farmers and Métis and whatnot, what do we have in our fields? Fieldstone. And it's not just limestone; it's granite, it's quartz, it's all kinds of, you know, stone.

And I want to throw in a dad joke here. There's one stone that I particularly enjoy a lot, it's called 'keeperite.' And you might ask what that is. It's the kind of stone that you keep, that you put in your pocket when you go walking. And in fact, I once paddled the Souris river from Wawanessa, on the way down to the Assiniboine, and on a rocky shoal bed, I found a piece of amber. And amber, you might remember, is actually fossilized—100-million-year-old fossilized sap from trees.

So, I think it's important that we keep on discussing this. I know we've got the Gillis family here. And I want to talk about my trades background. I've worked with Tyndall stone. I've been to the Gillis Quarries. I think it's important that we get this right, having a history background. Tyndall stone from the Gilles Quarries is actually from Garson. So I think it's important that we get this right, when we recognize this stone.

Having worked, like I said, at Lower Fort Garry, I'd also like to recognize that a lot of buildings in St. Boniface, like the cathedral—where I was baptised in 1968, just a few days before it burned—went through a horrific fire and because it was built out of Tyndall stone, it's still standing today. So we have all these monuments built out of Tyndall which I think are important, that we also have to recognize, like the ones in St. Boniface.

From a trades point of view, I'd also like to recognize that limestone is important because, to speak to

your bill, when we take limestone and we apply fire to limestone, we get lime. And honourable member from Seine River, here, talked about bricklaying. You can't lay brick if you don't have lime because you mix lime with sand and water and you get mortar. So, we have to keep all of these things in mind.

Coming back to history: I think it's also important to recognize that, you know, along the years, we've had a number of Métis, francophone, English, Scottish, all sorts of stone masons that have come through the years, from different backgrounds, who have built buildings that are still standing here in Manitoba. So, I think—as the honourable member from Seine River had said, I think it's important that we recognize the trades point of view of this, all right?

So, in closing, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say that, you know, having the Gillis family here, recognizing the importance of this bill, that we take the time to continue to reflect on the importance of limestone in Manitoba, just like yesterday we talked about the importance of Louis Riel. Because emblems in Manitoba—and we've got a list of them here—are things that actually, you know, are recognized for life.

The Speaker: Order, please. When this matter's before the House again, the honourable member for St. Boniface (MLA Loisel) will have four minutes remaining.

* (11:00)

The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private member's resolutions.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 1—Calling on the Provincial Government to Remove the Federal Carbon Tax on Home Heating Bills for Manitobans

The Speaker: The resolution before us this morning—*[interjection]* Order, please. *[interjection]* Order, please.

The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on calling the provincial government to remove the federal carbon tax and home heating bills for Manitobans, brought forward by the honourable member for Fort Whyte.

MLA Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): I move, seconded by the member from Portage la Prairie,

WHEREAS many Manitobans are struggling to make ends meet, and experiencing a cost of living crisis as the cost of essential goods and services are rising; and

WHEREAS home heating is an essential service in Manitoba, with an average of almost 200 days below zero degrees Celsius annually; and

WHEREAS the federal carbon tax is compounding Manitobans affordability concerns, costing households hundreds of dollars in additional costs for home heating, as well as making all goods more expensive; and

WHEREAS the Federal Government has realized the cost of living impact of its carbon tax, offering Atlantic Canadians a reprieve and tax exemption for their home heating oil over the next year; and

WHEREAS Manitobans deserve the same consideration for their home heating needs and cost of living concerns; and

WHEREAS it is counterintuitive to exempt heating oil, while still collecting a carbon tax on the much cleaner burning natural gas that a majority of Manitoba homes utilize; and

WHEREAS Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax; and

WHEREAS political leaders across party lines have called for a Canada-wide carbon tax exemption for home heating; and

WHEREAS Manitoba is a leader in developing one of the cleanest and greenest electricity systems in the world as its total natural gas consumption is less than 2% of Canada's total demand; and

WHEREAS Provincial leadership in other jurisdictions have already committed to removing the federal carbon tax from home heating bills; and

WHEREAS this Premier has previously publicly committed to pursuing an exemption, and acknowledged that "We also need to show flexibility."

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to remove the federal carbon tax on home heating bills for all Manitobans to provide them much-needed relief.

Motion presented.

MLA Khan: Thank you colleagues and those across the row. It's good to be back in here to speak about this very, very important resolution. Oh, the guests have left, unfortunately.

So, you know, in this House, as being elected officials, we carry a lot of responsibly and a lot of power to push things forward for the betterment of Manitoba. It was unfortunate with the previous bill or resolution that was brought forward that that wasn't brought forward—wasn't passed, and the NDP decided to speak it out.

Something as simple and as beautiful as The Manitoba Emblems Amendment Act to add in Tyndall stone. They talk so highly about it, and yet they did nothing to pass it. And, you know, and I'm not surprised, because that's the way they're going to operate when we talk about the betterment of Manitoba and we talk about making life more affordable.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

You know, members opposite don't want to hear about it; they're already heckling me. The member from St. Vital, minister should know better. When we're talking about affordability for Manitobans, this is an important issues, and I'm not going to be surprised that they'll probably speak this one as well, because in actuality they don't actually care about affordability for Manitobans.

Do not be fooled at home when they sit there—or they stand there and they say, it's all about affordability, it's about affordability, because in reality it's not about affordability for them. What it is about them is talking points. What it is about them is just making it sound like they're doing something when in reality they're actually not doing anything.

If you look at the simple numbers, and we presented the numbers week after week and day after day; the media's reported on it time and time again, that numbers don't lie—that numbers say that removing the carbon tax from heating homes will save Manitobans more money. You can't argue that.

No one can argue that, but they're not going to listen. They're not going to listen. They're not going to listen. They don't care about the actual making life more affordable for Manitobans. If they actually cared, their leader would actually lead. Their leader would stand up and do something big and bold outside of the box.

And he refuses to do that, and the rest of the people on that side also refuse to do anything. When their—when the Premier (Mr. Kinew), their leader, said a couple weeks ago that he would remove the carbon tax from home heating at the COF conference, like he did with all the other leaders across this great

country, he said he would do it—came back to Manitoba, refuses to do it.

At that point, we let them know right away we're going to bring a resolution forward calling on the provincial government to remove the carbon tax. So, today they have an opportunity to do what their leader said. The Premier of Manitoba, the Leader of the NDP government, said he would remove the carbon tax. He has not given an answer as to why he will not remove the carbon tax.

Other leaders across this great country have, and yet he won't do it. He's going back on his word, he's flip-flopping like he's done time and time again, and it's only two months into this newly elected government. They still have time to make it right.

Why will the Premier and the NDP government not do the right thing and make life more affordable?

By 2030, the carbon tax would have reached about an average of \$1,000 to heat the average Manitoban's home. And yet they want to pass their gas tax pause for six months. Six months, 14 cents at the pump. That is great savings, it is.

But what that works out to is, and their math—their fudged math, their fake math, their inflated math, as we've seen in the media, last few days—\$250 is going to save the average Manitoban. But wait, fine print, two cars. Two cars, \$250 over six months.

Well, what about one car? What about someone's just—you know, we have one car in the household. Lot of households only have one car—\$125 they are going to save the Manitobans; \$125. *[interjection]* Yes, you can clap for \$125 when, on this side of the House, we're saying take the carbon tax off. Take the carbon tax off and save \$275.

How about that math; \$125 on the gas tax pause, \$275 on the carbon tax. Let's do the math; \$275 minus \$125, \$150 more.

If this was really about affordability, they would pass the resolution today. They would have taken bold leadership and they would have done what every other province is calling for.

They wont do it; \$150—\$125 savings on the gas tax pause, \$275. But the carbon tax keeps going up. Right now, it is \$50 per ton. April 1st, it's going to go to \$65 per ton. What does that mean then? Oh, carbon tax is going to be more expensive next year and more expensive next year and more expensive.

They have the opportunity right now to do the right thing and get rid of the carbon tax, and they won't do it. They will not do it. They'll—gas tax pause is for six months. I asked the minister point blank: Does he believe that inflation, cost of living will go back within six months—back to norms? No.

Well, if it is not going to happen, why is the gas tax pause only for six months?

Make the carbon tax gone. Make it permanent. That will save Manitobans money. That will make life more affordable. Their \$125 does nothing other than taking \$370 million out of the provincial general account—\$370 million.

They want to take \$370 million out of the Province's budget—Province's general account for savings for six months when they can get rid of the carbon tax. The simple question is: Well, why do they want to give money to the feds?

This Premier (Mr. Kinew) and this party had made it very clear that their friendship to Justin Trudeau is more important than Manitobans. They would rather send money to Ottawa than keep money here in Manitoba. They have the opportunity to keep \$370 million here—they won't do it. They won't do it. They want to send it to Ottawa.

This carbon tax needs to go. Other leaders are doing it, why will this leader not stand up and do the right thing?

Now, they'll give you the argument, oh, it is against the law, we have a legal opinion, it's against the law. Well, how is Saskatchewan doing it? How is Alberta moving forward with it?

They're standing up for their people. They're standing up for Saskatchewanians, they're standing up Albertans. It's about time this Premier stands up for Manitobans.

You know, this—I only got three minutes left. I can go on and on, there is so much to talk about here. At the end of the day it comes down to this Premier, this NDP, do not care about affordability. They want their talking points to say that they gave you a gas tax holiday, pause, 14 cents.

Also, that's going up by—the carbon tax on fuel is going up to 18 cents April 1st. So their 14-cent savings are actually only a 10-cent savings, when they could have got rid of the carbon tax, taken some leadership and done it.

Now, lets talk about heating homes here quickly—I got two and a half minutes left—50 per cent of Manitobans use natural gas to heat their homes. Natural gas represents 53 per cent of energy use. The carbon tax will add another \$247 to the 'pricehold' of natural gas to heat homes.

Manitobans that rely on electricity—and electricity costs more—pay \$3,383 per year to heat their houses by electricity—\$3,383. How much does it cost for natural gas—\$1,770. Almost half to heat your house with natural gas.

Yet, this government, this Premier, this Minister of Finance (MLA Sala), want to switch everything to electricity. Why? It's going to cost Manitobans double to heat their houses with electricity.

* (11:10)

If they cared about affordability they would not do that; 262,000 households use natural gas, 200,000 use electricity. Only 17,000 use heat pumps. Now, in the last minute—in a bit—I'm going to talk about heat pumps very quickly because they want to go out into heat pumps; heat pumps, heat pumps, heating pumps.

Well, they got 5,000 heat pumps that they budgeted for at 2,600—\$26,000 a house. They're going to budget \$130 million of your money, Manitobans' money, when they're okay sending money to Ottawa, but they want to use \$130 million for 5,000 heat pumps.

Who picks the 5,000? And this is at \$26,000 for a heat pump, when Manitoba Hydro says it's actually closer to \$40,000 for a heat pump. They're going to pick just over 4,000 Manitobans, when over 460,000 Manitobans aren't using it: 262,000 Manitobans are using gas; 200,000 use electricity; and they are offering just over 4,000 homes heat pumps for a cost of \$130 million. Manitobans are paying for that.

If they wanted to do the right thing, they would pass this resolution today and they would call on the federal government to stop collecting the carbon tax. Saskatchewan is doing it. They have leadership. They've passed a law to do it. They're passing it today.

They have the time and opportunity to do the right thing and pass this resolution and make the law to get rid of the carbon tax to make life more affordable for Manitobans.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party; any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

MLA Mike Moyes (Riel): The PCs have proven themselves to be poor managers of public dollars. They put us in a \$1.6-billion deficit and now they want to fight another expensive legal battle.

Can the member for Fort Whyte remind us how the—how much the previous government spent on its losing court battle with the federal government?

MLA Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): I want to thank the member opposite for the question and what the resolution today is about is making life more affordable for Manitobans today.

I know they want to get off on their talking points. And some of them are really new and they're just reading from a piece of paper, but the reality is this resolution is about affordability for Manitobans.

We did the math: \$125 on the tax fuel pause; \$275 on the carbon tax. It's up to them. They can decide to make life more affordable for Manitobans, like this resolution is calling, or they can get off on their talking points, like they've always been doing.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Thank you for bringing this very important piece of legislation forward.

Considering this NDP Premier (Mr. Kinew) takes his orders from Jagmeet Singh, who supports the carbon tax carve out, why won't he act?

That is my question: Why won't he act? Or is it his own caucus members who want this carbon tax to stay? Which one is it?

MLA Khan: The reality is, I don't know why this Premier won't do it. You'd have to ask him—oh, wait, we have asked him a dozen times why he won't do it and there's no answer.

So, the only thing that I can think of is why they won't support this carbon tax, is ideological differences and campaign promises. There is nothing behind the gas tax pause, it's 14 cents. The carbon tax relief—this resolution—will save Manitobans more

money. If it's about affordability, they would support this.

But the reality is, it's not about affordability, it's just about their talking points and trying to fulfil their campaign promises, which they they know they cannot do.

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Does the member have any alternative solutions to ensure environmental protection while balancing affordability for Manitobans?

MLA Khan: I want to thank the member from Tyndall Park for that great question.

And, you know, when it comes to environment, of course we all have to be very, very concerned about what's happening with the environment.

It's nice to know, and she'll be happy to hear that Manitoba is one of the cleanest producers of energy in this country; 2 per cent of natural gas consumption is from Manitoba—that's it. So, we are already making a difference when it comes to environmental change.

This is about affordability measures. We're going to ensure affordability, along with environment, is the best way to go forward to make sure life is more affordable for Manitobans.

MLA Moyes: It is clear to Manitobans that the PCs were desperate to get re-elected and willing to do anything and say anything to hold on to power.

Will the member for Fort Whyte tell us where his party got their legal opinion that would allow them to violate federal legislation right before the election?

MLA Khan: I want to thank the member from—Riel, correct? Yes, thank you very much. I want to thank the member for Riel for his question.

You know, when it comes to legal opinion, there's lots of opinions out there. They brought forward a legal opinion the other day, we have our legal opinions, Saskatchewan has their legal opinion on how this is. But what this cause is for is a cause for leadership to go forward.

Leadership has to go forward and make the decision to fight for Manitobans, to fight for affordability for Manitobans. This leader has shown he doesn't want to do it; this party has shown they don't want to do it. Premier Scott Moe next door has shown he can do it.

Why won't they stand up for Manitobans to make life more affordable?

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): My question to my colleague from Fort Whyte is simply because we've been asking the same questions to the opposite side of the House for weeks now and not getting an answer; maybe my counterpart from Fort Whyte can.

Why do the NDP continue to support the carbon tax? And it's Manitobans that are asking for this. So, why won't the NDP act?

MLA Khan: I want to thank my colleague for that great question.

And again, I have no idea why this NDP government and this Premier (Mr. Kinew) will not call for removing of the carbon tax. Other leaders across Canada are doing, other premiers are doing it, he said he would do it. He then flip-flopped and said he wouldn't do it. The Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) said he would do it and he would support Manitobans and now they've also flip-flopped.

So, I have no idea why they won't do it. It makes sense, it's the right thing to do, it's larger savings for Manitoba, it's more affordability for Manitobans.

And yet, this Premier does not want to do it; I don't know why. We've asked him, we'll try to ask him again in question period today and I guarantee you he won't have an answer.

MLA Moyes: Millions; the PC government wasted millions upon millions of taxpayers' dollars over ideological disputes.

Will the member opposite stop playing political games and actually work on a climate change policy?

MLA Khan: You know, I want to thank the member for Louis—again for—Riel, sorry, for that question again.

And he keeps going back here on the same points here again. And this resolution is about affordability for Manitobans. This resolution is about making life more affordable. They want to go off on their talking points. They want to—the reality is getting rid of the carbon tax will save Manitobans more money.

Their plan for heat pumps: 3,250 homes. How are they going to pick those 3,250 homes when over 500,000 Manitobans rely on natural gas for heating?

They can answer that. They don't have an answer for it.

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Honourable Deputy Speaker, my colleague, the MLA for Fort Whyte and I both know as everybody on this side of

the House, the PCs are concerned about saving Manitobans hundreds of dollars.

Can the member for Fort Whyte (MLA Khan) tell the people how much they would save on the carbon tax removed from home heating?

MLA Khan: I want to thank my colleague for that question.

Getting rid of the carbon tax will save Manitobans more money than their gas tax pause, plain and simple. Fourteen cents on their gas tax pause; over \$1,000 for Manitobans in the next three years on carbon tax relief. The carbon tax is the right thing to do.

* (11:20)

Why does this Premier and party want to send money to Ottawa when the gas tax they're pausing takes \$370 million right out of the provincial coffers right here? They want to send money to Ottawa. On this side of the House, we want to help Manitobans with affordability.

MLA Moyes: You know, I am really happy that we have a Minister of the Environment that is actually working on a climate change policy, as opposed to the years and years that the PCs had that did not have anything going.

We're one of only two provinces where our greenhouse gases are increasing. The world is moving towards a low-carbon, net-zero economy. It is the biggest threat to our quality of life, never mind our economy.

We are actually having a plan to get people off of fossil fuels and moving towards geothermal. It is an excellent plan. I cannot wait to move in that direction.

What effect will this resolution have on Manitoba's rising greenhouse gas emissions?

MLA Khan: If the Minister of Environment was so concerned about this, then I would ask the Minister of Environment to stand-up and ask me a question, but obviously the minister has not.

So, the member from Riel will ask me a question. The reality comes down to: it is that natural gas consumption is less than 2 per cent of Canada's total demand in this province; 97 per cent of Manitoba's hydro energy is clean.

Manitoba is ahead of the curve when it comes to this, as far as clean energy goes in this country. Affordability is top of mind right now. When their

plan for energy pumps are—heat pumps come in, they're picking 3,000 winners in Manitoba.

We're worried about all of the Manitobans here for affordability.

Mr. Balcaen: Again, thank you to the member for Fort Whyte (MLA Khan) for bringing this very important piece of legislation forward.

I appreciate it. I know every Manitoban appreciates it. Saying that, a Manitoban is a Manitoban, is a Canadian.

So, can you answer: Does the NDP Premier (Mr. Kinew) believe that a Canadian is a Canadian, is a Canadian, when we look at this legislation?

MLA Khan: I want to thank my colleague for the question.

I think the answer is pretty evident that this Premier and this NDP do not view Manitobans as Manitobans. We saw that in the first iteration of this gas tax pause bill they brought forward.

It needed amendments that our side brought forward, that they said they refused to do, and then at the eleventh hour they said they'll do it, because they realized that their tax pause bill was not reflective all of Manitobans.

So we added them—added in. I want to thank them for taking our amendments and making inclusive of all Manitoba, but it is obvious that this leader and this party do not care about all Manitobans. They only picking 3,000 winners for their heat pumps, and the rest of Manitobans will have to suffer.

On this side of the House, we're representing all of Manitoba.

The Deputy Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: The floor is open for debate.

MLA Mike Moroz (River Heights): The member for Fort Whyte (MLA Khan), in his initial remarks, of course, is suggesting that the purpose of this resolution is affordability.

No one on this side of the House argues that Manitobans are facing some significant affordability challenges. Over the course of the last 24 months, a number of factors have conspired to raise costs for families. Core costs: groceries, rents, debt servicing,

electricity, transportation, and more than this. Everything is more expensive.

Likewise, our small business sector is seeing many of its costs climb to levels that has put some of them at risk as they attempt to rebuild after the pandemic. Transportation costs, supply chain disruptions and shifting workplace patterns have also made their recovery much slower and more difficult than anticipated.

That is a concern to all of us. Honourable Speaker—or Honourable Deputy Speaker, if it was this affordability crisis that led our government, even in this shortened session, to begin to take steps to deliver meaningful affordability measures to all Manitobans.

But the resolution proposed today, while intending to provide relief, actually puts Manitobans at a significantly increased risk over time, because this resolution doesn't just have one potential impact. It can't be applied in a public policy vacuum.

It also has an immediate and negative impact on efforts to combat climate change, and that needs to be part of our discussion here today.

Leaving aside, for a moment, the prevailing legal opinion that it would, in fact, be unlawful for a province to refuse to collect the carbon tax, I want to suggest that it's essential that policy-makers in any discussion of affordability include the fullest possible range of applications when making decisions about these kinds of resolutions.

Think about it. Even when we discuss affordability as individuals, as families, we never simply look at the raw costs of things. We also assess the cost of not making a decision, of not moving forward with an initiative, of not taking action. And when we do that, we're trying to determine the cost of doing nothing and establish which of those costs is actually greater.

When we're looking at a resolution like this one, that weakens our response to the climate crisis; not doing the same thing here is simply irresponsible. So let's do that. Let's leave partisanship aside for a moment and agree, whether we like it or not, whether we agree with its value as a public policy tool or not, that the statutory purpose of carbon pricing is to begin to address the existential crisis that is climate change.

Let's look, then, Honourable Deputy Speaker, at some of the potential rising costs that we would be accepting if we accepted this resolution. Let's look at

a couple of additional metrics to get a clearer sense of what we can actually afford or not afford.

First, let's consider the raw cost of the most recent wildfire season, one of—one that is acknowledged to have been the worst on record. In the province of British Columbia alone, the cost of fighting those wildfires was an astonishing \$770 million, crushing the previous expenditure record of \$649 million from 2017. At a national level, an analysis of wildland fire protection efforts has established that those costs topped \$1 billion for six of the past 10 fire seasons. Think about that—\$1 billion. What kinds of extraordinary affordability measures could we have brought in if we'd had access to that?

So, Honourable Deputy Speaker, when we're examining the concept of affordability within the context of this resolution, we must consider its potential impact on our ability to fight climate change. We need to recognize that if we do nothing on that file these costs for dealing with the consequences of climate change are only going to rise over time. And that must be part of our assessment of this resolution.

Over the past number of days, we've also discussed the affordability concerns of rural Manitobans, and rightly so. But here, too, climate change and its impact on agriculture must become part of our conversation. The Canadian National Agroclimate Risk Report from November 7, 2023, states: Large regions of Western Canada remain in severe to extreme drought, which has decreased livestock feed, reduced surface water supplies and increased the risk of erosion.

Speaking specifically to Manitoba, the report states: Livestock water supplies are adequate; however, significant snowfall to replenish water sources is necessary. Dugouts were at 50 to 60 per cent capacity going into the fall.

Here we are on December 7th, Honourable Deputy Speaker, and that significant snowfall has yet to materialize.

* (11:30)

After the hottest summer on record, we are potentially looking at one of the warmest, driest winters in memory. Having grown up on a family farm, I know only too well it is never too early to start worrying about next year.

And I know, from the conversations I am having with friends and family who are in the farming community, that that's already occurring in rural

Manitoba. They're deeply concerned about changes in climate and weather patterns.

So this kind of analysis must also be part of our affordability assessment of any potential impacts of this resolution on agriculture. Members need to accept that this isn't just about having a few more dollars in our pockets today. In and of itself, that's great; I'm all for it. But we must ensure that our actions help farmers continue to put dollars in their pockets as agricultural producers long into the future.

Reducing our efforts on climate change, as this resolution most certainly does, puts them at risk in the future. We simply cannot allow ourselves to rush to secure some politically expedient, short-term gain without considering its long-term public policy implications.

What we do here has to be more than an endless series of one-upmanship and gotcha. Science tells us very clearly, every single day, that we cannot afford to ignore the climate disaster on the horizon. Mother Nature, every single day, shows us they're right.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, it strikes me as more than a little ironic, more than a little disheartening, that we're here in this Chamber debating a resolution that ignores climate science, while in Dubai, at COP28, scientists, climate activists and governments from around the world are working around the clock to reach an agreement to accelerate the global response to it. The people of Manitoba are looking to us for leadership on this issue, and our government intends to provide it.

It's clear, Honourable Deputy Speaker, that no one policy initiative will ever be the magic bullet. Other tools must be used if we're going to reach our target climates: investment in the clean energy sector like Manitoba Hydro; help for families converting to geothermal, efficiency, heat pumps; supporting the adoption of electric vehicles; investing in the necessary charging station infrastructure—all of that is necessary.

I just want to quickly conclude my remarks by saying I applaud the member's desire to provide affordability, but this bill does not do that. I appreciate it was rushed to get it to the House—sometimes these things happen.

I encourage you to try again in the next session—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

The honourable member for Lakeside.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): It gives me a great honour today to rise in the House to speak favourably to this resolution being brought forward by the member of Fort Whyte, not only for being the voice of the great residents of my Lakeside constituency, but for the greater good of all Manitobans.

Calling on the provincial government to remove the federal carbon tax on home heating bills for Manitobans is something we must do. We are most definitely in an affordability crisis right now, and we are all feeling it, with high interest rates, rising costs of fuel, groceries and all goods and services costing hard-working Manitobans more out of their paycheques everyday, with little to no wage increases.

I think back to just a few short years ago before the carbon tax was implemented. Fuel prices were lower, grocery prices were affordable and yes, the interest rates were lower. Our economy was in a much better place, with lower energy costs. People then could afford to go out for dinner, maybe take their families to a hockey or baseball game.

Now, more and more Manitobans are finding it hard just to put food on the table. I have people telling me that it is costing them money to go to work. We cannot down this path of unaffordability. People are now planning to work way past the planned retirement years.

The rising energy costs in recent years has become quite evident that it is the most contributing rise in the cost of everything grown, manufactured, transported and purchased. And a huge part of this increasing is the increasing carbon tax year after year.

Everything we buy requires some source of energy to produce, build, move, service or comfort us. We continue to hear the NDP every day praising themselves for their election promise of an upcoming 14-cent-a-litre tax holiday on gas and diesel on January 1st. And although this is a step in the right direction to making life slightly more affordable for some Manitobans, and we all support tax breaks, but we have more work to do to make life much more affordable for all Manitobans.

Not all Manitobans can afford to own a car, never mind put gas into one. But all Manitobans need a source of heat to heat their homes or businesses in our cold Manitoba winters. Why should hard-working Manitobans be penalized for heating their homes in a province that has for years done their part using green energy like Manitoba Hydro to heat our homes and businesses?

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I've worked in the industry of fuel supply as a petroleum manager, servicing homes that use heating oil. Yes, I drove a fuel truck and actually filled heating oil tanks that ran oil furnaces used to heat customers' homes.

In recent years, many of these customers have changed over to electricity because of the high cost of heating oil to heat their homes and businesses. This, too, is becoming cost prohibitive for Manitobans to do because with that it means changing their electrical services to be able to maintain the power of an electric furnace, and many rural communities do not have access to natural gas.

Not to mention that insurance companies are forcing homeowners with these heating oil tanks to upgrade to newer environmentally friendly storage tanks, which is great. And with that comes another outrageous cost. I applaud the federal government for removing the carbon tax from heating oil to relieve the 'affordability' strain from some select Manitobans.

But what about the Manitobans that use natural gas and propane to heat their homes, barns, businesses and the farms that dry their grain? Have we forgotten about them? Why should these Manitobans be left out in the cold from an affordability opportunity?

A Manitoban is a Manitoban, and a Manitoban is a Canadian. Although electric furnaces are less expensive to operate than heating-oil furnaces, natural gas is the most efficient and cost-effective heat sources. But natural gas is not available in many rural areas, as I said. Propane and natural gas are much more cleaner burning energy than a dirtying heating oil will ever be. So, why would we not promote a savings on natural gas over heating oils?

Honourable Deputy Speaker, as I travelled to the great constituency of Lakeside in my campaign for this election, I came across many rural farms in Hutterite colonies and businesses that would love the opportunity to be able to use natural gas to heat their barns, workshops and to dry their grain. Manufacturing and other agriculture facilities to run their operations more efficiently. Some are close enough to gas lines but they're not large enough lines to service their needs. We cannot afford to have the gas shut off by 2035. We cannot take away those opportunities for them to thrive. We need to provide this energy source for them to prosper and most definitely not make it less affordable for them to succeed.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, no one on this side of the House is against saving the environment or

fighting against climate change, but with the small carbon footprint that this province contributes, I feel that Manitobans have done their part providing the green energy we have over many years, and Manitobans are willing to continue doing their part in any way that makes sense to make their lives more affordable without the economic strain of the carbon tax being pulled from the pockets of hard-working Manitobans.

Manitoba Hydro is 97 per cent clean, green energy and the federal carbon tax punishes this effort and investment and unfairly puts the burden on Manitobans. According to Manitoba Hydro, the carbon tax on home heating costs households an average of \$275 this year.

That's more in costs than the NDP's temporary gas tax pause will save. If the carbon tax was removed from natural gas and hydro bills, a household would save more than \$1,000 in heating costs over the next three years.

* (11:40)

Manitoba is a leader in developing one of the cleanest and greenest electricity systems in the 'worlds'—in the world, as its total natural gas consumption is less than 2 per cent of Canada's total demand.

When the NDP-Liberal carbon tax was first introduced by the federal government, the previous Manitoba PC government fought and advocated hard for Manitoba farmers to be exempt from the carbon tax on their dyed fuels and they were victorious. Why can't we fight hard for all Manitobans to have this tax exemption from home heating bills as well? Again, to make life more affordable to all Manitobans.

Municipalities, the school divisions also carry the burden of economic strain of the carbon tax. Heating the schools and RM workshops along with the 14 cents on gas and 17 cents on diesel, carbon tax that continues to rise is affecting their budgets year to year with this tax on top of tax. This continues to contribute to higher municipal and education tax bills every year to all Manitobans.

Honourable Speaker—Deputy Speaker, I encourage members of the Legislature to support this resolution, and let's axe the tax from home heating fuels in Manitoba and make life more affordable for all Manitobans.

Ms. Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): I would like to congratulate you and the rest of this House for making it to the end of our first sitting for us 2023 MLAs.

Rising today, I would also like to speak strongly against the senseless resolution from members opposite. The proposal from members opposite is not only a red herring to the real problems that warrant real solutions, but the proposal is also inherently irresponsible.

To begin, our NDP government is focused on finding real solutions for real problems instead of creating them out of thin air by fighting other governments. We should be finding—we should be fighting the root causes of systemic injustice instead.

Instead of admitting their mistakes, apologizing and doing better, they decided to cut, to fire, to hide the truth from Manitobans for far too long. Unlike members opposite, we aren't the kind of people who hide from the truth. Instead, we seek to serve as truth tellers. We seek to speak truth to power and to right our system's wrongs. That's how we wound up on this side of the House.

Even now, we continue to uncover new atrocities and austerity measures that—they do not have any credibility left to stand on; not financially, not legally and not morally.

There is one thing—one body of people, rather, that we are lucky we inherited from the previous government: the civil service.

Now, despite the 40 per cent vacancy rate they left us with, the people who have—these people have helped us get real result for Manitoba since October 4th. They are talented, but not only do we now have access to their talent, but we have access to their advice.

And unlike the former government, who, just this week, referred to civil servants as bean counters with junk math, we intend to respect the advice of these experts to keep us out of massive legal battles that end up costing an entire budget line.

Therefore, Honourable Deputy Speaker, I'm compelled to speak in strong opposition of this resolution, because Manitoba simply cannot afford to take advice from the same people who plummeted us into debt, drove hard-working front-liners out of province, put ideological schemes before families and businesses—at least up until election year, when they desperately brought their glue sticks in to see what would stick.

You know, they hope that Manitobans would believe them, but, Honourable Deputy Speaker, Manitobans are better than that. During the last election, they voiced their decision loud and clear. Not

only did people reject the PCs' tired approach of governing, they gave us a strong mandate to fix health care and address affordability concerns for families. That's what Manitobans care about.

I'd like to take this opportunity to once more congratulate 2023 MLAs—speaking of the last election—from both sides of the House. I actually feel for the 2023 members opposite. When the Leader of the Opposition served in Brian Pallister's government, they decided to freeze wages, fire nurses, cut school budgets and sell off profitable pieces of government to private interests.

Once he realized what a mess he'd made, Mr. Pallister resigned from his seat in Fort Whyte and evidently fled his leadership responsibilities too, though he left behind the Cabinet ministers, some who sit in the front bench, who were just as guilty of mismanaging Manitobans' money, and one who would soon become premier.

He also left an empty seat for the member for Fort Whyte (MLA Khan) to fill. Now, for the reason that I feel for the 2023 members opposite, I don't know what kind of welcoming package they received, but, when time came for that by-election to fill the vacant Fort Whyte seat—

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Ms. Dela Cruz: —the bar set high, with \$500,000—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

The Deputy Speaker: I have the member for Portage la Prairie, on a point of order.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Point of order, to relevance to this topic.

The Deputy Speaker: Honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Dela Cruz), on the relevance to the point of order.

Ms. Dela Cruz: Financial mismanagement and their—our inability to trust their advice.

Some Honourable Members: Carbon tax.

Ms. Dela Cruz: It's directly relevant to the carbon tax. Maybe if you listened you would—*[interjection]* Okay, I'll focus it in.

Anyways, point of order—

The Deputy Speaker: I—sorry, sorry, Member. I've heard enough on the point of order. *[interjection]*

Yes, yes. So it wasn't quite a point of order, but I would ask that the member keep their comments relevant to the motion.

* * *

Ms. Dela Cruz: Understandably so, those comments were cut short. It is a little embarrassing, but this is all to say that we cannot trust the advice of members opposite on the carbon tax, especially when it comes to balancing the public good with the public dime. Of course, it's hard to do that when both the public good and the public dime need to compete with private interests.

Honourable Speaker, once again this resolution is a red herring to the real needs of Manitobans. It's absurd to me that the majority of the time used in this House by members opposite is used on distractions like this, though I welcome the opportunity to talk about the work that we are already doing as the NDP government, and the new leaf that we are turning for this province. And that includes giving Manitobans a carbon tax holiday.

As a team, we are working to ensure Manitobans can access the health care they need when they need it. We are already making life more affordable by saving Manitobans 14 cents a litre at the pump, come the new year.

We are also doing our part to lower emissions and empower working families to choose greener home heating methods. There are far more life-altering matters to pick than ideological fights.

Honourable Speaker, members opposite made fighting with their federal counterparts a pillar of their election campaign. Manitobans already voted against taking Ottawa back to court when they ousted the former government.

I truly don't understand why we need to use the privileged time in this Chamber to discuss something that's already been decided upon so recently. Honourable Speaker, it was a losing battle the first time. It lost them the election the second time. Maybe this third time the now-opposition will finally get the message.

Manitobans can rest assured that their new NDP government trust the experts, including the esteemed legal teams tasked with government business. Through this resolution, the opposition is actually recommending that we break the law by not collecting the carbon tax.

This, once again, demonstrates their basic disregard for good government, and we will not listen to that. Honourable Speaker, we have seen the story before and we know how it ends.

I'd like to take the opportunity to tell a brief story. Prior to my election I worked jobs for non-profits as a spokesperson and organizational developer. One of those jobs included being elected as the youngest president of the University of Manitoba Students' Union amid global chaos—[interjection]—thank you—amid global chaos at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic here in Canada. As a handful of the opposition's front bench may remember, I represented the province's largest body of undergraduate post-secondary stakeholders.

Now, the reason I found the courage to put my name forward is that I couldn't stand the previous government's lack of climate policy and their austerity practices.

Before I had attended even my first class, I found myself in the halls of this very building protesting the harmful policy decisions of the former government—their decisions to ignore the needs of our province's youth, who so desperately wanted their provincial action to take climate change seriously.

So, on the carbon tax, we must never forget—we must never forget—that one of the first things that the former government did was strong-arm workers with The Public Services Sustainability Act. Again, another prime example of why we cannot take their legal advice.

The former government stripped workers of their right to free collective bargaining by legislating zero per cent wage increases. This is yet another example of mismanagement that costed taxpayers \$19.4 million.

* (11:50)

To illustrate the gravity of this amount of money, we were reminded and the—during this week's debates, before the former government took the reins, just over \$19 million allocated to fund adult literacy across the entire province, adult literacy programs that empower Manitobans to read, to write, to manage their affairs with dignity.

Not only did the PCs cost everyday Manitobans \$19.4 million—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

I just have to remind the member to keep their comments relevant to this topic, so.

Ms. Dela Cruz: Yes, yes, yes.

An Honourable Member: Third time's the charm, we'll get it this time.

Ms. Dela Cruz: Okay. Yes, yes, third time's the charm for you to get the message. Not only do the PCs—sorry, Honourable Speaker—for members opposite to get the message.

Not only did the PCs cost everyday Manitobans \$19.4 million, they have a track record of court—of lost court challenges.

Again, we have challenges as a province besides the carbon tax, like unemployment, the housing crisis among more that require uplifting solutions that we are already working to implement. Manitobans knew that they needed a new government and that they needed the government to not become one of those challenges themselves.

We can't afford to follow the illegal advice of members opposite to get rid of the carbon tax. It isn't our prerogative, it's not our jurisdiction, it's illegal.

So, Honourable Speaker, once again, I'm here to speak against this resolution on the basis of the opposition's disrespect for the legal system that they were meant to uphold and the rest of the Manitobans who are bound to it.

Their seat in this House does not make them exempt from the same rules that govern the rest of us. Unlike what this resolution implies, they are not above the law. In my response to the Throne Speech, I alluded to the need for youth to take up space in places where decisions are being made.

We have inherited a whole slate of challenges that must be solved in our lifetime, such as climate change and affordability.

I always said that our generation would be the one to feel the true impact of the decisions that are being made today. Well, I'm afraid that that's begun much sooner than I'd hoped.

Manitobans voted for a government that'll tackle the affordability concerns as well as the climate crisis. We know that doing nothing on a climate profile isn't an option anymore. These values extend past the constituency I represent in Radisson as well.

Every Manitoban feels the reality of climate change as the characteristics of our seasons change as

well. We're seven weeks into December and still projecting highs of above zero and nearing the double digits.

After seven years under the former government, Manitobans will no longer need to fight their government or their Premier (Mr. Kinew) to take action. Instead, we fight together as a province against environmental damage.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Thank you, Honourable Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to rise here this morning and speak to the resolution, Calling on the Provincial Government to Remove the Federal Carbon Tax on Home Heating Bills for Manitobans.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this bill is about affordability. And when we talk about affordability, we talk about Manitobans, Manitobans who are struggling every single day to pay for rent, to pay for their prescription medications, to pay for a bus pass, dental work.

We know many people who are on low income. We know many seniors who are on fixed incomes, businesses that are struggling and trying to stay afloat. And that's why it's incredibly alarming and hypocritical that the NDP only want to help those who can afford to drive vehicles and not those who need the assistance most.

But—[*interjection*] No, no, no, no, the PCs shouldn't be happy here, Honourable Speaker. We also have the PCs and this resolution that seems very targeted rather than focusing on what is most important for Manitobans and people of our province.

Honourable Speaker, there's this pattern that seems to be developing between the NDP government and the PC opposition—the issues of affordability; these issues of affordability at the expense of the environment.

Both of these parties are willing to hurt our environment further to push forward legislation to grandstand on them. And I'm concerned that this resolution that the PCs are bringing forward, we haven't heard a single comment from them regarding environmental protection.

And the NDP are no better. Here they are, pushing forward Bill 3. This is harmful on the environment; members spoke about this at committee. Again, both parties here, three weeks into session, fighting to do

the opposite of protecting our environment, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

This inaction, it's going to end up costing Manitobans more money. This resolution, it has no action. And we need action to reduce emission levels desperately—here in the province of Manitoba, all over the world, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

According to most the recent Public Accounts, emergency expenditures is \$166 million over budget, and we can only expect more. We know more is coming, because that's the state of our economy, that's the state of the Earth right now.

More than anything, I'm just disappointed with this government, with this opposition and the disregard for our environment and for the lack of prioritizing Manitobans here in our province.

Thank you.

MLA Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): This is my first chance to rise in the House. I do like to—before I speak a little bit on this resolution—I do like to thank my constituents who voted me the second time in.

And I'm humbled and honoured. I'm here on behalf of you, fighting for you, as PCs say. But we—I'm working you, actually, so—and looking forward to getting a better deal for all Manitobans.

Honourable Speaker, when I look at this resolution, it reminds me of the PCs election slogan—fighting; fighting Manitobans, fighting Indigenous people, fighting the federal government—where, on this side of the House, we want to work for Manitobans and work for everyday Manitobans and work with federal government to make sure we get better deals for all Manitobans.

Manitobans are facing real problems that require real solutions. Our government was given a mandate to fix health care and address affordability concerns for families.

An NDP government is focusing on finding real solutions for your problems, making sure Manitobans are—can access our health-care system in a timely manner and that we are listening to the staff.

When we are talking about listening to the staff, our first tour on this Friday will be at Grace Hospital, where our Premier, Health Minister and MLAs from the western side of Winnipeg will be at Grace Hospital at 8 o'clock in the morning, listening to the staff to see how can we make our health care better.

Making life more affordable by saving 14 cents a litre—that will start on January 1, even though PCs were against it. They don't want to help real people.

While also doing our part to lower emissions and empowering working families to choose greener home heating methods, the PCs continue a tired approach of fighting Ottawa on carbon tax.

This is again—they want to fight. This was their slogan during the elections. This is—today, they still haven't learned their lesson.

Manitobans have already given the mandate on October the 3rd that fighting doesn't work. It's the collaborative approach of working together will work for everyday Manitobans.

They continue to pick fights and drive division on the issues like they have done for years, when they haven't done nothing to save Manitobans money.

My question to the members from opposite: For the last seven years, haven't you done this? Haven't—why didn't you—brought this resolution?

You could have done so many things better. That's why, as the minister earlier said, you guys are sitting on that side of the table, we are sitting on this side of the table.

So we have seen this story before and we continue—we know how it ends. Wasting taxpayers' money—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Maples will have six minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 p.m., the House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 7, 2023

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