

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

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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, April 25, 2024

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

And before we start any proceedings, you will find a cookie on your desk. You cannot eat it in the Chamber. And thank the honourable member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte) for said cookies.

And here we go.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

The Speaker: Introduction of bills? Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I'm pleased to table the Repeal of Acts not in force under Part 6.2 of The Statutes and Regulations Act.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equity): I rise today to acknowledge April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Sexual assault is a global epidemic. Since there have been wars, sexual assault has been a tool of war against women. In our current context, women in multiple conflict zones and refugee camps are being sexually assaulted at alarming rates, right as we speak, right now.

One in three women around the world will experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. We are becoming numb to the reports, and reactions fall flat.

In 2013, UN Women started a program to address sexual violence. Because of our relationship with UN Women, I was part of a committee that brought the UN safe spaces program to Manitoba along with the City of Winnipeg. As a result, we were able to secure provincial funding to start the first Indigenous survivor program administered by Ka Ni Kanichihk—the first of its kind across Canada.

Recently, I met with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, who shared with me rampant reports of online exploitation and sextortion. Sextortion has risen exponentially in the last four years. If you have children

in your life, it is imperative to understand how dangerous being online is for children. Girls open their phones and are bombarded with unwanted images of male sexual organs; they are 'groomed'—groomed and preyed upon.

Sextortion is also happening to boys at an alarming rate. Boys are groomed to send sexual photos of themselves. If they comply, the predator then threatens to share the photo with their parents or others, or—if the boy doesn't send money. Online exploitation is literally causing children to take their own lives.

I am so grateful to the support of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection and what it offers to victims, and the incredible dedication and expertise of their staff tackling sexual exploitation.

To end sexual exploitation, we have to be real and talk about predators. Research supports men are the majority of sexual offenders. In fact, when men are victims of sexual violence, the offender is more often than not male. Most recently, another case of hazing in male hockey has been reported.

Survivors of sexual violence face a myriad of individual experiences. The damage is done. It is then that we rely on the support of experts. Experts like the incredible and formidable nurses in the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program, or SANE Program, as well as our community partners and elders in providing cultural and wraparound supports.

Myself and the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care (MLA Asagwara) are humbled to acknowledge the SANE program providers. SANE staff are on the front line of sexual violence. They tenderly and skillfully assist survivors so evidence can be collected, health concerns can be addressed and next steps considered.

Our government remains committed to supporting this critical program so survivors can access culturally appropriate care in a community setting that they need or in a hospital.

Finally, I am delighted to acknowledge and honour our guests here today, alongside my colleague, the Minister of Health. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in welcoming and celebrating our guests in the galley from Ka Ni Kanichihk, Klinik, KIM,

Toba Centre for Children & Youth, Child Protection Centre and the SANE HSC program.

Miigwech for all of your work. We honour you, we see you and we lift you up today.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I rise today to address Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which is recognized here in Manitoba annually during the full month of April.

This is an important opportunity for us in this Legislature, to support survivors as they heal, to support the people who care for them and to reinforce our unwavering to commitment to fight this heinous crime.

We know that the rate of sexual assault victimization is more than five times higher among women than men and that 95 per cent of sexual assaults are not reported to police. That statistic is shocking and very troubling and speaks to the need to ensure we are giving survivors the support they need to feel safe in reporting their assaults.

I've personally talked to survivors who've conveyed that the process of reporting their assaults can feel like an additional trauma. Part of that is because of harmful victim blaming and shaming that until far too recently was considered culturally acceptable.

And let me state unequivocally for the record that survivors are never to blame for their assault. It doesn't matter what you were wearing, where you were going or how much you had to drink. Sexual assault is one hundred per cent the fault of the perpetrator one hundred per cent of the time.

If there was less stigma and shame associated with surviving a sexual assault, more people would feel safe to report it. And we all have a responsibility in our public discourse and in our private conversations to put a stop to victim blaming and shaming.

There's been a lot of good work done in recent years to better support survivors, but there is so much more work to do to combat sexual violence here in Manitoba and around the world.

The minister touched on the scourge of online sexual exploitation and, as a parent, that is something that weighs heavily on my mind every day. Throughout this month, and for all months of the year, we must commit to prioritizing the protection of Manitobans and ensuring that sexual assault survivors are supported with accessible services in a manner that is conducive to their emotional and spiritual healing.

I want to take a moment to thank police and first responders, organizations like the Toba Centre, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, Klinik, Ka Ni Kanichihk and others who serve and support survivors.

I encourage all members of this Assembly to take this month as an opportunity to think and reflect on how we can continue to support survivors, to support the people that care for them during their healing and to ensure they know that they are not alone.

Thank you.

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

The Speaker: Does the honourable member from Tyndall Park have leave to speak to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

MLA Lamoureux: April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and it is alarming to learn that, according to the City of Winnipeg's website, one quarter of sexual-assault-related cases—calls to police involve—involving victims aged 14 to 17 years old.

* (13:40)

Sexual assault refers to any sexual harassment, such as stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, degrading sexual imagery, sexual exploitation, distribution of sexual images or video of a person without their consent, cyber harassment or cyber stalking of a sexual nature. And it is important to state that sexual assault and violence are never, ever the fault of the survivor.

Honourable Speaker, with Manitoba experiencing some of the highest rates of intimate partner violence, it is critical to have conversations about sexualized violence to remove stigma and empower people to take action and be aware of the supports available.

Some of these resources include: Klinik, Willow Place, Manitoba Association of Women's Shelters, Survivor's Hope, Westman region Women's Resource Centre and the Health Sciences Centre Sexual Assault/Intimate Partner Violence Program.

In closing, Honourable Speaker, I am glad to see our Manitoba government raising awareness through this statement and my hope is that more will be done through tangible actions to provide and further protect Manitobans. To those affected by sexual violence, we believe you and we stand by you.

I'd like to thank the minister for bringing forward this afternoon's ministerial statement as well as our guests for joining us here at the Legislative Building.

Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Before we move on, I want to acknowledge that we have seated with us in the public gallery from King Edward School, 48 grade 5 and 6 students under the direction of Stephanie Forman, and they are guests of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Brar).

* * *

The Speaker: Further ministerial statements?

Day of Mourning

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Honourable Speaker, every year, April 28 is recognized around the world as the Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured as a result of the work they do.

In Manitoba, we are observing this special day tomorrow, Friday, April 26. The Day of Mourning gives us all a chance to remember and honour the Manitobans who did not return home safely from work last year.

In 2023, 22 of our fellow Manitobans lost their lives as a result of work-related incidents and occupational diseases. Many more Manitoba workers were hurt seriously enough to cause permanent injury or require time away from their jobs.

Of course, those who were lost were much more than workers; they were our family members, friends, colleagues and neighbours.

I encourage my colleagues and all Manitobans to take part in the Safe Workers of Tomorrow Leaders' Walk which begins at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow at the Union Centre on Broadway and proceeds to Memorial Park, where we will gather for a commemoration ceremony organized by the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

As we remember the past and look to the future, I call on all of us to renew our commitment to occupational safety and health, and continuing to work together to ensure that workers come home safely.

After any replies, I respectfully request that all members stand for a moment of silence in the Chamber to honour the Manitobans who were injured or killed in the workplace this year.

Thank you.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Tomorrow, we will gather to observe the national Day of Mourning, a solemn occasion that invites us to pause and reflect upon the lives tragically lost or altered due to workplace accidents and illness. It is a day when we come together as Manitobans, as community and as a nation, to remember those who have suffered and to honour their memories.

In 1991, eight years after the day of remembrance was launched by the Canadian Labour Congress, the Parliament of Canada passed the Workers Mourning Day Act making April 28 an official Day of Mourning. Now more than 100 countries across the world will be observing this day alongside us.

All Manitobans have the right to come home safe and healthy at the end of every shift. Unfortunately, workplace fatalities and injuries continue to happen. Not only do these tragedies have devastating effects on their families, they also have long-lasting impacts on their colleagues. We cannot forget that these workers were much more than that; they were our family, friends and our neighbours.

As we commemorate this day, let us renew our commitment to fostering a culture of safety and well-being in our workplaces. Let us pledge to advocate for stronger safety regulations, to provide comprehensive training and education, and to empower workers with the knowledge and tools they need to stay safe on the job.

There will be many events occurring throughout the province in commemoration, and I encourage my colleagues and all Manitobans to take part. Tomorrow, the SAFE Workers of Tomorrow Leaders' Walk will be starting at 11:30 at the Union Centre on Broadway and proceed to Memorial Park, where they will gather for a commemoration ceremony.

Let's continue to work together to support workers in the workplace, including here in the Manitoba Legislature, and to ensure that no injury, illness or death occurs at our place of work or any workplace. We owe it to those we have lost, to their families and to future generations to make every effort to create work environments where everyone can return home safely at the end of the day.

Thank you.

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

Please rise.

A moment of silence was observed.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Girl Guides Manitoba–Trefoil Guild

MLA Jennifer Chen (Fort Richmond): Honourable Speaker, today I would like to honour all the volunteers in our community who work to empower women and girls and, in particular, Pat Walker and her Trefoil Guild of Girl Guides Manitoba, who join us in the gallery today.

Girl Guides' purpose is to be a catalyst for girls empowering girls. Leaders like Pat and the rest of the Trefoil Guild do the incredible work of inviting girls to challenge themselves, make lifelong friends, have fun and make a difference in the world. Girls from every background, identity and lived experience can find community and belonging in Girl Guides.

Pat and leaders like her find purpose and deep meaning in contributing to something that lifts up women and girls and makes a real impact in our community. Trefoil Guild are made up of women who are 30 and up who have previous involvement with Girl Guides. For leaders, Girl Guides offers fellowship and community.

I want to thank Connie Fillion, who wasn't able to attend today, but who started the Pembina Trails Trefoil Guild in Fort Richmond and south Winnipeg areas. Our community is indebted to her service and dedication; the Trefoil Guild has made a lasting impact.

I am excited that the Trefoil Guild national gathering, which takes place every three years, will be hosted here in Manitoba from June 19th to the 23rd. Honourable Speaker, 190 women and–women are coming from across Canada, with delegates from England, the United States, Nigeria and Ghana.

Please join me in thanking Pat Walker and all Trefoil Guild members for the incredible work they do in raising the next generation of independent, confident and empowered women. We must continue to strengthen and promote women in leadership positions and encourage every girl in Manitoba that they can make a difference in the world.

I would like to include my guests' names in Hansard: Pat Walker, Pam Walker, Susan Wylie, Kathy White, Leah Carson, Cheryl Romanow, Tracy Shorn, Wendy Pughe and Nancy Bollenback.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

East St. Paul Skating Club

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North): Honourable Speaker, I rise in the House today to honour three very

talented constituents of Red River North. Amy Borysowich, Tanya Pilat and Ashley McIntosh are three figure skaters from the East St. Paul Skating Club.

* (13:50)

The trio had the opportunity to travel to Italy this past year to compete in the Winter World Masters Games.

Tanya coaches Ashley and Amy at the East St. Paul Skating Club. The athletes convinced their coach Tanya to lace up her skates and join them to compete in the multi-sport event for athletes 30 and up.

Tanya, Amy and Ashley were proud to represent Manitoba and Canada in three different categories at the international event. Tanya competed in the Masters Class 3 Artistic event, Amy competed in the adult bronze women's class 2 artistic and free skate event and Ashley competed in the Masters Class 1 Artistic and free skate.

The three figure skaters enjoyed their time at the games so much so that they are now planning to participate in the 2026 adult worlds as well as the 2028 world masters.

Congratulations to all three skaters and–for their time in Italy, and I wish them all the best and all the best of luck in their skating endeavours.

Unfortunately, Honourable Speaker, Ashley was unable to join us today. However, we have in the gallery today, and I'd ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming them: we have Tanya, her husband Brian and Amy who have joined us in the Chamber.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week

MLA Nellie Kennedy (Assiniboia): Honourable Speaker, Monday, April 29 marks the beginning of Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week, a seven-day campaign dedicated to raising awareness about mental health problems before, during and after pregnancy. In honour of this incredibly important week, I rise today to acknowledge those experiencing perinatal mental health issues here in Manitoba, to remind them they are not alone, and that it's okay to not be okay.

A perinatal or maternal mental health issue can occur during pregnancy, and up to two years after giving birth. Postpartum depression is recognized as the most common complication of childbirth, affecting one in five, or 20 per cent of women. Other perinatal

mental health issues include anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, bipolar disorder and postpartum psychosis.

The good news is these conditions are treatable. We must, however, continue to tackle the stigma associated with maternal mental illness and normalize new parents asking for help when they need it.

I myself have a deep understanding of these complexities of perinatal mental health issues because I myself experienced postpartum depression and anxiety after the birth of both my children. My own experience with these illnesses motivated me to become a mental health advocate and share my own struggles with perinatal mental health issues to raise awareness and reduce stigma.

In Manitoba we have amazing professionals and community organizations, some of whom are here in the gallery with us today, who have—who provide incredible support to new parents who are dealing with a perinatal mental illness.

One of those professionals is psychiatrist Dr. Tanya Sala, who played a very large part in my healing journey and who has my eternal gratitude for her kindness and excellent care.

I would also like to acknowledge mood disorders of Manitoba, the Women's Health Clinic, psychologist Dr. Carrie Lionberg and the Canadian Mental Health Association for the life-saving work you do for Manitoban parents. I look forward to continuing to be a partner to your cause—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

The Speaker: Is there leave for the member to finish her statement? [*Agreed*]

MLA Kennedy: I look forward to continuing to be a partner to your cause and collaborating to improve the future of maternal mental health care in our province.

Honourable Speaker, I would like to add the names of my guests to Hansard.

Please welcome me in congratulating and thanking the wonderful people who support Manitobans through perinatal mental health issues.

Dr. Kirsten Penner-Goeke, Dr. Tanya Sala; Women's Health Clinic: Erin Bockstael, Tanea Brown, Courtney Maddock, Jennifer Weber; Canadian Mental Health Association: Marion Cooper, Laurie McPherson, Dariene Tougas

Member for Tuxedo Acknowledgements

Ms. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): For 23 years, serving as MLA, minister, and the first woman premier has been the honour of a lifetime. These roles allowed me to serve Manitobans and help pave the way for future generations of women in public service.

Thank you, Manitoba, for the opportunity, the responsibility, and the honour. This will be my last opportunity to address this Chamber before my resignation as the MLA for Tuxedo.

I want to thank the constituents of Tuxedo. Tuxedo is where my grandparents raised my father and where Jason and I have raised our children. For us, it's home.

Thank you to my executive and team of volunteers and the many people who have worked with me here at the Legislature and locally in Tuxedo.

I am forever grateful to my family: to Jason, to Victoria, to Tommy, who are here with us in the gallery today. I am so thankful for—Victoria and Tommy, of course, were born into the political life, and I am so thankful that they have been on this journey with Jason and I. We love you both so much and will always be very proud of you.

I have been blessed to learn from so many people over the years, whether it was newcomers to our province, First Nations leaders and elders, the Red River Métis or wonderful grassroots organizations like the Clan Mothers, I am thankful for their wisdom and their expertise. Manitoba is richer because of the people we make—because of the people that make up our communities.

During my tenure as premier, we went through some challenging times, but I'm proud of our government's accomplishments. We achieved record economic growth and job creation, enacted record tax relief, ran one of the country's most successful vaccine programs and balanced the budget while making historic investments in health care and education and in social services. We have set the table for success into the future for Manitoba.

I want to once again congratulate the Premier (Mr. Kinew) on his historic legacy as the first First Nations Premier in our province, and I wish him very well.

Equally as important is to have a strong opposition party to hold the government to account, and I know we have that in the—our incredible team of MLAs on this side of the House. I wish all MLAs well

in their deliberations as they represent their constituencies across this great province of ours.

Finally, I want to once again thank my Tuxedo constituents and all Manitobans for giving me this tremendous opportunity.

Thank you, Tuxedo, and thank you, Manitoba.

Point of Order

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): I want to take this opportunity to thank—I already said point of order—I want to take this opportunity to thank the member for Tuxedo (Ms. Stefanson) for her life of service to the great province of Manitoba. I know that she served in many capacities over the years, including behind the scenes before being elected as the MLA for Tuxedo. She served many roles in Cabinet and, of course, became Manitoba's first woman premier.

During her time here, she saw, I guess, many other MLAs come and go, and so to have this opportunity to share in this milestone is truly significant.

I want to say that the legacy that she leaves will be defined by her and others, but on a personal level, later today I will reread the letter that she left for me on the desk in the Premier's office and reflect on our shared commitment to the people of Manitoba.

I believe it was the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) who once said that long after the average person forgets whether any of us served in these Chambers, it's going to be our families who remember us and carry on that in their hearts and minds. And so, by way of thanking the member, I also want to acknowledge Jason, her kids and the extended family who are here today.

And on behalf of the Province of Manitoba and the great people who call this place home, thank you for your service.

Acorn Family Place

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I am so happy to rise today to pay tribute to Acorn Family Place.

Acorn Family Place began almost 26 years ago and was known as Wolseley Family Place for many years. In 2022, after completing a process of community reconciliation education, Acorn Family Place was chosen as the new name that best represents everything they do.

* (14:00)

Acorn Family Place is an essential part of the West Broadway neighbourhood in the Wolseley constituency, in providing a drop-in, food connections, wellness programs, parenting support, counselling and workshops such as Caring Dads and Healthy Baby, serving over 2,000 people through 20,000 client contacts annually. There is a beautiful playroom for children whose parents are attending a program or for families to play together to foster supportive community connections.

An acorn is small yet strong and has great potential. An acorn is whole and complete on its own, and with the right nutrients, conditions and support, it can grow into a mighty oak, resilient and sheltering. Similarly, Acorn Family Place knows that families are whole and complete on their own, and with the right nutrients, conditions and support they will become stronger and more resilient. Acorn Family Place walks with families of young children on their journeys, supporting them to thrive and thereby strengthening our province.

Today I want to say a belated happy 25th anniversary to the staff and board members at Acorn Family Place, some of whom we are honoured to have in the gallery today. I especially want to recognize Sharon Taylor, who had the vision and built this program, serving as the executive director for 20 years. I also want to recognize current executive director, Wolseley resident Emma Fineblit, who has skilfully led the program for almost six years.

Thank you to you both and to your team, for your passion, dedication and persistent efforts to support families and make our community a more inclusive and nurturing place to live.

And Honourable Speaker, I'd like to include the names of my guests in Hansard.

Acorn Family Place board members: Emma Fineblit, executive director; Bhavesh Mistry, chair; Sharon Taylor, former executive director. Staff: Asaria Crouch, Lindiwe Lord, Nadine Mackenzie, Mélissa Perron, Darla Smith

The Speaker: Before we proceed, I must back up a step and indicate that the First Minister did not have a point of order, but I'm sure we all want to thank him for his kind words.

* * *

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): On a point of order.

Point of Order

The Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a point of order.

Mr. Ewasko: On a point of order, responding to the point of order by the First Minister, I'd like to thank the First Minister for putting a few of those words on the record.

I, too, on behalf of our PC caucus and team here in Manitoba, want to thank our good friend and colleague, the MLA for Tuxedo (Ms. Stefanson), for her 23-plus years of service, not only as an MLA but also working within the political realm as well.

We know that her being elected as the first woman premier was an absolute milestone for our great province of Manitoba. To her family, Jason, Victoria and Tommy, and extended family as well, thank you for sharing your mom and your wife with all of us here, not only the constituents of Tuxedo, but to Manitoba as well. So thank you to all of you.

So, my friend, on to bigger, better things and just some time to relax and to enjoy yourself a little bit maybe, and thank you for your years and years of service. We know that you're not going far, but thank you for your service on behalf of your PC team and all Manitobans and, of course, your Tuxedo constituents.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: The member for Tuxedo, on the same point of order?

An Honourable Member: Tyndall Park.

The Speaker: Tyndall—sorry. Member for—it's having that kind of day, I'm sorry.

The Honourable Member for Tyndall Park, on the same point of order?

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Yes, on the same point of order.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker, and I appreciate where your head is at. I just want to echo some of the thoughts that have been shared.

Honourable Speaker, my colleagues here in the House know that I was born and raised in politics. I've been watching question period for as long as I can remember. I used to plan my spares in high school around question period so I could go home and watch it.

And, Honourable Speaker, the member from Tuxedo served alongside with my father for many, many years, and she is a member who I have watched and I

have admired throughout my young childhood, entering a career in politics as a young woman, and she truly is an inspiration for being the first female premier here in Manitoba, and I feel honoured that I was able to be part of these Chambers as we saw that happen within our Province.

So I want to wish her well. I want to wish her family well. You've got a great mom and a great wife. You've done an excellent job at serving your constituents and thank you for all of your service for the Province of Manitoba.

The Speaker: I would just point out that the member does not have a point of order, but I will add my congratulations and thanks to you as you move on to a different phase, and we look forward to seeing what's next.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Provincial Nominee Program Request for Draw Schedule

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Today, I want to recognize also the courage and the strength of the protesters who came to the Legislature despite the threats from this NDP government.

Members of the international community still have serious fears that the minister is going to cancel draws in response to their protests. Because of the pressure they put on this minister and amplified by members on our side of the Chamber, they are going to be trying to cancel some of the draws.

And we know that there was a specific draw under the MPNP, but there are—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: —still worries, Honourable Speaker.

So if the minister claims she's not interfering or have not interfered, can she release a schedule of draws for the next six months to provide assurances to hopeful newcomers to this great province of ours?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): We know that there's been a lot of anxiety felt by those folks in our province who hold international student post-graduate work permits. It was a surprise to all of us, those folks included, when the federal government unilaterally announced this change.

Now, folks on our team have been sitting down and meeting with those folks in the Legislative Building, in gurdwaras, in community and in many other settings.

We have been doing the work of ensuring that draws take place. We held one last week, we held one yesterday, we have another one scheduled for next week.

At the same time, we're working with the federal government with the hopes that they will review their recent decision and we expect to have very good news to share on that front tout de suite [*immediately*].

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

Mr. Ewasko: Once again, Honourable Speaker, dodging and deflecting some of the responsibilities by this Premier and this Minister of Labour and Immigration (MLA Marcelino).

Honourable Speaker, this government's disrespect toward hopeful newcomers is very well documented. First, we heard the minister talking about the right kind of immigrants, implying that there's a wrong kind of immigrant. Then, we saw the policy in action that the NDP government is sending a third of the MPNP's invitations than our PC government did over the same time frame.

Why is this NDP government failing to retain skills and talent through the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program?

Mr. Kinew: For the first time in years, our Province has an economic development strategy, and we're working hard to ensure that more Manitobans can join the workforce and that more people from around the globe can call this great province home

One of the unfortunate things about the PC time in office is that they cut the horsepower within the department that administrates the Provincial Nominee Program. As a result, there were 2,000 spots left unfilled last year.

Not only have we conducted a draw last week, another draw yesterday, scheduling another one next week, we've also started the work of restaffing this part of government so that we'll be able to retain and recruit many talented people to come to this great province for many years to come.

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

Mr. Ewasko: Under our government, we actually provided record invitations through the MPNP program so, again, not only new, hopeful Manitobans coming to Manitoba can't believe a word that this Premier is saying, he's got nothing to back up those claims that he's saying today.

It's unfortunate that again he's dodging and deflecting. The main topic is that him and his Minister of Labour and Immigration had actually went and threatened, with consequences, to those hopeful newcomers, Honourable Speaker. This approach has ruined Manitoba's reputation with the international community.

* (14:10)

So I ask: Will the Premier try to, in good faith, release a schedule of draws for the next six months, and what does he plan to do to reinstate that good faith with the international community?

Mr. Kinew: I recognize the member opposite has a tough job. He's got to try to find reasons to criticize when he himself couldn't bring himself to stand up and vote against our budget. That's how good Budget 2024 is for the people of Manitoba.

Look at the Hansard record. Many PC members voted against the budget, but not the member for Lac du Bonnet. Again, one of the things that we rolled out in Budget 2024 is to have more staff within the government department that administers the PNP program. Because of those investments that we're making under the leadership of my esteemed colleague from Notre Dame, that's why we were able to hold a draw last week, another one yesterday.

That's why we're holding one next week, and that's why we're doing the important work of ensuring that the federal government will do the right thing. And we expect to have very good news to share on that very soon.

Provincial Nominee Program Number of Applications Processed

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Honourable Speaker, I want to give credit to the members of the international community who are not backing down to the minister's tactics.

Yesterday, I tabled a breakdown of all the public draw data for the last two and a half years. It paints a picture completely opposite what this minister has claimed. It shows an MPNP program that is only processing one third as many applications as under our PC government.

Can the minister explain why she is processing less applications in the same time frame?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): One of the things that you discover upon taking government is that there's going to be many curveballs that come your way. Unexpected decisions from the federal government

would fall into that category; that certainly applies in this situation.

But also the depth of deterioration within the Department of Immigration that was overseen by the former PC administration was another one of those unexpected surprises. The good news is that the people of Manitoba have chosen a new approach.

It's a new day in this province. We're making investments in Budget 2024 to ensure that this government department will have the necessary horsepower. Again, on the substantive issue at hand, a draw last week, a draw yesterday, another one to come next week and more good news to be shared very soon with our partners at the federal level.

The Speaker: The honourable member from Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

Changes to Draw Criteria

Ms. Byram: Honourable Speaker, after we brought the minister's interference to light, there was a draw posted yesterday. Within an hour of the minister tabling the draw in the House, the terms of the draw were changed. I table that information.

Why, within an hour, does criteria change after a draw is made?

Mr. Kinew: Well, it's important to establish a consensus that draws for the Provincial Nominee Program are taking place. The member for Agassiz recognizes that; perhaps she could explain that to her leader.

Along the way, she might want to ask him why it was under the former PC administration that this program was so cut, was so degraded, why it didn't have the horsepower last year to be able to fill 2,000 positions.

Well, these are questions for the PC caucus to sort out in their upcoming leadership campaign. On our side of the House, this government is going to focus on delivering for you: more draws for the MPNP program, and of course, more work with the federal government to alleviate this challenging situation.

Ms. Byram: So within an hour, criteria changed to a draw already made, adding in a clause that declared at least four years of work experience in the past five years were considered. This is a stipulation present on no other draw in the archive. When the draw details were originally posted and tabled here in the House, this was not present.

Can the minister explain why her department is retroactively adding eligibility criteria?

Mr. Kinew: Well, again, the member opposite is asking about draws that are taking place under our administration. I invite her to share this information with the interim Leader of the PC Party, who we see in the Winnipeg Free Press, is overseeing a party that has lost its way, that is out of touch with the value of its members and that, yes, unfortunately, is the subject of ridicule.

We know that over the PC time in office, the MPNP program was called by experts arbitrary, capricious, procedurally unfair and unjust. This is just one of the reasons why Manitobans have chosen a new direction.

Our team is hard at work to improve the horsepower within the Immigration department, and we're working with the federal government to deliver the goods for you, the good people of Manitoba.

Phoenix School Expansion Request for Project Update

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): The No. 1 capital priority of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division is the expansion and renovation of Phoenix School in Headingley. The project will add a new gym, multi-purpose room, two new classrooms, space for the before-and-after school program and more.

In 2022, the project received approval to proceed to design stage and extensive design work is near completion.

Unfortunately, the division has yet to hear from this NDP government about whether the project will be approved to continue.

Can the Minister of Education tell the residents of Headingley if this project will proceed, or has it been cut by the NDP?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Budget 2024 has a ton of great news for the school system in Manitoba. We're building new schools and we're investing in education.

I'd like to share a bit of information with the member opposite. When we proposed, in years prior, a school program to feed children who were hungry, the PC caucus called that a bad idea. That's a direct quote.

I don't know about you, but I think that the average Manitoban out there, as well as everybody in our team, believes that if kids are hungry, they should be fed.

That's why, in Budget 2024, in addition to building new schools and funding education, we're bringing a

universal nutrition program so no kid has to go to school hungry.

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

New Child-Care Spaces Needed Construction Commitment Inquiry

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I look forward to sharing that non-answer with the residents of Headingley who are dealing with a school that's bursting at the seams, Honourable Speaker.

Along with overcrowded classrooms, parents and hopeful parents across Manitoba are rightfully concerned with the NDP's lack of plan on child care. No mention of plans to increase spaces, to staff our early childhood education system or to get families off of wait-lists.

The NDP have cut nine schools that included almost 700 daycare spaces and allocated zero dollars in funding for additional programs to build more spaces quickly. We know we need 23,000 new spaces in Manitoba by 2026. Progressive Conservatives got Manitoba over halfway there.

Will the NDP commit today to building 26,000—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): And I thank the member opposite for the question. It gives me an opportunity to stand up and talk about how excited and proud we are of our budget.

I also want to just remind members opposite, we have been trying to share the message of all the promises that were made by the previous government with no money in the budget to build those schools. The shame of that commitment with no money in the budget rests solely on the members of the—on the opposite side of the House, who were once in government.

Manitoba is growing; we're investing \$160 million to build two new schools complete with new child-care centres. And we are making \$10-a-day child care a reality for all families in Manitoba—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Roblin, on a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Cook: Manitoba needs tens of thousands of new daycare spaces to meet the demand that we know is coming, and soon. Young, hopeful parents should not be worried about whether they can go back to work or

not based on whether they can find a child-care space because the NDP don't have the foresight to keep building more spaces.

Manitoba is growing; Manitoba families are growing. The NDP government has an obligation to keep up with that.

* (14:20)

Will the NDP stop cutting daycare spaces and help Manitoba parents, yes or no?

MLA Naylor: I know the member opposite just got here, but she may not realize that her staff is taking a script out of Hansard, because if you just changed NDP to PC, we asked those same questions for seven years.

We asked for daycare spaces. We asked for more schools. We asked to feed children. And that—the previous government would take no responsibility. Our government is building—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Naylor: —schools, feeding children, creating daycare spaces and making Manitoba a better place to live for families.

Provincial Gaming Expansion Types of Licences and Locations

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): My question is for the minister responsible for Liquor & Lotteries.

Since this government has committed to lifting the pause on gaming expansion within the province, could the minister tell the House what type of licences will be granted, and where will they be given?

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries Corporation): I'd like to thank the member opposite for the question. This is a question that he asked in committee when we were doing the annual report for Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries.

The answer today that—and the answer then are the same. We will do this in a measured approach where we look at all of the stakeholders and talk to them and ask them what the—what their plans are. Learning about what the landscape is, it's going to be a long process. We're not going to do this overnight.

For some reason, the PCs on the other side think that we can just turn a switch like that, fix health care like that, build schools like that. And the simple answer, responsible governments look at things in a measured—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

The honourable member for La Vérendrye, on a supplementary question.

Private Gaming Lounges MBLL Revenue Sharing

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): MBLL has stated that certain types of gaming activities, like live poker, are no longer profitable for the casinos of Winnipeg. But yet there is demand for this type of gaming. This void is offering—this void in offering is only encouraging illegal gambling in its absence.

Would the minister be willing to extend licences to gaming lounges willing to assume the risk and share profits with MBLL and the government of Manitoba?

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries Corporation): Well, I'll just answer that question simply: We will continue to trust Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries' team who carry out this work on behalf of the province.

We have a corporation that we have a lot of faith in. A lot of—a corporation that works hard for Manitobans. And unlike past governments, who seem—that it's okay to meddle in Crown corps, we will trust them. And we will continue to work with our partners at Liquor & Lotteries to make Manitoba better.

The Speaker: The honourable member for La Vérendrye, on a final supplementary question.

Licences for Gaming Services

Mr. Narth: I will table a letter sent by MBLL to a Manitoba entrepreneur trying to legally acquire a licence for a poker table. He was told since it's not profitable for MBLL, he was out of luck regardless of the demand in his community for this gaming service.

Why is the government blocking private providers from legally acquiring licences when there is public demand? Does the NDP prefer to support illegal gaming operations?

Mr. Simard: Again, I'd like to thank the member opposite for tabling that document. We'll take a look at that document again.

And the thing is, we support our Manitoba and—Liquor & Lotteries team. Point final. *[Full stop.]*

Food, Fuel Prices and Tax Increases Cost of Living Concerns

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): Honourable Speaker, we've heard a lot from this Premier (Mr. Kinew),

including some pretty insulting language directed at my colleague, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan). And we already know the Premier doesn't respect anyone that challenges him.

If the Premier wants a lesson on how fuel prices work, he's welcome to come join me in the loge, and in his own words, he can humble himself, and I will enlighten him.

Would that help him better understand fuel pricing?

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations): I thought the member was going to stand up on a matter of privilege because he's being prevented from doing his job to speak up for municipalities. And, again, time and time again, four critical asks—four, Honourable Speaker—that AMM asked for that we're addressing: municipal funding, fairness and predictability.

So we're at the table; 2 per cent escalator for municipalities to increase—increasing budget by \$52 million to the operating grant for investing in core infrastructure. Budget 2024 provides \$4-million increase to—for Manitoba Water Services Board; \$10 million to support the City of Winnipeg for sewage system repair; \$6 million to repair Mollard Road from Pipeline to Route 90; \$3.8 million to repaving Dauphin's Main Street.

More to come, Honourable Speaker.

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

Mr. King: Honourable Speaker, on this side of the aisle we worked alongside Manitobans, be it on the farm, the job site, classroom or in emergency services. We stand with Manitobans, and that is why we're so keenly aware of the impacts that his government's tax hikes will have on Manitobans.

Why is this Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) insisting on punishing families trying to get ahead, taxing their homes, their incomes and their success?

Mr. Bushie: Again, Honourable Speaker, the member opposite had the opportunity to stand up and advocate on behalf of municipalities and still fails to do it day in and day out.

Manitoba is also investing \$500 million in capital funding for repair to rebuild Manitoba's highways and public infrastructure to spur economic development opportunities.

The member opposite consistently stands up and says, we heard from municipalities, but, Honourable

Speaker, we heard from municipalities, but we're also listening.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Lakeside, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. King: Honourable Speaker, grocery inflation is, in fact, outpacing our neighbours. In fact, according to this government's own data, under this NDP government, food inflation is equal to Saskatchewan and Ontario's rates combined. Pricing was trending downward until this government took power, and since October it's been on a sharp ride up. I table the document.

Why is this minister doing nothing to help families put nutritious food on our Manitoba tables?

Mr. Bushie: Again, another attempt to try and get the member to advocate for municipalities, but fails to do so. We know because they have nothing to stand on.

Our investments are endless, Honourable Speaker. I was privileged to stand with the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and the member from Waverley as we stood and we announced \$3.4 million for the City of Winnipeg to hire 40 new firefighters—[*interjection*]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Bushie:—and build a new fire station in Waverley West. We support our growing communities and we know that it's important to invest in the front-line services.

Honourable Speaker, we were out in Waverley, shovels in the ground, digging up for the fire station that's going to come in, and we know members opposite and the former member from Waverley had no idea how to even operate a shovel.

Provincial Nominee Program Changes to Draw Criteria

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Honourable Speaker, we heard earlier from my colleague from Agassiz how the NDP and the minister are changing the rules for the MPNP draws at the last minute.

My question is: Why is this minister making it restrictive for the MPNP draws to happen fairly?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): While members opposite are continuing to engage in slander and hearsay, we are still working to fix this immigration system that these PCs broke.

We are actively helping this community of workers. Many temporary residents are experiencing a desperate situation. There's about 6,700 of them that will be

having their federal work permits expired or expiring in 2024. This is causing a lot of extra pressure, and this was a sudden decision made by the federal government in January. And that's why we're working with the federal government towards an agreement to allow them to stay working in Manitoba, and we're hopeful for a positive announcement soon.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

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

Mr. Perchotte: Honourable Speaker, students' average permits are eight months to three years, yet this government now says you have to have four years of work experience to be considered. That is not fair by any stretch of the imagination; that's an unattainable goal.

* (14:30)

Why is this minister playing with the lives of these people?

MLA Marcelino: Honourable Speaker, I'd love to inform this House about how we are putting through a work permit strategy to prioritize folks who have received their letters of advice to apply so they continue to work in Manitoba.

So the MPNP is sending out emailed notices to all LAA applicants with a form to fill out if their permits have expired already, or are expiring in 45 days. This is major undertaking for our department because, again, we are talking about thousands of applicants.

We will continue to make consistent draws. We are managing our application inventory so that we have just-in-time processing, and that's going to make our MPNP system processing secure and even faster than it is now.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Selkirk, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Perchotte: Honourable Speaker, we have thousands of people from the international community scared of what their future holds here. We have people right here in Manitoba waiting for draws, and yet this government is currently giving draws to people outside the country.

The right Manitobans are here. The right individuals are right here.

Why are you looking in other countries when people are waiting here on the steps?

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

I—just remind the member to direct his response and questions through the Chair and not directly to a member opposite.

MLA Marcelino: Yesterday, the PCs tabled some documents indicating high numbers of draws under their failed government, and they use this as sham evidence that I was threatening protestors, Honourable Speaker. Instead, what they actually tabled was proof of their incompetence and mismanagement of this immigration file and how they caused the giant PC backlog today.

What I'm tabling now shows that the PCs put through over 16,000 draws, even though there are only 9,500 spots to be given out. All these extra applications have glutted our system and, more shameful, Honourable Speaker, due to the one third of their workforce cuts, their failed government ended up losing 2,152 nominations, okay?

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Intimate Partner Violence Declaration Request

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Intimate partner violence is a serious problem across our country. Earlier this month, the Province of Ontario committed to supporting an opposition bill to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic in the province. I table the story for the minister here.

Given that Manitoba has nearly three times the rate of intimate partner violence than Ontario, will this minister follow suit and call intimate partner violence for what it is in Manitoba—an epidemic?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equity): I thank the member for Tyndall Park for that very important question in respect of intimate partner violence.

And certainly I think everybody in the Chamber should know and should appreciate that Manitoba does have certainly some of the highest levels of gender-based violence against Manitoba citizens.

That's why Budget 2024 has invested in eradicating gender-based violence through partnerships with the federal government and our national action plan. We've invested \$2.7 million towards the eradication of gender-based violence. We'll be working with community partners that are on the front lines of supporting Manitobans as—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Request for Strategy to Address

MLA Lamoureux: I table these numbers from Stats Canada for the minister now. The government of Ontario went a step further and will be seeking the advice of the standing committee on Justice to do an in-depth study on all aspects related to intimate partner violence and how the Province of Ontario can improve its strategy to address the root causes of it.

Can the Justice Minister explain why he believes that Manitoba does not need an IPV strategy given that our province has some of the highest rates—three times more than Ontario—of intimate partner violence across the country?

MLA Fontaine: I thank the member for Tyndall Park for that important question.

Just a couple of weeks ago, our government stood in partnership with the federal government to announce a new program that will help Manitobans seeking to leave gender-based violence, who are currently living in unsafe living conditions. This is supports directly to be able to help them in those emergency measures.

We know that survivors who are trying to leave violence often experience financial abuse and have no resources or supports that they can immediately access. And so that's why we're very proud to have partnered with the federal government and announced \$27 million towards helping survivors of gender-based violence—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a final supplementary question.

Provincial Court Amendment Act Request to Call Bill 209 to Committee

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): A comprehensive strategy is desperately needed to combat intimate partner violence. Families and children are affected every day by this, and the horrible tragedy in Carman underlines the serious need for an IPV strategy.

I truly see this as a non-partisan issue: all sides of the House can and have come together in declaration that we cannot accept the status quo.

Will the minister commit today to calling Bill 209 to committee before the House rises for the summer?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equity): The other thing that

Budget 2024 did was it allocated \$20 million towards the support of an MMIWG2S strategy.

And in fact, what I would share with the House is that that—this is the first time across the country that any government has actually applied and allocated dollars towards tackling the epidemic levels of violence against Indigenous women, girls and two-spirited.

I'm very proud of that work. I work alongside our special advisor as we begin that process in developing a—or, a provincial strategy in respect of MMIWG2S.

I'd be more than willing to speak with the member opposite and see how we can work together on that front.

Miigwech.

Municipal Investments Budget 2024

MLA Mike Moroz (River Heights): Honourable Speaker, we know that for seven long years, Manitoban municipalities were ignored and that the needs of those municipalities went unaddressed. But unlike the failed PC government, we are a listening government, actively listening to and working with municipalities.

Can the Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations please tell us more about how our government is working for the prosperity of all Manitobans by partnering with municipalities?

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations): I'd like to thank my colleague for that fantastic question.

We met with AMM again yesterday. I am pleased to share that our government has passed the AMM progress report with flying colours; check marks across the board: 2 per cent boost to municipal operating basket, check; 2 per cent boost to infrastructure basket, check; \$24 million for Manitoba Water Services Board, check; expedited review of bill 37, check; announcing a five-point plan to strengthen the provincial bail system and make communities safer, check; investing a record \$8.2 billion in health care, which included funding to retain, recruit and train more health-care workers to address shortages, check.

Here's just some examples of how Budget 2024 invests all across Manitoba: firefighters and a new fire station in Waverley West; Thompson Aquatic Centre; Brandon Park Community Centre; Taché Multiplex—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Spruce Woods Constituency Road Safety Concerns

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): In January, I wrote to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, highlighting the three stretches of highway that are a top priority for Spruce Woods constituents to get replaced. And just for context, my constituency is larger in square kilometres than all of Prince Edward Island, so that's remarkable that all constituents agree.

After two months, the minister replied and noted that none of the projects would happen before 2026 and one of the projects has no timeline to be replaced whatsoever.

These three stretches of road are a major—are major economic corridors for our agricultural and manufacturing industries, as well as main routes to many of Westman's most iconic tourist destinations.

Why won't this minister prioritize highway reconstruction and road safety in Spruce Woods constituency?

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

As he knows, we are investing record amounts into highway infrastructure this year. And I will remind him that with the help of the blue-ribbon panel and with the expertise with our consultations with municipalities, there may be changes ahead in our plans for highway infrastructure.

* (14:40)

But everything on the current schedule was put in place by the former government and that's the schedule he's disappointed in.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Spruce Woods, on a supplementary question.

Timeline for Highway No. 2 Repairs

Mr. Jackson: One of the projects that the minister highlighted is Highway 2, from Souris west to Deleau. This stretch of road which runs through the co-chair of her blue-ribbon panel's community is becoming a serious safety concern for people and livestock, with several serious accidents at the west intersection of Highway 2 and Highway 21 last year alone.

Yet still, even with that co-chair on her blue-ribbon panel, this minister noted this government anticipates getting to work on that stretch of road in 2028 or 2029. That is completely unacceptable to Spruce Woods residents.

Will this minister commit to expediting that project today?

MLA Naylor: I have met with over 70 municipalities about their specific needs since coming into this role. I'm more than happy to meet with the—your—the municipality that's being referenced by the member across the aisle.

And again, I'll just repeat what I said in the last question. The current schedule and plan is still the five-year plan created by the previous government. I'm very happy to say that we have some very skilled folks advising us on—[*interjection*]

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Naylor: —new plans going forward and we will always prioritize emerging needs that are urgent and regarding safety on Manitoba highways.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Spruce Woods, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Jackson: Well, Honourable Speaker, it's very confusing messaging from the minister opposite. First she said she's got this great blue-ribbon panel that's prioritizing all projects that they're hearing about and then she says that the schedule's all still the same as the last government that she's keeping. So which is it?

And further to that, the minister noted that her 2028-2029 construction plan anticipates doing Highway 2 starting west of the Town of Souris, but misses the stretch of highway that runs through town completely. I'd encourage the minister to get outside the Perimeter, take a drive on No. 2 through Souris all the way to Deleau and I think she'll find the entire stretch from the east side of Souris needs to get done.

Will this minister commit to expanding and expediting this project today, or will Spruce Woods constituents have to keep waiting until 2027 when we are back—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

MLA Naylor: I believe I've already answered the member's question regarding the prioritizing of safety on our highways and looking at upcoming projects.

But I am thrilled that he asked me about getting outside of the Perimeter since it's one of the—my favourite things to do and this gives me the opportunity to share with the whole House about my trip to Gillam and Fox Lake Cree Nation last week, where I was told multiple times throughout the day how exciting it was have Cabinet ministers visit because that never happened in seven years. Seven years, no

Cabinet minister went to Gillam or Fox Lake, even when Keeyask came online.

The Speaker: The honourable—[*interjection*]

Order. Order.

Building Affordable Housing in Interlake-Gimli Timeline for Icelandic River Flood Protection Study

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): Honourable Speaker, affordable housing is in very short supply in the province and Interlake-Gimli is no exception.

There are people and companies who are waiting for the Icelandic River flood protection study to be released so they can build affordable homes for Manitobans, but the Province keeps putting up road-blocks. The town of Arborg in the RM of Bifrost-Riverton are being stonewalled by this government, and the minister won't even respond to their letters.

Honourable Speaker, I ask the Minister of Infrastructure: When will the Icelandic River flood protection study be released?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Acting Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I thank the member opposite for the question.

It is certainly the audacity of the members opposite to ask anything in respect of housing, when we know members opposite, from day one in 2016, cut and sold social—affordable social housing, had no concern for Manitobans who were unsheltered and vulnerable Manitobans that needed wraparound supports.

All members opposite cared about in their failed Stefanson government was money—how they were going to save money, how they were going to cut money, how they were going to keep money, how they were going to give money to their rich friends—that's—at the end of the day, that's all that they cared about.

They did not care about—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Interlake-Gimli Land Drainage Issues Earthwork Project Approvals

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): Honourable Speaker, land drainage has been an ongoing issue in the Interlake for decades. Recent flooding events have brought the issues to the forefront. Many of my neighbours were flooded and impacted in the 2011 Lake Manitoba flood.

There are currently earthworks under way just north of 325 that the RMs of Fisher and Bifrost-Riverton are concerned that they will be negatively affected by, along with their community.

Have these works been reviewed and approved by the appropriate government departments?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Acting Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I want to just share and put on the record a couple of things that our Budget 2024 committed to in respect of dealing with housing: \$10 million for the affordable housing partnership program, \$20 million to work with non-for-profits to increase social housing supply, \$6 million for the purchase of new buildings for social housing, \$8 million to help families at risk of homelessness to afford clean and safe housing, \$5 million for housing-first initiatives, including supports exiting homelessness, \$1 million for eviction prevention, \$1 million for rent supplements, and \$1 million for pest-control program—something that members opposite never did in all of their time in—

The Speaker: The member's time is expired.

The time for oral questions has expired.

Speaker's Rulings

The Speaker: And I have a ruling for the House.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

On April 17, 2024, during orders of the day, the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) raised a matter of privilege alleging that the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) consistently shouted down and attacked the member for Tuxedo (Ms. Stefanson), impeding her ability to do her duties as a member and therefore breaching the privileges of both members.

The honourable Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care (MLA Asagwara) spoke to the matter before I took it under advisement, and I thank the minister for their contribution.

Members are well aware that for a matter of privilege to be ruled in order a prima facie case of privilege, the member must demonstrate that the issue has been raised at the earliest opportunity while also providing sufficient evidence that the privileges of the House have been breached.

The honourable member for Midland raised this matter while the honourable Minister of Justice was

heckling the member for Tuxedo, and so clearly the condition of timeliness was met.

Before getting to the second issue of whether a prima facie case of privilege was established, I am obligated to note that the member did not conclude their matter of privilege by moving a motion.

* (14:50)

This is an essential procedural step when raising a matter of privilege and it is—required mechanism for the House to provide a remedy. I must therefore inform the House that I am ruling this matter of privilege out of order on that basis.

That being said, I'm going to address the issue raised—*[interjection]*

Order.

I am going to address the issue raised by the member, as it demonstrates a problem that has been a growing concern for your Speaker.

I have reviewed Hansard and the Assembly broadcast for that afternoon's sitting. The actions and behaviour displayed by the Minister of Justice were not becoming someone in a position of such responsibility. By repeatedly shouting down another member of the House who had the floor in debate, not only did he do himself and other members a disservice, but the level of disrespect he showed the Deputy Speaker, who repeatedly tried to call him to order, was appalling.

Speakers and their deputies have been presiding over parliamentary procedures for 600 years. When a member takes this Chair, I expect them to be listened to and treated with the full respect this significant position deserves, and that goes for all members.

The member for Concordia is a minister of the Crown and the Attorney General of Manitoba (Mr. Wiebe). He is also a long-serving member of this Assembly, and I hope that he knows his behaviour in this moment was inappropriate, and I strongly recommend the minister reflect on his behaviour in this Chamber.

I understand and recognize that members have strong opposing views on many issues. And that's fine; that's part of how this place works. What is not fine is yelling across the Chamber to try and make your point. That's not how this place should work. This place works when members make such points in debate, not by incessant heckling.

This ruling is about the Minister of Justice's behaviour that afternoon, and I hope that he takes this seriously. However, that member is one of many who have taken things too far recently, and who should be asking themselves the same hard questions. In recent weeks a lot of members on both sides of the House have been hollering back and forth at each other, and this behaviour has to stop.

This ruling should serve as a notice that if other members behave this way in the future I will apply the same approach to them, and as you all know, that could eventually include naming and expelling members from this Chamber.

I have given quite a bit of leeway on this. I believe in the healthy back and forth of debate; it is part of our democracy.

However, as I have said previously, the trend in this Chamber seems to be moving toward—the trend this Chamber seems to be moving toward is not healthy. You are not representing your constituents or your communities well when you act this way, and how should we treat each other has a huge influence on how folks outside of here treat each other.

Members are going to disagree. It's okay to be passionate, to stand up for what you believe in. But we must be respectable to each other. We must let each other have their say and argue their points in a healthy debate. We are supposed to be role models, and it is about time we gave Manitobans a good example to follow.

I believe your constituents expect better from each and every one of you.

Thank you for your attention to this ruling.

And I have another ruling for the House.

Prior to routine proceedings on March 20, 2024, the honourable Opposition House Leader raised a matter of privilege alleging that the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care (MLA Asagwara) divulged information to the media about a bill creating a seniors advocate that was not yet before the House.

The member concluded his remarks by moving: That this House refer this matter to an all-party for review.

The honourable Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) spoke to the matter before I took it under advisement.

As the House leaders know, for a matter of privilege to be ruled a prima facie case, the members must demonstrate that the issue has been raised at the earliest

opportunity, while also providing sufficient evidence that the privileges of the House have been breached.

On the condition of timeliness, the honourable Opposition House Leader indicated that this was his first opportunity to rise on this matter, and I would agree with the member on this point.

Regarding the second issue of whether a prima facie case has—of privilege—has been established, I would refer the member to the last ruling I delivered in this House on a comparable matter raised by the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) regarding the member for Seine River (MLA Cross).

Similar sentiments apply to this matter as they did to that matter of privilege, namely: (1) As noted in my ruling on that matter, former House of Commons Speaker Peter Milliken made it clear that unless there is evidence that a minister made copies of a bill available to someone outside the House, it is hard to find any breach of privilege.

Canada's pre-eminent expert on parliamentary privilege, Joseph Maingot, advised that complaints a minister made a statement outside the House rather than in the House may amount to a grievance against the government, but they are not a breach of privilege. No fewer than six former Manitoba Speakers—seven, counting the current Speaker—have ruled that such complaints may be a matter of discourtesy, but they are not a matter of privilege.

Accordingly, I rule that the prima facie case of breach of privilege has not been established in this case.

Having said that, I feel obligated to echo former Manitoba Speaker Walding's sentiments and note that, while this circumstance does not constitute a breach of privilege, it should be considered discourteous to the Assembly. The frequency with which events like this have been occurring recently suggests a troubling lack of respect for the primacy and authority of the Assembly.

I find that concerning, and I trust that my rulings on these matters a

nd the related concerns I have shared with you will resonate with members and moderate future actions regarding introductions of bills in the House.

Finally, as I indicated in a previous ruling, if members wish to resolve this issue, it could be referred to the Standing Committee on Rules of the House for consideration.

Thank you.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): With all due respect, Honourable Speaker, I'd like to challenge your ruling.

The Speaker: The ruling of the Speaker has been challenged.

Voice Vote

The Speaker: All those in favour of sustaining the ruling of the Speaker in the House, please rise—or, please say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

The Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

The Speaker: I believe the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Johnson: A recorded vote, please.

The Speaker: A recorded vote has been called. Call in the members.

* (15:00)

Order, please.

The one hour for the ringing of the bells has expired. I'm directing the bells be turned off and the House proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is: Shall the ruling of the Speaker be sustained?

* (16:00)

Division

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

Ayes

Asagwara, Blashko, Brar, Bushie, Chen, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Fontaine, Kennedy, Kinew, Kostyshyn, Lathlin, Loiselle, Maloway, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Naylor, Oxenham, Pankratz, Sandhu, Schmidt, Schott, Simard, Smith, Wasyliv, Wiebe.

Nays

Balcaen, Bereza, Byram, Cook, Ewasko, Goertzen, Guenter, Hiebert, Jackson, Johnson, King, Lagassé, Narth, Perchotte, Piwniuk, Schuler, Wowchuk.

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Yeas 29, Nays 17.

The Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

PETITIONS

Medical Assistance in Dying

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Beginning March 17, 2024, persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illnesses.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition.

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not dying.

This is signed by Lucille Phaneuf, Adele Kapingan [*phonetic*], Maria [*phonetic*] Fillion and many other Manitobans.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Brandon West. I can't see you.

Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Pardon me. Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba:

The background to this petition is as follows:

1. In 2022, according to Statistics Canada, there was an one-one-point-four circle-slash-circle increase in food prices.

* (16:10)

(2) Staple food products, such as baked goods, margarine and other oils, dairy products and eggs have seen some of the largest price increases.

3. Agriculture and the agri-food sectors contribute close to one-zero-circle-slash-circle of Manitoba's GDP.

4. There are increased costs added at every step of the process for Manitoba's agriculture producers. In order to make \$0.18 from one bread loaf worth of wheat, farmers are paying carbon tax at every stage of production to grow the crop and get it to market.

5. Grain drying, fertilizer and chemical production, mushroom farming, hog operations, the cost of heating a livestock barn, machine shops and utility buildings are all examples of how the carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels cost farmers and consumers more each year.

6. In food production there are currently no viable alternatives to natural gas and propane. The carbon tax takes money away from farmers, making them less profitable and hindering rural agricultural producers' ability to invest in upgrades and improve efficiency while reducing emissions.

7. The provincial government neglected farmers in the six-month fuel tax one quote, holiday, one quote until the opposition critic and local stakeholder groups called for their inclusion.

8. Other provincial jurisdictions and leaders have taken action on calling the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax, and/or stop collecting the carbon tax altogether.

* (16:20)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to call on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels and farm inputs for Manitoba agriculture producers and the agri-food sector to decrease the cost of putting food on the table for Manitoba consumers.

This, sorry, quote, this has been signed by (1) Dianne LeClerc; 2. Louise Rushton [*phonetic*]; (3) Connor [*phonetic*] Ketchen and many, many Manitobans.

* * *

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Hi, I would like to read the petition for the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone).

The Speaker: Sorry. Could the honourable member repeat what he just said, please?

Mr. Johnson: Could you seek leave to see if there's leave for member for Interlake-Gimli to read the petition for the member for Midland?

The Speaker: Is there leave for the member for Interlake-Gimli to read the petition for the member for Midland?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Medical Assistance in Dying

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental health illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the ages of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to those supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

And, Honourable Speaker, this petition is signed by Peter Neufeld, Dylan Wiebe, Robin Elias and many other Manitobans.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and

other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition.

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

Thank you.

* * *

Mr. Johnson: Honourable Speaker, could you please canvass the House to see if there's leave to allow the member for Interlake-Gimli to present the petition for the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt)?

* (16:30)

The Speaker: Is there leave for the member for Interlake-Gimli to read the petition for the member for Riding Mountain?

Some Honourable Members: Yes

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Medical Assistance in Dying

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance; and

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is a sole condition; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

This has been signed by Justina Dyck, Garret James Dyck, Lindsay Becker and many, many Manitobans.

* * *

Mr. Grant Jackson (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader): I'm just seeking leave.

Honourable Speaker, would you seek leave of the House and the good nature of our colleagues across the way to allow the member for Spruce Woods to read the petition on behalf of the honourable member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt)?

The Speaker: Is there leave for the member for Spruce Woods to read the petition on behalf of the member for Riding Mountain?

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Mr. Jackson: Would you please seek leave to canvass the good nature of our colleagues across the way to allow the member for Spruce Woods to read the petition on behalf of the honourable member for Midland (Mrs. Stone)?

The Speaker: Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, for sure. Absolutely.

The Speaker: Just to advise the member that leave had been previously asked by someone else to read the petition on behalf of the member for Midland. Leave was denied, so, just repeating that same request doesn't work.

Mr. Jackson: I'd hoped that they might just like me better than the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), but alas, here we are.

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background to this petition is as follows:

Number 1. The—

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

I've been pretty lenient in how these petitions are being read, but from now on, there'd be no more reading period, comma, question mark. Just read the petition as it's written, please.

Mr. Jackson: Thank you for your guidance, Honourable Speaker.

(1) The federal government has mandated a consumption-based carbon tax, with the stated goal of financially pressuring Canadians to make decisions to reduce their carbon emissions.

(2) Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with a high-efficiency furnace, the carbon tax is costing the

average family over \$200 annually, even more for those with older furnaces.

* (16:40)

(3) Home heating in Manitoba is not a choice or a decision for Manitobans to make; it is a necessity of life, with an average of almost 200 days below 0°C annually.

(4) The federal government has selectively removed the carbon tax off of home heating oil in Atlantic provinces of Canada, but has indicated they have no intention to provide the same relief to Manitobans heating their homes.

(5) Manitoba Hydro indicates that natural gas heating is one of the most affordable options available to Manitobans, and it can be cost prohibitive for households to replace their heating source.

(6) Premiers across Canada, including in the Atlantic provinces that benefit from this decision, have collectively sent a letter to the federal government, calling on it to extend the carbon tax exemption to all forms of home heating, with the exception of Manitoba.

(7) 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.

(8) Provincial leadership in other jurisdictions have already committed to removing the federal carbon tax from home heating bills.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to remove the federal carbon tax on home heating bills for all Manitobans to provide them much-needed relief.

This petition has been signed by Errol Glenn Dixon, Ed Grenier, Todd Labelle and many, many, many more fine Manitobans.

Louise Bridge

Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Over 25,000 vehicles per day cross the Louise Bridge, which has served as a vital link for 'vehicler'-'vicular'-'vehicler'-'vehicular'—I apologize—vehicular traffic

between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown for the last 113 years.

(2) The current structure will undoubtedly be declared unsafe in a few years as it has deteriorated extensively, is now functionally obsolete, and therefore more subject to more frequent unplanned repairs and cannot be widened to accommodate future traffic capacity.

* (16:50)

(3) As far back as 2008, the City of Winnipeg, open bracket, City, closed bracket, has—[interjection] No, but that's what it says—

The Speaker: Order, please.

I previously advised members that reading punctuation marks and brackets is not the approved way to read it. Just read it as it's written, please.

Mr. Khan: I thank you for your guidance on that, Honourable Speaker. I sincerely apologize.

—has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

(4) After including the bridge replacement in the City's five-year capital budget forecast in 2009, the new bridge became a short-term construction priority in the City's transportation master plan of 2011.

(5) City capital and budget plans identified replacement of the Louise Bridge on a site just east of the bridge, and expropriated homes were on the south side of Nairn Avenue in anticipation of the 2015 start.

(6) In 2014, the new City administration did not make use of available federal infrastructure funds.

(7) The new Louise Bridge Committee 'began'—began its campaign to demand a new bridge, and its surveys confirmed residents wanted a new bridge beside the current bridge, with the old bridge being kept open for local traffic.

(8) The City tethered the Louise Bridge replacement issue to its new transportation master plan and eastern corridor project. Its recommendation—recommendations have now identified the location of the new Louise Bridge to be placed just to the west of the current bridge, not to the east as originally proposed.

(9) The City expropriation process has begun. The \$6.35-million street upgrade of Nairn Avenue from Watt Street to the 113-year-old bridge is complete.

(10) The new City administration has delayed the decision on the Louie [*phonetic*] bridge—Louise Bridge for a minimum of one year, and possibly up to 10 years, unless the Province steps in on behalf of northeast Winnipeg residents and completes the overdue link.

The—(11) The Premier has a duty to direct the provincial government to provide financial assistance to the City so it can complete this long overdue vital link to northeast Winnipeg and Transcona.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier to financially assist the City of Winnipeg on building this three-lane bridge in each direction to maintain this vital link between northeast Winnipeg, Transcona and downtown.

(2) To urge the provincial government to recommend that the City of Winnipeg keep the old bridge fully open to traffic while the new bridge is under construction.

(3) To urge the provincial government to consider the feasibility of keeping the old bridge open for active transportation in the future.

This petition was signed by many, many, many, many, many, many Manitobans.

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hour being 5 o'clock, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. May—[*interjection*] 1:30, May 6—1:30 p.m., May 6.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 25, 2024

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<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>