

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

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Speaker*

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-Third Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
AL TOMARE, 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
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
<i>Vacant</i>	Tuxedo	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 9, 2024

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

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

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Before we proceed with the afternoon, I've got some guests in the gallery I'd like to introduce.

We have seated in the public gallery from Broadview *[phonetic]* Christian School, 21 grade 4 to grade 10 students, under the direction of Nevin Bender, and they're guests of the honourable member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth).

And I would draw attention to all honourable members to the loge to the left of me, where we have Gerry McAlpine, former member for Sturgeon Creek.

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here today.

Seated in the Speaker's Gallery, we have Sharon Lindsey and her friend from school days who is visiting from Abbotsford, BC, and they are obviously the guests of the Speaker, so please welcome them to the gallery.

The day is proceeding nicely so far. I'd just like to reintroduce the students because unfortunately they weren't here when I introduced them. So we have seated in the public gallery, from Broadview *[phonetic]* Christian School, 21 grade 4 to grade 10 students under the direction of Nevin Bender, and they are guests of the honourable member for La Vérendrye.

### Speaker's Statement

**The Speaker:** I at this point in time would like to read a statement:

So, on Sunday, May 12, 2024, it will mark the 154 anniversary of the day The Manitoba Act received royal assent in the Canadian Parliament. This act created the Province of Manitoba and accordingly, May 12 has been designated as Manitoba Day.

In honour of this occasion, members will notice some of the treasured artifacts displayed on the clerk's table: The star blanket cushion and beaded mace runner, gifted to us by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in 2010; a Métis sash, gifted to us in 2023 by the Manitoba Métis Federation; and a soapstone polar bear carving,

gifted to us by the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut in 2023.

These artifacts are displayed in the Chamber today to recognize and pay tribute to the Indigenous people of Manitoba as we celebrate this day. They serve as a reminder that this Chamber and Legislative Building reside on the traditional lands of Indigenous people, as we recognize each day in our land acknowledgment.

As your Speaker, I am honoured and humbled to include these treasured artifacts in our annual celebration of Manitoba Day.

Additionally, as we have done for the past several years, in today's Speaker's parade, our Sergeant-at-Arms carried our original Manitoba mace. This mace was made—this mace made its first formal appearance on March 15, 1871, on the first sitting day of the first session of the first Manitoba Legislature, held in the home of A.G.B. Bannatyne in the Red River Settlement.

The Bannatyne home was destroyed by fire in 1873, but thankfully, the mace survived.

After 13 years of service, our original mace was retired in 1884 when our current mace debuted. The original mace has a permanent home on display outside the Speaker's office, coming out of retirement annually to mark this day and other special events.

This historical artifact sits on the table today as a nod to our past, but also to remind all members that we are part of a very select group of Manitobans.

Since the mace was first placed on the Clerk's table in 1871, only 880 Manitobans, including all of us here today, have served as members of this Assembly in this room and the rooms which preceded it. Out of the millions of Manitobans who have lived in this province over the last 154 years, only this small, fortunate group has had the honour and privilege and solemn responsibility of serving our fellow citizens as their elected representatives.

Our system is certainly not perfect. Historically, not everyone in Manitoba has had the right to vote, and it took many decades for Indigenous people and women to gain that right.

As we commemorate this event, then, it's worth remembering that our democracy is a fragile work in progress in need of protection. We should never take it for granted, and I hope we can all remember that as we strive to do our best in this place each day.

In honour of Manitoba Day and it—with its rich history in mind, I would encourage all members to reflect on our shared responsibility to serve Manitobans with honour, respect and reverence. I would encourage all of us: remember that our work in this place is part of a very long legacy of service to the people of Manitoba.

Thank you.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**The Speaker:** Introduction of bills?

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Standing Committee on Justice First Report

**MLA Billie Cross (Chairperson):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the first report of the Standing Committee on Justice.

**The Speaker:** Tabling of reports—no.

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Your Standing Committee on Justice—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**The Speaker:** Dispense.

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

#### Meetings

*Your Committee met on May 8, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.*

#### Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 6)** – *The Manitoba Assistance Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les allocations d'aide du Manitoba*
- **Bill (No. 8)** – *The Safe Access to Abortion Services Act / Loi sur l'accès sécuritaire aux services d'interruption volontaire de grossesse*
- **Bill (No. 11)** – *The Statutes and Regulations Amendment and Interpretation Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les textes législatifs et réglementaires et la Loi d'interprétation*

- **Bill (No. 14)** – *The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2024 / Loi corrective de 2024*
- **Bill (No. 15)** – *The Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les caisses populaires et les credit unions*
- **Bill (No. 19)** – *The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules*
- **Bill (No. 20)** – *The Highway Traffic Amendment Act / Loi modifiant le Code de la route*
- **Bill (No. 24)** – *The Intimate Image Protection Amendment Act (Distribution of Fake Intimate Images) / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection des images intimes (distribution de fausses images intimes)*

#### Committee Membership

- Mr. BALCAEN
- MLA CHEN
- MLA CROSS
- Mr. KHAN
- Mr. OXENHAM
- Mrs. SCHOTT

*Your Committee elected MLA CROSS as the Chairperson.*

*Your Committee elected Mr. OXENHAM as the Vice-Chairperson.*

#### Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record:

- Mrs. COOK
- Hon. Min. FONTAINE
- Mr. PIWNIUK
- Hon. Min. SALA
- Mrs. STONE
- Hon. Mr. WIEBE

#### Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following three presentations on **Bill (No. 6)** – *The Manitoba Assistance Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les allocations d'aide du Manitoba*:*

*Kate Kehler, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg*

*Josh Brandon, Make Poverty History Manitoba*

*Jim Silver, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Manitoba*

Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 8)** – *The Safe Access to Abortion Services Act / Loi sur l'accès sécuritaire aux services d'interruption volontaire de grossesse*:

David Grant, Private citizen

Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 15)** – *The Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les caisses populaires et les credit unions*:

David Grant, Private citizen

Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 19)** – *The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules*:

David Grant, Private citizen

### **Bills Considered and Reported**

- **Bill (No. 6)** – *The Manitoba Assistance Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les allocations d'aide du Manitoba*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 8)** – *The Safe Access to Abortion Services Act / Loi sur l'accès sécuritaire aux services d'interruption volontaire de grossesse*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 11)** – *The Statutes and Regulations Amendment and Interpretation Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les textes législatifs et réglementaires et la Loi d'interprétation*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 14)** – *The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2024 / Loi corrective de 2024*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 15)** – *The Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les caisses populaires et les credit unions*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 19)** – *The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 20)** – *The Highway Traffic Amendment Act / Loi modifiant le Code de la route*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 24)** – *The Intimate Image Protection Amendment Act (Distribution of Fake Intimate Images) / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection des images intimes (distribution de fausses images intimes)*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

**MLA Cross:** Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **TABLING OF REPORTS**

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I'm pleased to table the Court of King's Bench Annual Report 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 for Manitoba Justice.

**The Speaker:** Ministerial statements?

### **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

#### **GymKyds Gymnastics Centre**

**Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training):** GymKyds Gymnastics has been a pillar in our community for over 20 years. GymKyds just isn't—isn't just about perfecting cartwheels and mastering splits, they're about fostering a spirit of well-being that extends far beyond the walls of the gym.

Peggy Glassco moved her small start-up gymnastics centre to Southdale in 2003, and with her leadership and vision, she has grown GymKyds into a cornerstone of our community.

Their commitment to giving back is as impressive as their dedication to physical development. From delivering Christmas hampers to participating in Socktober, GymKyds consistently uplifts those in need.

\* (13:40)

Their fundraising efforts and community support initiatives for the Alzheimer Society, the Children's

Hospital and helping newcomer families get established in the community with donations and furniture showcases their genuine care for our collective well-being.

But GymKyds' heart truly soars when it comes to empowering children. GymKyds champions inclusivity by offering gym space to children with additional needs from the Louis Riel School Division, while the iconic Bear Aerobics at the Teddy Bears' Picnic ignites a love for fitness in a playful way.

Peggy and her team, along with the incredible GymKyds families in our community, allows GymKyds to make a real difference. Together, they've built not just strong bodies, but a strong, more vibrant community.

I'd like to welcome our guests in the gallery today: Peggy and the GymKyds family and our new friends from Morocco and Ukraine, who have made our community their home.

Join me in celebrating GymKyds Gymnastics Centre for their two decades of exceptional service and their unwavering commitment to making our community a healthier and happier place.

*Peggy Glassco, owner; Kalee Forsyth, manager; Lauren Hanson, manager; Selina Whitford, office manager; Liz Curtis, head coach; Inna Biehmuradova; Ruya Ozdemir; Esmee Timjerdine; Youseff Timjerdine; Zaynab Timjerdine*

### Denise Abgrall

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, a lot can happen in 35 years.

Here in our own province of Manitoba, we have seen seven premiers and untold MLAs and political staff come and go, all in the name of democracy. We have seen the Berlin Wall fall, the Internet rise and both the loss and return of our Winnipeg Jets.

However, despite all the changes we have witnessed as legislators in the world around us and in our own province of Manitoba, there are constants.

It is one of those constants that I rise today to recognize, not only for what this individual has done for me, but has done for every single MLA since she began on May 10, 1989. Honourable Speaker, for the last approximately 20 years, just outside these Chamber doors on the east side message room, sits one of our favourite message room attendants, Denise Abgrall.

Prior to being moved to the message room, she worked up in the public gallery for almost 15 years, helping citizens who were here to observe and participate in our parliamentary democracy. She started when Gary Filmon was premier and is now on her seventh premier. She has memories of all of them.

I know in speaking with Denise about her political memories. After 35 years, she shared the events of June 19, 1990, as one of the most profound, and I quote: It was a particularly raucous day. End quote. She noted as Canada's Meech Lake Accord continued to be debated and unbeknownst to her, she, from her view in her gallery—in the gallery, became a living witness to Canadian history when Elijah Harper held an eagle feather in his seat and said, no, thus ending years of constitutional negotiation and, more importantly, ushering in a new era of Indigenous leadership.

Denise added, and I quote: I can still see that eagle feather in my mind when I close my eyes. End quote.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

**The Speaker:** Does the member have leave to continue his statement? [*Agreed*]

**Mr. Ewasko:** I thank each and every one of my colleagues here in the Manitoba Legislature.

When Denise's smiling face and friendly disposition isn't greeting us in the message room, she can be found spending time with her daughters, grandson and great grandchildren. Denise enjoys time with her family and playing Rummoli with older people.

Honourable Speaker, on behalf of our PC team and, indeed, all MLAs, I want to extend to Denise a very happy 35th anniversary, and I look forward to celebrating many, many more.

### Save Our Seine

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** Today I would like to speak on the phenomenal work of Save Our Seine, a non-profit organization in the heart of St. Boniface.

The Seine River Greenway is a vital part of Manitoba's rich environmental tapestry. Seeing the historical value of this incredible waterway and the importance of securing its future, SOS took on a key role in the preservation of the Seine River.

Beginning in 1990, SOS's mandate is to preserve, protect, enhance, restore and repair the Seine River

Greenway. SOS is active in our community, organizing advocacy initiatives, raising public awareness to the issues facing the Seine River and seeking collaborative opportunities between governments, businesses and non-profit organizations.

Since its inception, SOS has been on the front lines lobbying, fundraising, volunteering, gardening, planting and educating. Through their passion, dedication and hard work, SOS has successfully undone and maintained nearly 100 years of neglect and abuse on the Seine River. In fact, much of this work is directly linked to the SOS summer team.

Also known as the River Keepers, the SOS summer team was the first recipient of the Urban Green Team program through the province of Manitoba in 1995. Every year, SOS hires youth over the summer to maintain the health of the Seine River. These employees sweep the river multiple times a season to remove garbage, weeds and invasive shrubs.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Save our Seine for their consistent efforts in repairing and maintaining the Seine River Greenway. We acknowledge the important work you do and are grateful for your consistent advocacy for the preservation of our beautiful Seine River.

In the gallery we have Lindsay Kane, president; Ryan Palmquist, executive director; Anita Moyses, board member; and Laurie Ringaert, River Keepers co-ordinator. And I would like to add their names, of course—

**The Speaker:** The member's time is expired.

### **Brandon Health Checks**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** On December 20th of this past year, I was delighted to receive a phone call from Mrs. Meryl Orth, who personally wanted to share with me the exciting news that the Brandon Health Checks committee's case study had been selected by the United Nations Decades of Healthy Ageing from 117 entries across nearly 50 countries, for its innovation, inclusivity and dedication to promoting healthy aging.

This recognition, granted a few months prior, deserves to be acknowledged within this esteemed Assembly. As the member for Brandon West, it was my distinct privilege to extend my gratitude to the steering committee co-chairs, Mrs. Meryl Orth and Ms. Janis Evens, along with all committee members for the exceptional work in preparing and presenting this report to the United Nations.

Their efforts in championing healthy aging have rightfully put Brandon, Manitoba, on the international map. I urge everyone to pursue the case study available on the United Nations Decades of Healthy Ageing website.

The Brandon Health Checks represents a collaboration among 14 organizations, including non-profits and local citizens, as well as representatives from Prairie Mountain Health, the Centre on Aging at the University of Manitoba and the Manitoba Association of Senior Communities.

Mark your calendar for the sixth annual Community Health and Wellness Expo by Brandon Health Checks, themed: There's a Whole Lot of Living Left to Do. This event takes place on September 10, 2024, at the Brandon University Healthy Living Centre, and this free expo attracts hundreds of participants of all ages, alongside vendors that come together united in serving our community needs.

The expo provides a wealth of information on health and wellness, safety and recreation, and with all the same goal of promoting healthy aging.

Honourable Speaker, please join me with all of my colleagues in celebrating the significant impact of Brandon Health Checks, whose initiative empowers individuals to age in place with respect and dignity.

### **Grace Hospital Day**

**Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park):** Tomorrow is Grace Hospital Day, a day to celebrate and give thanks to the Grace Hospital's staff, volunteers, patients and the Grace's wider supporting community.

For 120 years, the Grace Hospital has served Manitobans from across west Winnipeg and surrounding communities. As one of three acute-care sites in the city, it is an integral part of our health-care system.

\* (13:50)

Time and time again, staff and volunteers at the Grace Hospital have gone above and beyond to care for their fellow Manitobans. Now, it's time to show our support.

From 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., I encourage folks to turn into 680 CJOB for the Grace Hospital Radiothon—that's tomorrow—and then come on down to Sturgeon Creek parkway for a family-friendly comedy performance by Al Simmons and music from Jet Stream, the RCAF band. While you're there, you can grab a bite to eat from the free barbeque, visit the petting zoo and

pay a visit to the Winnipeg Circus Club's very own Sleepy the Clown.

Whether you've donated, volunteered or helped raise awareness, thank you to all the Manitobans who've gone the extra mile to support the Grace Hospital. It's folks like you who inspire our government to continue rebuilding health care across our province each and every day.

As Manitobans, we take great pride in our public health-care institutions. Together, we will ensure they remain strong for our families, our communities and the many generations yet to come.

I invite all honourable members to join me in thanking staff and volunteers, who are busy preparing for the event, from the Grace Hospital and the Grace Hospital Foundation for their dedication to the good people of Manitoba.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

\* \* \*

**MLA Cable:** I would like to ask that the members of my guests, including the wee one that was needing some lunch, be added to Hansard.

**The Speaker:** Does the honourable minister wish them to be added after her statement?

**MLA Cable:** Yes, please.

**The Speaker:** So ordered. *[interjection]*

Okay, we need leave for that to take place, so is there leave for the honourable minister's guests' names to appear after her statement in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Before we move on to oral questions, I would also like to recognize in the Speaker's Gallery Denise Abgrall. Denise has—recognized by many as the attendant at the east message room. She began employment in 1989, May 10, and I think after 35 years, being recognized more than once in this Chamber is worthwhile. So this is her 35th year, and I believe that someone owes her a ride in a shiny red sports car, so that's going to happen too.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Political Parties and Candidates Election Spending Rebate Increase

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Again, congratulations Denise, and everybody, for joining us here this afternoon.

Honourable Speaker, Louis Riel School Division has been forced to get, and I quote, get creative, end quote, by converting a library into two classrooms at a K-to-8 school. You would think this kind of story would prompt the Premier and the Education Minister to take action, maybe build some new schools. Nope.

But they—but what they did do, they put education so far down the priority list, they have cut nine schools, Honourable Speaker. Meanwhile, schools like those in the constituencies of the members opposite, members of Seine River, Southdale, Riel, St. Vital, are bursting at the seams.

Our solution was planning and building more schools faster. Their priority is enhancing the subsidy paid by taxpayers to his own political party.

Why does the Premier prioritize his own NDP party over Manitoba students?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Want to take this opportunity to acknowledge Denise for her 35 years of service to the Manitoba Legislature, and to say on behalf of the Province of Manitoba, thank you.

I also want to say to the students who are visiting us here today that I think the presence of myself and so many of the MLAs here is a testament to the fact that any one of you, should you wish to enter politics, can earn a seat here. Work hard, treat people with respect and earning the support of people in your constituencies could send you to a seat in this Chamber. And I'll tell you what, it's a pretty good gig. It's a high honour to be able to serve you, the people of Manitoba.

Of course, in order to be able to do that, you need a strong, quality education. And that's why our investments in education start in the early years. They see us building new schools in this year's budget and, importantly, crucially, announcing a province-wide universal school nutrition program so that no kid who shows up for school has to learn on an empty stomach.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** The Premier almost got to the point of the topic there, the question.

Honourable Speaker, with Budget 2023, our previous PC government invested more than \$52 million on a multi-faceted violent crime strategy that this Premier voted against. He voted against improving public safety in our budgeted last year, and then what does he put in his budget this year? He wants to increase the publicly funded rebate that his political party



receives. He's cutting Justice funding and increasing political subsidies.

Our PC team respects the taxpayer and had reduced the rebate to 25 per cent from 50 per cent. Premier's feathering his own nest while violent crime in Manitoba is just getting worse.

My only question is: Why, Honourable Speaker?

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

It's long-standing practice in this place that the three questions have to be at least somewhat related to each other.

So I believe—[interjection] Order, please. Order, please.

I would make—or caution the Leader of the Official Opposition to make sure his three questions are on the same topic.

Thank you.

**Mr. Kinew:** Happy to answer a question on public safety.

We got a letter from the National Police Federation that says Bill 30 is, and I quote, an important piece of legislation that marks a significant step forward in the RCMP's ongoing efforts to combat drug trafficking and organized crime. End quote.

The National Police Federation represents RCMP officers across this great province. They want to see Bill 30 passed. The member opposite and his team are blocking it each and every day. We know that the public safety issues we face in so many of our communities are being driven by drugs. We're trying to take action to take resources away from drug traffickers and hold them accountable.

Why are the PCs blocking this important piece of legislation? And I'll table the letter for the member.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** I'll recap for the House, because I think it's very important that we're talking about the fact that the NDP are increasing political subsidies to their own party.

The NDP does not prioritize education. The NDP does not prioritize public safety, and just so I can be more clear to the current House leader, the NDP only prioritizes the NDP. They did not run in an election on increasing political subsidies, but that's what they are doing.

And so once again, Honourable Speaker, the question to the Premier and his NDP team, the MLA for Fort Rouge: Why?

**Mr. Kinew:** I want to say that the member for Lac du Bonnet's got to be the first Conservative who doesn't want to talk about law and order in the history of this country. I tabled the letter for him that says that the National Police Federation wants to see Bill 30 passed. Why do they stand against this?

Perhaps they'd like to consider an answer to this letter. This is from the Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police congratulating our Attorney General (Mr. Wiebe) for bringing forward Bill 30, and it goes on to say that this legislation will make a significant difference for the safety of all Manitobans. That's a direct quote.

\* (14:00)

We got the representatives of the RCMP saying that it's going to help us crack down on drug trafficking. That'll keep young people in our community safe. We got the Manitoba chiefs of police saying this is going to help improve the safety of all Manitobans.

We support the legislation. Police support this legislation.

The only question remains: Why do the PCs insist on blocking this every single day?

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

### **Tobacco Company Litigation Premier's Public Comments**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** And it just looks like the Premier doesn't want to talk about that they're padding their own party with political subsidies.

Honourable Speaker, we've established the Premier's more showman than statesman, and that's going to cost Manitobans big time. At the Manitoba NDP convention in Winnipeg on Saturday, the Premier broke the rules of engagement by making an unsanctioned announcement about a lawsuit.

Breaking the rules is, again, nothing new to you know who, the MLA for Fort Rouge.

And the other premiers aren't talking about it because there is a shared national approach to this

litigation between provinces. They also recognize, rightfully, the subject of that ongoing litigation is before the courts.

My question for the Premier, the MLA for Fort Rouge, is simple: Why does he think it's okay to share privileged information with his NDP donors?

**The Speaker:** So I have previously cautioned the Leader of the Official Opposition about the—using the term, you know who, when he's referring to another member. The standard practice is to refer to a member by their constituency name or by their ministerial title.

So I'd kind of ask the Leader of the Official Opposition to please follow that in the future.

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Physicians for a 'cancer'-free society, welcome to transparency. I'll take advice from physicians over the name-callers on the other side, each and every single day.

But on a substantive issue that affects so many people and constituents across—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

Things have broken down early today, and it has to stop. Both sides can quit with the childish name-calling back and forth. Both sides can quit hollering back and forth. It's time to show proper respect in this Chamber for the positions that we have and the job that we're here to do.

The honourable leader of the official—or the—sorry, the honourable First Minister.

**Mr. Kinew:** You know, public safety is an important matter. It's not something that I'd come here to heckle about. I come here to engage on the issues substantively, and I invite the PCs to do so.

Pass Bill 30. Let's hear from the public at committee, and let's see what Manitobans have to say about cracking down on drug trafficking.

You have in your hands letters that speak to that effect. We got the representatives of the RCMP saying pass this legislation. You got the chiefs of police of this province saying pass this legislation.

What have they done? Perhaps they'd like to share with our guests in the gallery, what have they done every single day that that bill has been called for debate? Delay. Avoid debate by reading petitions slowly—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, the Premier claims an initial payment of hundreds of millions of dollars could arrive soon. His press secretary said the Premier felt confident to say it.

Now, confidence certainly isn't a problem for this Premier. His problem is he can't keep things to himself, even if there's a court order that precludes him from speaking.

Now, again, the Premier feels he is above court orders. Legal experts are saying all aspects of the mediation in confidential—are confidential and no comment is possible by virtue of a court order. Public comment would be in violation of the court order. Other provinces acknowledge this.

Why is this Premier violating a court order to share privileged information with his NDP donors, Honourable Speaker?

**Mr. Kinew:** Is the member opposite concerned about big tobacco? Or perhaps he's concerned about the fact that his government cancelled the CancerCare Manitoba headquarters as one of the first things they did after the 2016 elections.

We're going to take a different approach. We're going to fight cancer in Manitoba. We're going to guarantee that we make investments to prevent cancer among young people for future generations, and also we're going to advance public safety.

I've tabled a letter that shows the RCMP wants Bill 30 passed. He should indicate whether he's going to pass it today. I'll table the letter from the Association of Chiefs of Police in Manitoba, which are also saying that Bill 30 will help make communities safer.

And of course we have a letter—I'd invite the members to listen. We also have a letter from the Winnipeg Police Association that says that they ought to know, every MLA in here ought to know, that the WPA recognizes this legislation as another valuable tool for law enforcement to tackle evolving threats that are endured. End quote.

The people are behind it—

**The Speaker:** Member's time is expired.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, we know that there's a real cost to this showman's bravado and boasting. This will cost Manitobans' reputation as well as the relationship with other premiers and the courts.

This will cost Manitobans money. The settlement from tobacco companies is important; cancer treatment and research is important. And it is irresponsible to play fast and loose with the litigation. Each and every one of us in this Chamber have been touched personally with cancer. The Premier wanted to act like he had good news in front of his donors, but in reality is undermining and jeopardizing many years of work all across Canada.

Manitobans will pay the price for his bluster. There's a real chance the settlement will be impacted. The mediation has likely been affected—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —the Premier has stepped out of line.

How does the Premier expect any province or partner to ever negotiate or work with his government in good faith if they violate court-ordered confidentiality?

**Mr. Kinew:** It's notable that the member opposite refers to big tobacco as a partner. We think they should be held accountable, and where they cut the CancerCare headquarters, we're going to build a state-of-the-art cancer-care facility to serve everyone in Manitoba.

I want to table a letter from the Winnipeg Police Association so that the member opposite, by the time he goes and speaks to media this afternoon, will have in hand a—documents that show that the representatives of the RCMP, of Winnipeg police, of the chiefs of police in this province, want to see Bill 30 passed so that we can hold drug traffickers accountable.

It simply defies logic that the PCs would come in here and deny law enforcement a tool to hold drug traffickers accountable. But that's what you get with the PCs: all tactics, no strategy, no—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

### **Building Sustainable Communities Fund Request to Restore Funding**

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** Honourable Speaker, on March 7, I asked the Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations and Indigenous Economic Development when the Building Sustainable Communities application period would be opening. He wasn't able

to answer, as they cut it. Upon realizing its importance it was brought back, albeit in a very reduced form.

I ask the minister today: Will he restore the 12-and-a-half-million-dollar cut from the pockets of municipalities, community groups, non-profit organizations and Northern Affairs community councils, yes or no?

**Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations):** Honourable Speaker, I gave the member an opportunity to talk to the architects of that unsustainable budget: Cameron Friesen, Cliff Cullen, Heather Stefanson.

And I know they wouldn't return his phone calls, but perhaps if he recalled Ralph Eichler, and maybe he'd take his phone call to ask why did he sit at the table and pass unsustainable budget after unsustainable budget, year after year after year.

Our program from the ground up, 12 and a half million dollars to invest in the front lines of communities, to invest from communities that need it the most, Honourable Speaker, and that's where our priority is.

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

**Mr. King:** Honourable Speaker, the minister's BSC-lite program, as that's what it is, a formerly good program watered down and gutted such that it is a shell of its former self. The numbers are clear: 12 and a half million is less than 25 million; 100,000 is less than 300,000; 50,000 is less than 75,000.

\* (14:10)

Honourable Speaker, can the minister please tell me how he came to the conclusion that 12 and a half million is better than 25 million?

**Mr. Bushie:** Honourable Speaker, 22 per cent is less than 78 per cent, and that's where the priority that Manitobans that—22 per cent west to—went to vulnerable communities during that program; 78 per cent went to their constituencies, their constituencies alone.

So what do they do during a pandemic recovery? Record transfers from the federal government, record transfers, Honourable Speaker, record transfers from the federal government. And what do they do with it? They go with it and they misspend it time and time again. So there's nothing sustainable about anything that government ever did.

So I encourage the member to not let Shannon Martin read his questions here, and get to the questions of the day.

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

**Mr. King:** Honourable Speaker, Agape Table, Augustine Centre, Community Education Development Association, the Lighthouse Mission: had these projects been delayed just one year, they would have been delayed permanently as they would not qualify under BSC lite.

Honourable Speaker, what was the logic behind capping projects at \$100,000 instead of the previous \$300,000?

**Mr. Bushie:** What was the logic behind freezing municipal funding year after year after year? Seven and a half years of frozen funding, and that member had ample opportunity to go to his colleagues and ask, why was that good, why was that logical?

Why did he not go to member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), ask him, when he was minister, why did he freeze funding? Go to Red River North, ask him why he froze funding. Or better yet, ask the member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton) to call up Andrew Smith and ask him why he froze funding—because we know he's going to call minister after minister and talk government business.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. Order. Order.

### Drug Decriminalization Policy Public Safety Concerns

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** Honourable Speaker, Canadians are watching as BC has admitted their NDP drug strategy just doesn't work and has had to ask Ottawa to step in to recriminalize hard drugs.

Three years ago, this Premier stood with BC and asked Trudeau to decriminalize hard drugs. I table this for the House.

Parks for families are not safe. Playgrounds for children are not safe. Streets are not safe. Does the Premier plan to ask Ottawa to decriminalize hard drugs, or will he keep hard drugs banned in Manitoba?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** Well, what I want to tell that member is, is we want—we're focused on this side—is saving lives here in our province, something that members across the way weren't focused on. They

weren't focused on a harm reduction model. We saw the numbers go up in this province, people losing their lives while the members across the way turned a blind eye, did not listen to families and saw the numbers of folks lose their lives.

We will not take that approach. We're looking at opening the first supervised consumption site in this province, along with folks that are—with lived experience, members that have expert knowledge, something that members opposite never did.

And we'll take no—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Midland, on a supplementary question.

**Mrs. Stone:** Three years ago, this Premier advocated for a now-failed NDP drug policy.

Businesses are closing in this Premier's own constituency as a result of public drug use and an increase of crime and safety concerns. I went to a clothing store on Corydon that had to keep its doors locked as a result of public drug use and safety concerns.

The Premier needs to learn from the BC NDP premier and admit to Manitobans that NDP drug policies just don't work.

Will the NDP commit today to focusing on treatment, not consumption, by keeping hard drugs banned in Manitoba to protect the safety of Manitobans?

**Ms. Smith:** Well, what I will say to members on that side is Manitobans spoke loud and clear, and that's exactly why you are sitting on that side. Your approach did not work. Manitobans told you loud and clear that they wanted a different approach, and that's exactly why we're sitting on that side.

Bill 30; RCMP have told you that they want this bill. Winnipeg Police Association, chiefs of police, drug traffickers are contributing to this.

We have purchased two drug testing machines. Staff are being trained this week. We're expecting these drug testing machines to be up and running this summer. That's going to help save lives.

A harm reduction approach is what our government is focused on. Opening the first—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Member's time has expired. Order, please.

I just caution—*[interjection]* Order. Caution members to make sure they're directing their comments through the Chair.

**Mrs. Stone:** Honourable Speaker, the deputy chief of the Vancouver Police Department told a House of Commons committee that the NDP drug plan had tied the hands of police to respond to problematic drug use, both in public spaces and in hospitals. I table that today.

BC needed federal intervention to walk back on their failed NDP drug plan.

Will this NDP Premier stand up and admit to Manitobans that NDP drug policies just don't work, and will he commit to keeping hard drugs banned, focus on treatment and recovery, to stop the crime?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Manitobans know that we need a comprehensive approach to public safety that is tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime.

Our minister is doing important work to spearhead a new initiative that sees us dealing with compassion for those who are living with addictions, but bringing the hammer down on those who are trafficking drugs and bringing toxic substances into our communities.

Budget 2024 brings the investments forward for harm reduction and addictions treatments. They've opposed this. Bill 30 is going to allow us to bring the hammer down on drug traffickers.

Why is the member for Midland part of blocking Bill 30's passage in this House?

### Provincial Park Infrastructure Funding for Strategy

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** As the minister responsible for parks, I was pleased to start the work on redeveloping the Nutimik Lake museum in the Whiteshell last year. And I was relieved to learn recently it wasn't among the massive \$6-million cut to parks made under this new NDP minister.

The minister still hasn't told Manitobans what projects have been cut from the parks renewal strategy. Is it the Mantario Trail upgrades? The new Spruce Woods campgrounds? The new yurts for campers at Asessippi? Or is it all three?

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. I'd like to start my response by sharing the exciting news that this weekend marks the

opening of provincial parks here in Manitoba. *[interjection]* Yes.

We have a beautiful weekend ahead of us, so I know that my family loves to get out into Manitoba's provincial parks and enjoy all that they have to offer. I encourage and I look forward to seeing Manitobans out in the parks, and I look forward, in my next response, to sharing about some of the exciting work that we're doing this summer.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Riding Mountain, on a supplementary questions.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Honourable Speaker, this NDP minister threw out years of consultation with Manitobans and cut \$6 million from parks. Those are the facts.

Our PC government was pleased to get the work done on upgrading the water and waste-water systems in Birds Hill and Paint Lake provincial parks. There are more systems that our government had slated to upgrade in Grand Beach, William Lake and Wekusko Falls.

Has the minister axed these projects in her \$6 million of cuts, and will she ensure campers have clean water in these parks this weekend?

**MLA Schmidt:** As we head out this weekend and all summer into Manitoba parks, there—here are some improvements in our parks that Manitobans can look forward to enjoying this season: the redevelopment of the Nutimik Lake museum in the Whiteshell Provincial Park; new playgrounds in Kiche Manitou and Spruce Woods and Winnipeg Beach and White Lake and Whitefish Lake.

\* (14:20)

I'm proud to say that we have completed work on water and waste-water treatment system upgrades in Asessippi and Birds Hill park and Paint Lake Provincial Park as well as a new washroom and shower facility at Bakers Narrows Provincial Park.

I can't wait to see Manitobans in our parks this summer. *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member for Riding Mountain, on a final supplementary question.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Manitobans are extremely disappointed that this NDP minister refuses to answer questions and refuses to restore the \$6 million she cut from the provincial parks.

The parks renewal strategy allocated \$1 million for St. Malo, \$1 million for Nopiming and millions

more for Hecla, Grindstone, Clearwater Lake and Camp Morton.

Will she stand up for parks at the Cabinet table, respect the consultations that were done with Manitobans and commit to fully funding the Manitoba provincial parks infrastructure renewal strategy?

**MLA Schmidt:** There are not many parts of our portfolio in Environment and Climate Change that I'm more proud of than our Parks branch.

And you know, there's a great saying that I adhere to, and that's, you know, on matters like this, you can either lead, you can follow or you can get out of the way. The opposition had their time to lead on this. They slashed the budget in Parks, they slashed positions in Parks.

So I would encourage the members opposite to either get on board or simply get out of the way.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Selkirk. *[interjection]*

Order.

#### **Private Post-Secondary Institutions Foreign Student Revenue Stream**

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** Thank your—honourable minister—Honourable Speaker, sorry. I asked several times, day after day, about regulated independently funded institutions, and day after day, I get answers about public institutions.

We need to know: Why did this minister and the NDP government take away the foreign student revenue stream from these non-publicly funded institutions and give them directly to the governmently funded institutions?

**Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training):** I thank the member for the question.

He knows very well that capping the number of international students came as a directive from the federal government. Manitobans elected our government to work for them, and that's what we did. We worked with the federal government for our fair share.

It was an unfortunate situation that we inherited, but I can guarantee that we did the very best that we could with that situation. Our department got to work immediately, came up with a system for attestation letters that allowed students to apply, that welcomed international students.

And I encourage the member to get on board with what we're doing.

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

**Mr. Perchotte:** I can appreciate that perhaps the minister did fight for their fair share of letters here.

But what they failed to do, and what they continue to fail to do, is to distribute those letters fairly. They dramatically decreased the number to nonfunded schools and gave them directly to the publicly funded schools.

Will the minister put on the record today, was that her decision or was that of the Premier's (Mr. Kinew)?

**MLA Cable:** I thank the honourable member for the question again.

And to answer the question, when determining how to implement this federal—again, federal—decision, we took a reasoned and principled approach, and it focused on public institutions and labour market needs. Because we fought for Manitoba and increased our share of provincial attestation letters, all public universities and colleges are now at near or at their 2023 levels for international student applications.

We applied the same approach equitably across all institutions, and we also allocated letters to private institutions that are training folks that we need for our labour market. So that includes pilots, early childhood educators and health-care aides. I'm happy to report we also—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

**Mr. Perchotte:** Will the minister release to the House her allotment of these attestation letters that she provided to each school separately today? What about Heartland, Booth, Providence, Robertson, Herzing, ACC, Louis Riel, A-B-C college, CDI College? What about them?

**MLA Cable:** Once again, I thank the honourable member for the question.

And I'd just like to remind him that when his colleagues on that side of the House were in government, year over year over year, they cut funding to not only public post-secondary, but K-to-12 education. Completely gutted most of our public services.

And we're in the process of rebuilding and investing.

Thank you.

### **PrEP and PEP HIV Medication Request to Remove Deductible**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** I want to begin by thanking the U of M college of medicine advocate group for meeting with us today.

Honourable Speaker, pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis, PrEP and PEP for short, are life-saving medications that can have a huge impact for communities at risk of HIV.

Manitoba has among the highest rates of HIV in the country, yet despite this, many people experience barriers to accessing this life-saving medication because of costly deductibles.

Will the Minister of Health commit today to removing the deductible for PrEP and PEP, and ensure full coverage for these medications to be available at no cost for Manitobans?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I clap for that question too. That's a really important question from the member, and I really appreciate it. I welcome that.

You know, for seven and a half long years under the previous government, Heather Stefanson, Brian Pallister, there was a lot of failed leadership across health care. But certainly the area of HIV care was an area that we saw have massive negative impacts in our province. There was no action taken whatsoever to make sure that Manitobans had access to the medications and treatments and services they need.

Our government, one of the first things we did was invest in making sure that Manitobans could get access to care in their communities. We've invested in Aboriginal Health and Wellness providing care on the front lines, and Nine Circles enhancing their care.

We're doing work right now making sure that preventative treatments are more readily available, and I look forward to giving that member an update.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a supplementary question.

### **Availability Expansion and Pharmacare Coverage**

**MLA Lamoureux:** HIV disproportionately affects at-risk communities, including vulnerable Manitobans and the 2SLGBTQ+ community. We are concerned that there are only three places in Winnipeg to access PEP and PrEP: only ERs and community-care clinics. There are even less places rurally.

How will the Minister of Health make PEP and PrEP more readily accessible across the province, and will they commit to expanding access of this important medication to all urgent-care centres, pharmacies, access centres and clinics in high-risk areas?

**MLA Asagwara:** So that's a great question.

You know, again, for seven and a half years, the previous PC government did absolutely—they did less than nothing, actually, I would say, in terms of making sure that Manitobans had access to this critical care.

Our government has taken steps to improve access to treatment and services, including investing on front lines, grassroots organizations who provide hand-to-hand care in terms of HIV.

It's important to note that one of the fastest growing demographics who are testing positive for HIV in Manitoba are Indigenous women, which is unusual and not consistent with data that we see in other jurisdictions.

And so we're taking an informed approach. We're working with Indigenous-led organizations, we're investing in improving access to services across the province in rural and northern and urban settings and we're making sure that we're listening to the experts in Manitoba—

**The Speaker:** Member's time is expired.

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

### **Barriers to Accessing HIV Services Request for Specialized Training**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Part of the issue is reducing the stigma associated with HIV and STI testing across the province. We have heard from many advocates that folks from at-risk communities feel that the jumble of referrals is a barrier for accessing life-saving HIV care.

A solution can be to increase physician awareness and training to incorporate HIV into a standard-of-care practice.

Will the Minister of Health commit to creating a care list of providers that specialize in HIV care, to ensure specific training for front-line health-care providers?

\* (14:30)

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** The answer to that is yes.

And I apologize, I actually didn't fully answer the member's second question. And I can say yes to that commitment as well. We're doing that work right now.

It is so important that primary-care providers, not just physicians, have the education and resources they need to provide the quality care that Manitobans who have HIV deserve. That's nurse practitioners as well.

Our government is doing work to make sure that doctors, nurses across the board have not only the education, but that nurses as well have the tools, by way of legislation, that will allow them to provide treatment directly to those who need it.

And so there's a lot of steps that we're taking in collaboration with experts and community front-line service providers, and I'm very happy to provide a more comprehensive update to that member after today.

#### **Potential Closure of Clear Lake to Watercraft Inspections and Decontamination Stations**

**MLA Mike Moyes (Riel):** Honourable Speaker, Clear Lake is a beloved destination for Manitobans looking to relax and an important economic hub for many small businesses. Manitobans are concerned the federal government will soon make a decision to close the lake to watercraft.

Can the Minister of Natural Resources tell the House how our government is fighting for a safe, healthy and accessible Clear Lake?

**Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources):** I thank my colleague for that really important question.

Our team leapt into action the moment we were alerted to this issue. We added half a million dollars in funding to protect our environment, increase watercraft inspection and decontamination stations. And by this weekend, those stations will be staffed and operational across the province.

I've been up to Clear Lake and had conversations with residents and small-business owners who will be impacted by the federal closure. I've spoken with the minister and urged him to support the local businesses and to take their concerns seriously.

Our government has offered full co-operation to protect the health of the lake, and once again I'm urging the federal government to listen to the Clear Lake voices.

Manitoba will do our part to protect the lake and the environment—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

#### **Highways, Parks and Schools Infrastructure Funding Concerns**

**Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte):** This minister is raising school taxes 17 per cent. He's increasing education property taxes \$148 million. He's increasing your hydro by 4 per cent when he said he would freeze it—another broken promise—and he's increasing Manitoba's debt load to the highest it's ever been in this province.

This fake gas tax will cost Manitobans \$400 million this year. He could've just stood up to Justin Trudeau like other premiers and leaders have done. Instead he's taking \$400 million out of schools, out of highways, out of education centres.

Why will this Premier (Mr. Kinew) and minister not stand up and do the right thing?

Will the minister restore funding to highways, parks and schools, yes or no?

**Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance):** Honourable Speaker, our team is proud to be doing the work of making life more affordable each and every day.

The members opposite stand up and make these kinds of comments without looking in the mirror. They made life more expensive for seven and a half years. They applied the fuel tax every single day they were in government. They increased taxes on renters. That's their record. They increased hydro rates with BITSA legislation. That's their work.

What's our work? We're making life more affordable each and every day. We started out with a fuel tax holiday. Our recent budget brought in 21—that's 21—new ways to save for Manitobans; \$1,500 homeowner—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired. *[interjection]*

Member's time has expired.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. Order. Order.

The time for oral questions has expired.

#### **PETITIONS**

##### **Hearing Aids**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:



(1) A hearing aid is a battery-powered electronic device designed to improve an individual's ability to perceive sound. Worn in or behind a person's ear, they make some sounds louder, helping people hear better when it's quiet and when it's noisy.

(2) People who suffer hearing loss, whether due to aging, illness, employment or accident, not only lose the ability to communicate effectively with friends, family or colleagues, they also can experience unemployment, social isolation and struggles with mental health.

(3) Hearing loss can also impact the safety of an individual with hearing loss, as it affects the ability to hear cars coming safely, safety alarms, call 911, et cetera.

(4) A global commission on the state of the research for dementia care and prevention released an update consensus report in July 2020, identifying 12 key risk factors for dementia and cognitive decline. The strongest risk factor that was indicated was hearing loss. It was calculated that up to eight per cent of the total number of dementia cases could potentially be avoided with management of hearing loss.

(5) Hearing aids are therefore essential to the mental health and well-being of Manitobans, especially to those at significant risk of dementia and Alzheimer's, a disorder of the brain affecting cognition in the ever-growing senior population.

(6) Audiologists are health-care professionals who help patients decide which kind of hearing aid will work best for them, based on the type of hearing loss, patient's age and ability to manage small devices, lifestyle and ability to afford.

(7) The cost of hearing aids can be prohibitive to many Manitobans, depending on their income and circumstances. Hearing aids cost on average \$995 to \$4,000 per ear, and many professionals say that hearing aids only work at their best for five years.

(8) Manitoba residents under the age of 18 who require a hearing aid, as prescribed by an 'ornagologist' or audiologist, will receive either an 80 per cent reimbursement from Manitoba Health of a fixed amount for an analog device, up to a maximum of \$500 per ear, or 80 per cent of a fixed amount for a digital or analog programmable device, up to a maximum of \$1,800. However, this reimbursement is not available to Manitobans who need the device who are over the age of 18, which will result in financial hardship for many young people entering the workforce, students and families. In addition, seniors

representing 14.3 per cent of Manitoba's population are not eligible for reimbursement, despite being the group most likely in need of hearing aids.

(9) Most insurance companies only provide a minimum partial cost of a hearing aid, and many Manitobans, especially retired persons, old-age pensioners and other low-income earners do not have access to health insurance plans.

(10) The Province of Quebec's hearing device program covers all costs related to hearing aids and assistive listening devices, including the purchase, repair and replacement.

(11) Alberta offers subsidies to all seniors 65 and over and low-income adults 18 to 64 once every five years.

(12) New Brunswick provides coverage for the purchase and maintenance not covered by other agencies or private health insurance plans, as well as assistance for those whom the purchase would cause financial hardship.

(13) Manitobans over age 18 are only eligible for support for hearing aids if they are receiving Employment and Income Assistance, and the reimbursement only provides a maximum of \$500 an ear.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to consider hearing loss as a medical treatment under Manitoba Health, and

(2) To urge the provincial government to provide income-based coverage for hearing aids to all who need them, as hearing has been proven to be essential to Manitobans' cognitive, mental and social health and well-being.

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

### **MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility**

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** 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:

Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Portage regional health facility is well under way.

\* (14:40)

The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

An MRI machine is a non-invasive medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and computer-generated radio waves to create detailed images of organs and tissues in the human body. It is used for disease detection, diagnosis and treatment monitoring.

Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on the No. 1 Highway in Southern Health/Santé Sud Health Authority. Currently there is only one MRI machine in the RHA.

An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will reduce transportation costs for patients as well as reduce the burden on stretcher service and ambulance use. It will bring care closer to home and reduce wait times for MRI scans across the province.

(5) Located around Portage la Prairie are the Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay and Long Plains First Nations reserves. Indigenous peoples in Canada disproportionately face barriers in access to services and medical care. An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will bring care closer to their home communities and provide greater access to diagnostic testing.

(6) Located in the close proximity to the new Portage regional health facility is the Southport airport. This aerodrome has a runway length that is more than adequate to support medical air ambulance services. This would provide the opportunity to transport patients by air from more remote communities to access MRI imaging services.

(7) The average wait times for Manitobans to receive an MRI scan is currently six to eight months. Having an MRI machine in the Portage regional health facility will help reduce these wait times for patients and provide better care sooner.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and placement of an MRI machine in the Portage regional health facility in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans: Ken O'Donnell, Sherry Francis, Danielle Carefoot and many, many more Manitobans.

### **Provincial Trunk Highway 2**

**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:

(1) Provincial Trunk Highway 2, PTH 2, is a 315-kilometre, 196-mile highway that runs from the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border to Winnipeg's Perimeter Highway.

(2) A significant portion of PTH 2 runs through the constituency of Spruce Woods, from the border of the rural municipality of Pipestone and the rural municipality of Sifton to the border of the rural municipality of Victoria and the rural municipality of Norfolk-Treherne.

(3) This route is historically significant, as it follows the original path taken in 1874 by the North West Mounted Police in their march west from Fort Dufferin to Fort Whoop-Up.

(4) PTH 2 is a significant commuting route for Westman families and is also utilized by those in the trade, commerce, tourism, agriculture and agri-food industries.

(5) The 'contition'—condition of PTH 2, from the east side of the town of Souris straight through to the hamlet of Deleau, is in an unacceptable state of disrepair.

(6) The newly appointed Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure has confirmed the department has no plan to refurbish this stretch of road until the 2028 or 2029 construction season.

(7) The minister outlined that the current 2028-2029 construction plan does not include the stretch of PTH 2 that runs through the town of Souris, but instead starts on the west side of town.

(8) The communities in the area have been clear that any reconstruction of PTH 2 must include the stretch that runs through the town of Souris.

(9) The minister and the Premier have a duty to respond to infrastructure needs identified by rural communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to immediately prioritize the reconstruction of Provincial Trunk Highway 2 in the upcoming construction season; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to include the stretch of Provincial Trunk Highway 2 that runs through the town of Souris in its reconstruction plans.

This petition has been signed by Gail Williamson, Disha Patel, Lucero Aliuni [*phonetic*] and many, many, many more Manitobans.

### Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(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.

\* (14:50)

(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 the 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—with that—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, Honourable Speaker, is signed by Bruce Stuhlmueler, Robbie Wirth and Lauren Leahe [*phonetic*] and many other fine Manitobans.

### Child Welfare System—Call for Inquiry

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

To the background—the background to this petition is as follows:

On Sunday, February 11, 2024, Manitobans witnessed an unimaginable tragedy when five individuals were murdered.

The victims ranged in ages from two months to 30 years.

Manitoba has the second highest rate of intimate partner violence among Canadian provinces, at a rate of 633 per 100,000 people, according to police-reported data from Statistics Canada.

Public reporting indicates that on December 9, 2023, Myah-Lee left a voicemail for her Child and Family Services worker in which she pleaded to be moved out of her home in Carman.

Manitoba's Advocate for Children and Youth noted: This case highlights the failures of the government to respond to our recommendations.

On March 6, 2024, the Minister of Families, the MLA for St. Johns, indicated on the public record that she was too busy to discuss issues surrounding children in care, including calling a public inquiry into this unprecedented tragedy.

The last inquiry held in Manitoba was for the death of five-year-old Phoenix Sinclair in 2008.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Families to develop better policies to protect youth in care for potential physical or psychological abuse.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately establish a public inquiry to identify the failing of the child-welfare system and ensure that no call from a child ever goes unanswered or ignored again.

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

### Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** 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:

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.

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.

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 the 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 the natural—that natural gas heating, one of the most affordable options available to Manitobans, and it can be cost prohibitive for households to replace their heating source; and

(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; and

(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.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

### Child Welfare System—Call for Inquiry

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** 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:

On Sunday, February 11, 2024, Manitoba witnessed an unimaginable tragedy when five individuals were murdered. The victims ranged in age from two months to 30 years.

Manitoba has the second highest rate of intimate partner violence among Canadian provinces, at a rate of 633 per 100,000 people, according to police-reported data from Statistics Canada.

Public reporting indicates that on December 9, 2023, Myah-Lee left a voice mail for her Child and Family Services worker in which he pleaded to be moved out of her home in Carman.

Manitoba's Advocate for Children and Youth noted: This case highlights the failures of the government to respond to our recommendations.

On March 6, 2024, the Minister of Families, the MLA for St. Johns, indicated on the public record that she was too busy to discuss issues surrounding children in care, including calling a public inquiry into this unprecedented tragedy.

The last inquiry held in Manitoba was for the death of five-year-old Phoenix Sinclair in 2008.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Families to develop better policies to protect youth in care from potential physical and psychological abuse.

Second, to urge the provincial government to immediately establish a public inquiry to identify the failing of the child-welfare system to ensure that no call from a child ever goes unanswered or ignored again.

This petition is signed by Patricia Pellard [*phonetic*], Joel Tourond, Candice Narth and many, many other Manitobans.

\* (15:00)

### Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(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.

Manitoba—No. 2—Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with high-efficiency furnace, the carbon tax is costing the average family over \$200 annually, even more for those with older furnaces.

(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 the 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 that 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 has been signed by Harlan Perchotte, Kolten Courtney, Todd Riznek and many, many, many others.

### Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) In 2022, according to Statistics Canada, there was an 11.4 per cent increase in food prices.

(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 agri-food sectors contribute close to 10 per cent 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 18 cents 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 holiday until the opposition critic and local stakeholder groups called for their inclusion.

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

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 costs of putting food on the table for Manitoba consumers.

This petition has been signed by many, many, many Manitobans.

### Medical Assistance in Dying

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

These are the reasons for the 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 ages 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.

(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; 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 Rose Bouchard, Yvette Bouchard, Irene Rioux and many other concerned Manitobans.

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

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.

\* (15:10)

(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 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.

This petition has been signed by Eva Krahn, David Betker and Helen Neufeld, along with many, many other Manitobans.

**Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Turtle Mountain):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Beginning on 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 ages of 10 and 19.

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

(4) Legal and mental—medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would determine suicide prevention efforts at the risk of 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 the—protect the life, liberty and security to all its citizens.

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

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

(8) The federal government would focus—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 assisted in dying for those who—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 in facilitating treatment, recovery and mental assistance in living, not death.

These are signed by people like Jeanne La Rivière, Ginette Roy and Georges Gobeil.

**The Speaker:** No further petitions? Grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

*(Continued)*

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

#### House Business

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** Finally. Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

I would like to announce a change to the matters under consideration for the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development meeting on Monday, May 13, 2024 at 6 p.m.

The Committee will now consider the following bills: Bill 5, The Adult Literacy Act; Bill 10, the advanced education administration act—administration amendment act; Bill 17, the workplace and health amendment act; Bill 18, The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act; Bill 202, the community foundation day commemoration act, commemoration of days, weeks, months acts amended.

And I would also like to announce that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Monday, May 13, 2024 at 6 p.m. to consider Bill 13, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act; Bill 22, the—a—The Celebration of Nigerian Independence Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended); and Bill 23, The Change of Name Amendment Act (2).

**The Speaker:** It has been announced that there's been a change to the matters under consideration for the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development meeting on Monday, May 13, 2024, at 6 p.m.

The committee will now consider the following bills: Bill 5, The Adult Literacy Act; Bill 10, The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act; Bill 17, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act; Bill 18, The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act; Bill 202, The Community Foundation Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

Also, it's been announced that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Monday, May 13, 2024, at 6 p.m. to consider Bill 13, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act; Bill 22, The Celebration of Nigerian Independence Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended); and Bill 23, The Change of Name Amendment Act (2).

\* \* \*

**MLA Fontaine:** Can you please call the continuation of second reading debate of Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended), as well as call second reading of Bill 31, The Captured Carbon Storage Act, and followed by second reading of Bill 29, The Body Armour and Fortified Vehicle Control Amendment Act.

**The Speaker:** It's been announced that we will now resume debate on second reading of Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended), followed by second reading of Bill 31, The Captured Carbon Storage Act, followed by Bill 29, The Body Armour and Fortified Vehicle Control Amendment Act.

#### DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

##### Bill 30—The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended)

**The Speaker:** We will now resume debate on the reasoned amendment to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, criminal forfeiture act, corporations act amended, standing in the name of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain, who has eight minutes remaining. *[interjection]*

I'll resume debate on the reasoned amendment to the second reading motion of Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, criminal property forfeiture act, corporations act amended, standing in the name of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain, who has eight minutes remaining.

**Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Turtle Mountain):** I'm so honoured to be up here a few times today. I'm talking about first a petition and now a resolution and continuing with the debate on reasonable amendment for Bill 30.

And, like I said, from yesterday, I'd just like to, you know, when it comes to this bill, Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture

Act and Corporations Act Amended), and it's important that, you know, again, when I talked yesterday, it was about the bill that we put forward. I believe it was bill 58, talked about the same content, basically, that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) has put forward.

And like I said before, yesterday, I—just going to—sort of summarize of what I sort of said because now we're in a different day here.

So, anyways, I just want to say, like, you know, that—like, again, I'm—the minister, he had many years in opposition to come up with some really good legislature, especially when, you know, changing times when it comes to the technology, with cryptocurrency.

\* (15:20)

This is very important that other stuff like this, more important stuff with the crime increasing, especially when businesses in the Osborne Village area is shutting down because of the crime. It's too—it's very concerning to a lot of residents and to businesspeople that are doing business in downtown Winnipeg.

And what I'm saying right now is that this amendment act, I know it does cover for—when it comes to the bill itself, Bill 30, about—like, when it comes to forfeiture, especially when it could also talk about cryptocurrency, we—you know, actually, in my constituency, they're actually building a—basically, a cryptocurrency—I forget what they call it when they use a lot of power to create cryptocurrency.

It's called—*[interjection]*—data mining, yes. So there's actually one, actually, being constructed right now in my constituency.

So it's important that the importance of making sure that if criminals are using this, basically, cryptocurrencies for prospering in the illegal drug business, we want to make sure that Manitobans are being looked after and making sure that they're covered for any crimes that are going to be, again, with seizure of drugs, that we want to make sure our police officers, like the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen), who was a retired police chief, all the work he has done and what—the conversations we've had over the last few months here since he's become my colleague, it's important that we can always go to him.

That's why I think in our side we have such a diversity of people from all walks of life to talk about these issues and the importance of how these bills come forward from the Minister of Justice. And what's—the thing was, he did have many years in opposition to come up with some good legislature, but all he did



was copy what we've actually put forward on bill 58 to talk about—and just added a few little things here and then feels like he accomplished so much by putting this bill forward on Bill 30.

So this is why, Honourable Speaker, that's why we're doing a reasonable amendment to the bill, because we feel that there's a lot more legislation out there that the—so that's why we need to make sure that when it comes to why this side of the House are wanting to do a reasonable amendment because the fact is we feel that there could have been better legislation brought forward by this minister.

*Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

And we want to make sure that we are putting—put some information out there that will benefit and protect Manitoba public when it comes to crime and making sure that what we did in the past, making sure that any criminal—you know, if there's vehicles that are purchased, if there's property that was purchased in these—with these criminals, that we are able to forfeit a lot of that money so that when they are caught and they are being prosecuted, that forfeiture of these assets that the organized crime—a lot of times it's gangs and it could be organized criminals that—part of bike gangs and stuff—this gives us the opportunity to forfeiture. And we did that legislation back in the days where a lot of my colleagues that are—that I had worked so greatly with and was able to bring a lot of these bills forward.

But, like I said, this Bill 30 is basically a copy. And we had such a good legislation back in 2021, and even BC, again, had copy it and wanted to make sure that—they used a lot of our content to make sure that their citizens are protected and forfeitures of—because there's a lot of crime that happens.

And like I said yesterday, I just want to summarize, that one of our friend's neighbours' house was raided because one of our friend's neighbours down the street, their house was raided by the police, understanding that there was possibly organized crime. It does happen in many different prominent areas of any place in the cities of our country, our province.

And I think it's very important that we address all these concerns and all this organized crime. And this is the time that we have to make sure that if we're going to be putting legislation forward in this House, the minister has to bring better and improved to really change with the times to make sure that our Manitoba public is protected.

We're seeing crime expanding in rural areas right now, and a lot of times we have criminals who go to cottage country, now. And when there's a lot of temporary residents there, they're breaking into—taking propane tanks.

And that propane tank is used—lot of these propane tanks are used to help with the manufacturing of crystal meth by organized crime, by criminals who are profiting in selling of this really addictive drug, crystal meth, that a lot of our youth are actually exposed to. And it's very scary out there.

And so this is why we've—with all the stuff that's happening right now, I really thought that this minister would bring better legislation that would really combat a lot of the crime that's—what's happened right now, not just in our rural areas, but in the cities, the inner 'city'—city of this province. And like I said, a lot of businesses are starting to close down in downtown Winnipeg, and that's very concerning to our—this side of the House.

And the fact is, you know, what—we have to be there to protect the public, to making sure that we prosper when—in downtown Winnipeg. With new businesses coming down, we've actually been affected by COVID, and a lot of the people are not coming back to downtown to work. I know there's been a lot of companies mandating that people come back—their employees come back—to downtown, the importance of revitalizing the downtown.

Hopefully, the development of bringing more people to live downtown would make it safety in numbers. When you have more people on the streets doing their daily life, living, when it comes to shopping, going to the—to—out for walks, we want more people to be exposed to our downtown area so that, again, when major centres—like, when you go to New York, there's safety in numbers. And I like to see that this government addresses the downtown, especially downtown Winnipeg, because Winnipeg—downtown Winnipeg—can be so vulnerable.

Thank you, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

**MLA Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail):** Good afternoon, Honourable Deputy Speaker. I'd like to start by thanking my colleague, the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), for bringing forward the amendment to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act.

I would also like to thank the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), for bringing this bill before the House,

so there is an opportunity for us to speak to the previous legislation, once again, that was passed by the PC government, and the importance of it.

This also gives me an opportunity, once again, to try practising my French, so please bear with me.

Bonjour, Honorable Président. J'aimerais d'abord remercier mon collègue, le député d'Interlake-Gimli (M. Johnson), d'avoir proposé la modification au Projet de loi 30 sur la richesse inexpliquée. Je tiens également à remercier le Ministre de la Justice et Procureur général – le député de Concordia (M. Wiebe) – d'avoir présenté ce projet de loi à la Chambre, afin que nous puissions parler des lois antérieures adoptées par le gouvernement progressif – 'conversateur' et de son importance.

### **Translation**

*Good afternoon, Honourable Speaker. I would like to begin by thanking my colleague, the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), for proposing the amendment to Bill 30 on unexplained wealth. I would also like to thank the Minister of Justice and Attorney General—the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe)—for bringing this bill before the House, so that we can talk about the previous legislation passed by the Progressive Conservative government and its importance.*

### **English**

The reason we are here today is because there are very important questions that were raised multiple times in this House, and no answers were provided by the Minister of Justice, the member for Concordia. It is important and it is part of our job as the opposition to review the effectiveness of previous legislation before endorsing the enactment of any bill.

Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, as I understand it, will give law enforcement, so our police officers and RCMP officers, the criminal property 'forchichures' office and the regulatory enforcement agencies, tools that will help build stronger cases against assets used in organized crime, drug trafficking and money laundering, using these unexplained wealth orders.

Si nous sommes ici aujourd'hui, c'est parce que des questions très importantes ont été soulevées à maintes – à maintes – scuse – à maintes reprises – à 'maintes' reprises – à la Chambre, et que le ministre à la Justice – le député de Concordia – n'a pas répondu.

\* (15:30)

Il est vraiment important, et ça la fait partie de notre travail en tant qu'opposition d'examiner les faits cités des lois antérieures avant d'approuver l'adoption d'un projet de loi.

Le Projet de loi 30, la Loi sur les richesses inexpliquées, si je comprends bien, donnera aux organismes d'application de la loi, donc nos policiers et nos agents de la GRC, au Bureau de confiscation des biens obtenus ou utilisés et organismes d'application de la réglementation, des outils qui aideront à monter des dossiers solides contre des biens utilisés dans le crime organisé, le trafic de drogue et le blanchiment d'argent, en utilisant cette ordonnance pour les richesses inexpliquées.

### **Translation**

*We are here today because very important questions have been raised repeatedly in the House, and the Minister of Justice—the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe)—has not responded.*

*It is important, and it is part of our job as the opposition, to examine the facts cited in previous legislation before approving the adoption of a bill.*

*Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, as I understand it, will give law enforcement agencies, so our police and RCMP officers, the Criminal Property Forfeiture Office and regulatory agencies, tools that will help build strong cases against assets used in organized crime, drug trafficking and money laundering, using these unexplained wealth orders.*

### **English**

We all know how vital it is to work all together collectively to support any and all efforts that are being made to deal with the unlawful wealth in our province and support the efforts being made to manage organized crime in our province.

The former PC government took great steps and strides to combat money laundering in Manitoba. When those steps were taken, the former government was amongst leaders in the country that were taking significant action against organized crime.

Now that Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, is before the House, it definitely served as a reminder for everyone of the great work the former PC government did against organized crime. In 2021, the PC government actually passed legislative changes that strengthened the ability for the criminal property 'fortiture' unit to quickly act on securing money that investigators believed to be illegally acquired and could be subject to money laundering.

Nous savons toutes à quel point il est essentiel de travailler ensemble pour appuyer tous les efforts déployés pour lutter contre la richesse illégale dans notre province et pour souhaiter les efforts déployés pour gérer le crime organisé dans notre province.

L'ancien gouvernement 'progressant' conservateur a pris de grandes mesures et a fait des grands progrès pour lutter contre le blanchiment d'argent au Manitoba. Lorsque ces mesures ont été prises, l'ancien gouvernement faisait partie des dirigeants du pays qui prenaient des mesures importantes contre le crime organisé.

Maintenant que le Projet de loi 30, Loi sur les richesses inexplicables, est à l'étude, il y a certainement rappelé à tout le monde l'excellent travail accompli que l'ancien gouvernement 'progressant' conservateur a accompli contre le crime organisé.

En 2021, le gouvernement conservateur a fait adopter des modifications législatives qui ont renforcé la capacité de l'unité de confiscation criminellement à agir rapidement pour sécuriser l'argent que les enquêteurs croyaient avoir été accueillis illégalement et pourrait faire l'objet de blanchiment d'argent.

### **Translation**

*We all know how essential it is to work together to support all efforts to fight illegal wealth in our province and to support efforts to manage organized crime in our province.*

*The former Progressive Conservative government took great steps and made great strides to combat money laundering in Manitoba. When these measures were taken, the former government was among the leaders in the country taking significant action against organized crime.*

*Now that Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, is under consideration, it has certainly reminded everyone of the great work the former progressive Conservative government did against organized crime.*

*In 2021, the Conservative government pushed through legislative changes that strengthened the ability of the Criminal Asset Forfeiture Unit to act quickly to secure money that investigators believed had been illegally collected and could be subject to money laundering.*

### **English**

Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, also serves as a reminder to folks of the changes the PC government made in 2022. The former PC government expanded staffing capacity within the criminal property

'fortiture' unit, also known as the C-F-P, to combat money laundering. Two investigators and a financial analyst—and a financial analyst joined the unit and were hired specifically to target organized crime.

The millions of dollars that get seized and go into the Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund from these organized crime rings were then distributed to different agencies and various different initiatives. One of those initiatives that received funds was, and I remind the Chamber as I've stated before, the Bear Clan Patrol and also to law enforcement agencies, victim service organizations and services, community safety groups and rural charities.

Le Projet de loi 30, Loi sur les richesses inexplicables, sert également à rappeler à toutes les gens de la Chambre—apporte—apporté par le gouvernement conservateur en 2022.

En 2022, l'ancien gouvernement conservateur a augmenté la capacité de donation et personnel de l'unité de confiscation des biens obtenus ou utilisés criminellement, également connue sous le nom de CPAP.

Pour lutter contre le blanchiment d'argent, deux enquêteurs et un analyste financier se sont joints à l'unité et ont été embauchés pour cibler spécifiquement le crime organisé. Les millions de dollars qui sont saisis et versés au fonds de confiscation des biens obtenus ou utilisés criminellement par ces réseaux du crime organisé ont ensuite été distribués à différentes 'organises' et diverses initiatives—initiatives—initiative. L'une de ces initiatives qui a reçu des fonds était la patrouille du Clan de l'ours, et aussi organismes d'application de la loi, les organisations et les services de services aux victimes, les groupes de sécurité communautaire et les organismes de bénéfice rural.

### **Translation**

*Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, also serves to remind everyone in the House that is brought in by the Conservative government in 2022.*

*In 2022, the former Conservative government increased the donation and personnel capacity of the Criminal Property Forfeiture Unit.*

*To combat money laundering, two investigators and a financial analyst joined the unit and were hired to specifically target organized crime. The millions of dollars that are seized and paid into the fund for the forfeiture of assets obtained or criminally used by these organized crime networks have then been distributed to various organizations and initiatives.*

*One such initiative that received funding was the Bear Clan Patrol, and also law enforcement agencies, victim services organizations and services, community safety groups and rural benefit organizations.*

**English**

I do recall not too long ago that British Columbia brought forward amendments to their Civil Forfeiture Act to allow the province to pursue ill-gotten gains more efficiently. The amendments they made would compel people to explain how the wealth was acquired, whether there were any sort of suspicious–suspicions about criminal activity. BC would then redirect the funds to crime prevention and community safety initiatives.

And I do also recall when British Columbia announced their new law in March of 2023 that their Attorney General made a comment about a similar piece of legislation that was already in place in Manitoba. And this has been mentioned several times in the Chamber already.

\* (15:40)

Je me souviens, il n'y a pas si longtemps, que la Colombie-Britannique a adopté des modifications à sa Civil Forfeiture Act pour permettre à la province de poursuivre plus 'effacement' les gains mal accueillis.

Les amendements qu'ils ont apportés obligerait les gens à expliquer comment la richesse a été acquise chaque fois qu'il y a des soupçons d'activité criminelle. La Colombie-Britannique redirigerait ensuite les fonds vers des 'inistav' de prévention du crime et de la sécurité communautaire.

Et je me souviens également que, lorsque la Colombie-Britannique a annoncé sa nouvelle loi en mars 2023, son procureur général a fait un 'communautaire' – commentaire au sujet d'une loi similaire qui était déjà en place au Manitoba.

**Translation**

*I also remember, not so long ago, that British Columbia passed amendments to its Civil Forfeiture Act to enable the province to more effectively pursue ill-gotten gains.*

*The amendments they made would require people to explain how wealth was acquired whenever there was the slightest suspicion of criminal activity. British Columbia would then redirect the funds to crime prevention and community safety initiatives.*

*And I recall that, when British Columbia announced its new legislation in March 2023, the BC Attorney*

*General commented on similar legislation already in place in Manitoba.*

**English**

Honourable Speaker, organized crime prevention has been a priority for everyone in our province for many years. Organized crime is incredibly difficult to control. Operations by criminals have completely transformed in the ways that make it substantially harder for law enforcement to define and to combat the great risks they pose.

Organized crime has always had vast consequences for our society. Today, organized crime has significantly more impact on society and is much more far-reaching than before. We now live in a world where organized crime has morphed and adapted to the digital age, making the webs of organized crime much more intricately weaved together.

Honorable Président, la prévention du crime organisé est une pré – pré-auto – priorité pour tous les habitants de notre province depuis de nombreuses années. Le crime organisé est incroyablement difficile à contrôler. Les opérations des criminels se sont complètement transformées, de sorte qui est considéré – considérablement plus difficile pour les forces de l'ordre de définir – de définir et de 'combattre' – combattre les grands risques qu'elles représentent.

Le crime organisé a toujours eu de vastes conséquences sur notre société. Aujourd'hui, le crime organisé a un impact bien important sur notre société et sa portée est bien plus grande qu'avant. Nous vivons désormais dans un monde où le crime organisé s'est transformé et s'adapte à l'ère numérique en rendant les réseaux du crime organisé beaucoup plus complexes.

**Translation**

*Honourable Speaker, organized crime prevention has been a priority for everyone in our province for many years. Organized crime is incredibly difficult to control. Operations by criminals have completely transformed, making it considerably more difficult for law enforcement to define and to combat the great risks they pose.*

*Organized crime has always had vast consequences for our society. Today, organized crime is having a great impact on our society, and the scope of this impact is greater than before. We now live in a world where organized crime has transformed and adapted to the digital age, making organized crime networks much more complex.*

**English**

The consequence of organized crime to our society affects everything. There are environmental impacts that would include wildlife trafficking, illegal toxic waste dumping. There are health risks, the risks that counterfeit drugs pose to the public health. There are endless societal disruptions, families suffering immensely when loved ones fall victim to addiction or exploitation. The corruption that infiltrates so many institutions. The destabilization that is caused in regions with very heavy crime and on our communities where crime thrives.

These are just some of the many detrimental consequences of organized crime. And as the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Piwniuk) mentioned, it's even in our own backyard in Osborne Village.

The amendment to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, is before the House because the legislation that brought forward in Bill 30 by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) does exist today.

There have been numerous questions asked to the Minister of the—of Justice and answers have been provided, but there has been no clear, precise answers given to show that Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, is different from the previous legislation that passed from the legislation that already exists.

Les conséquences du crime organisé sur notre société affectent tout. Il existe des impacts environnementaux qui incluent le trafic d'espèces sauvages et le déversement illégal de déchets toxiques. Il y a les risques sanitaires, les risques que les médicaments contrefaits font peser sur la santé du public.

Les perturbations sociales sont sans fin : les familles souffrant 'anormant' lorsque leurs proches sont victimes de 'dépense' ou d'exploitation, la corruption qui infiltre dans des institutions, la déstabilisation provoquée dans les régions à très forte criminalité et dans les communautés où la criminalité prospère. Ce ne sont que là – ce ne sont que là que quelques unes des nombreuses conséquences néfastes du crime organisé.

L'amendement au Projet de loi 30, Loi sur les richesses inexpliquées, est devant la Chambre parce que la législation présentée dans le projet de 30 par le Ministre de la Justice (M. Wiebe) existe aujourd'hui.

De nombreuses questions ont été posées au ministre de la Justice et des réponses ont été apportées. Mais aucune réponse claire et précise n'a

été donnée pour démontrer que le Projet de loi 30, Loi sur les richesses inexpliquées, est différent de la législation précédente qui a été adoptée, de la législation qui existait déjà aujourd'hui.

**Translation**

*The consequences of organized crime on our society affect everything. There are environmental impacts that include wildlife trafficking and illegal dumping of toxic waste. There are health risks, such as those posed by counterfeit medicines.*

*Societal disruptions are endless: families who suffer immensely when their loved ones fall victim to addiction or exploitation, the corruption that infiltrates so many institutions, the destabilization caused in high-crime regions and communities where crime thrives—these are just some of the consequences of organized crime.*

*The amendment to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, is before the House because the legislation introduced in Bill 30 by the Minister of Justice already exists today.*

*Many questions have been put to the Minister of Justice, and answers have been given. But no clear and precise answer has been given to demonstrate that Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, is different from the previous legislation that was passed—from the legislation that already existed today.*

**English**

I would hope that the amendment brought forward by my colleague, the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, is going to get us all—all Manitobans—some clear answers.

The key question that has been asked to help us understand the differences between Bill 30 and the legislation that exists today is, how will Bill 30 change what is done under our previous PC government?

J'espère que l'amendement proposé par mon collègue, le député d'Interlake-Gimli (M. Johnson), au Projet de loi 30, Loi sur les richesses inexpliquées, nous apportons à tous – à tous les Manitobains – des réponses claires.

Une question qui a été posée pour nous aider à comprendre la différence entre le Projet de loi 30 et la législation en vigueur aujourd'hui est de savoir comment le Projet de loi 30 changera-t-il ce qui a fait sous le gouvernement conservateur précédé?

**Translation**

*I hope that the amendment proposed by my colleague, the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, provides all of us—all Manitobans—with clear answers.*

*One question that was asked to help us understand the difference between Bill 30 and the legislation in effect today is how will Bill 30 change what was done under the previous Conservative government?*

**English**

We all know by now that legislation was put forward by the former PC government to help deal with 'mundering'—money laundering and unexplained wealth. I went into the history of that above, and I shared the great legislation that was put forward years ago.

My colleague, the honourable member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), also asked questions regarding this. The member from Steinbach questioned, and I quote once again: The Cullen Commission sort of did recommend things around the unexplained wealth and money laundering. And in fact, the government brought in legislation specifically around unexplained wealth. And, in fact, the member might remember, because it was before the House a couple years ago and I don't remember if he supported it, but he certainly was aware of it. So now he's suggesting that this is a result of the Cullen Commission, yet the legislation was passed in this House regarding that. Why is he doing something that has already been done? And that is a very valid question.

\* (15:50)

The member for Steinbach then went on to say, and again, I quote: But I'll try again for him. There's already been before the court orders under the criminal property 'fortune' act that deal with unexplained wealth. If he wants the legislation to pass quickly, he needs to explain why this is different than the powers that already exist within the branch.

We still do not have a clear answer, and that is why we are still debating it—to that question, which again, is the reason the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson) brought forward this amendment.

Nous n'avons toujours pas de réponse claire – nous n'avons toujours pas de réponse claire à cette question. Ce qui, encore une fois, a été – est la raison pour laquelle le député d'Interlake-Gimli (M. Johnson) a présenté cet amendement.

**Translation**

*We still do not have a clear answer to this question—which, again, is why the member for Interlake-Gimli has tabled this amendment.*

**English**

Us folks sitting on this side of the House are very grateful to have an incredible array of experience and knowledge, as mentioned by my colleagues, in all different fields. We do value in all knowledge that is shared with us when we get the opportunity to work with or chat to someone that we can learn from.

We on this side of the House are incredibly grateful that we have the member for Steinbach and, again, the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) to have conversations with and listen to when bills like Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, are brought forward.

The member of Steinbach, just to refresh the House's memory, served as the minister of Justice for some time. And in that role, he sat down with countless individuals, organizations and community groups that had been heavily involved in dealing with all aspects of crime: those who worked the front lines to stop criminals, those that investigate criminal activity and all those—also those who deal with criminals in the system, the rehabilitation or—criminals and those who have fallen victim to certain types of crimes and criminals.

The member for Brandon West, once again, shadow minister for the just—for Justice, as a former chief of police, brings a wealth of experience to all of us in this Chamber, as he served our province for many years on the front lines of crime. The member for Brandon West is very familiar with the Criminal Property Forfeiture Unit, as he has stated, and has great relationships with them and their investigators.

Nous, les gens assis de ça – nous, les gens assis de ce côté-ci de la Chambre, sommes très reconnaissants d'avoir un inventaire incroyable d'expériences et de connaissances dans tous les domaines.

Nous valorisons toutes les connaissances qui nous sont partagées avec nous lorsque nous avons l'opportunité de travailler ou discuter avec quelqu'un dont nous pouvons apprendre. Nous, de ce côté-ci de la Chambre, sommes incroyablement reconnaissants d'avoir le député de Steinbach (M. Goertzen) et le député de Brandon West (M. Balcaen) avec qui discuter et écouter lorsque des projets de loi comme le

Projet de loi 30 sur les richesses inexplicées, sont présentés.

Le député de Steinbach a été ministre de la Justice pendant un certain temps, et à ce titre, il a reconnu – rencontré d'innombrables personnes, organisations et groupes de communautaires qui ont été fortement impliqués dans la lutte contre tous les aspects contre la criminalité – ceux qui travaillent en première ligne pour arrêter les criminels, ce qui 'écantement' sur les activités criminelles, ainsi que ceux qui s'occupent des criminels dans le système de la réhabilitation des criminels et de ceux qui ont été victimes de certains types de crimes et de criminels.

Le député de Brandon West, ministre fantôme de la justice, en tant qu'ancien chef de la police, nous apporte à tous dans cette chambre une riche expérience, puisqu'il a servi notre province pendant de nombreuses années aux premières lignes de la lutte contre la criminalité. Le député de Brandon West connaît très bien l'unité de confiscation des biens criminels, comme il a déclaré, et entretient d'excellentes relations avec elle et ses enquêteurs.

#### **Translation**

*We, the people sitting on this side of the House, are very grateful to have an incredible inventory of experience and knowledge in all fields.*

*We value all the knowledge that is shared with us when we have the opportunity to work or talk with someone we can learn from. We on this side of the House are incredibly grateful to have the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) and the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) to discuss and listen to when bills like Bill 30, unexplained wealth, are introduced.*

*The member for Steinbach was minister of Justice for a time, and in that capacity he met countless individuals, organizations and community groups who were heavily involved in the fight against all aspects of crime—those who work on the front lines to arrest criminals, those who investigate criminal activity, as well as those who deal with criminals in the criminal rehabilitation system and those who have been victims of certain types of crime and criminals.*

*The member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen), shadow minister of Justice, as former chief of police, brings a wealth of experience to all of us in this Chamber, having served our province for many years on the front lines of the fight against crime. The member for Brandon West knows the Criminal Asset Forfeiture*

*Unit very well, as he stated, and has excellent relations with it and its investigators.*

#### **English**

The question that was asked by the member for Brandon West during the reading of Bill 30 before the amendment, The Unexplained Wealth Act, was, and I quote: My question on this is reality, and so many—as so many questions is. If we're increasing Criminal Property Forfeiture and the workload that they will be doing, obviously, The Unexplained Wealth Act is something new. The Corporations Act is something new.

Why has the Justice Minister cut the funding to The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act unit? There are concerns with the lack of answers being provided by the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), the Minister of Justice, and that is why we brought forward this amendment to Bill 30.

Le manque de réponse fournie par le député de Concordia, Ministre de la Justice (M. Wiebe), suscite des inquiétudes –

#### **Translation**

*The lack of response from the member for Concordia, the Minister of Justice, raises concerns—*

**The Deputy Speaker:** And the member's time has expired.

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** On a point of order, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

#### **Point of Order**

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Justice, on a point of order.

**Mr. Wiebe:** I just—I recognize that many members opposite, while we did have an opportunity to table letters in the Legislature earlier today that wouldn't have been available for the debate today, this afternoon. These are letters from the Winnipeg Police Association, the Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police and the National Police Federation, all urging members to stop with the political games, to get on board to pass Bill 30 as soon as possible.

This would probably help inform some of the debate this afternoon, and I hope members opposite will directly address the law enforcement that are paying attention to the debate today.

So I just wanted to table these documents for members opposite's benefit, and I hope to hear some

useful comments about how they refuse to stand with law enforcement and refuse to pass this bill here in the Legislature.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** Yes. Obviously, this is not a point of order. The member knows that.

The legislation is identical to what's there, and it's already enacted. And we are having fulsome discussion until the questions of our—the best Justice minister here, Kelvin Goertzen, former Justice minister—until those questions are answered—*[interjection]*—oh, sorry. Retract that. Let me retract that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. Johnson:** I think I accidentally said the member's name. I meant the member from Steinbach, so I apologize about that.

But still, this is not a point of order. It's just grandstanding on the member and using a point of order to table documents.

**The Deputy Speaker:** So that was, in fact, not a point of order, but there has been practice in the past where members have been allowed to use a point of order to table documents.

\* (16:00)

But I will say, it's not encouraged.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte):** Thank you very much to my colleagues there and thank you very much, Honourable Deputy Speaker. It's an honour to rise and talk to this amendment that's brought forward, a very important reasoned amendment.

And I'm glad that the Minister of Justice—the current Minister of Justice—is listening to this and he'll pay attention to what we're actually saying on this side of the House. I know the minister just stood up and talked about a point of order in regards to this and the Honourable Deputy Chair just ruled it was not a point of order.

As the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), you think you would know what a point of order is. I think it's logical to assume that when a minister of Justice stands up to call a point of order on the amendment we're speaking about, that it's very relevant to what we're speaking about.

I can hear members opposite yelling, relevance. It just goes to show the lack of understanding on what's happening on that side of the House. I'm speaking to a point of order that the Minister of Justice called on this reasoned amendment. I could not be speaking about something more clearly than what this reasoned amendment is. That is plain and simple. And they want to heckle, relevance, relevance, relevance.

The reasoned amendment for Bill 30 is that the motion to be amended by deleting all the words after the word that, and substitute the following, Honourable Deputy Speaker: The House declines to give second reading to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended), because this House has not received satisfactory evidence or assurance that this bill is different to the existing legislation that was brought forward and passed in the House 2021.

Now why do I read that, and I really hope the Minister of Justice actually listens to what I'm saying here and he maybe can take two minutes out of his busy day and just focus on this terms here. That the bill is different—that the House has not received satisfactory evidence or assurance that the bill is different to the existing legislation that was brought forward and passed in 2021.

So any rational human being, any rational Manitoban, Minister of Justice, would say, okay, they're simply saying that we need to have satisfactory evidence or assurances that the bill is different. It's not very hard. I think we would all agree that if I say to you, Honourable Deputy Speaker, I say to anyone in the House, prove to me that one plus one equals two, you would show me the math behind that. And two times two is four, et cetera, et cetera; you get the point. And the relevance of that is you can prove it, you can say this is how it works. Not very hard.

If this is the minister's bill, all he had to do was stand up and say, this is how it's different. That would be evidence. You would think the Minister of Justice would know what evidence is, and yet he does not provide satisfactory evidence or assurances. We wouldn't even be in this if the minister at first reading—or second reading, sorry, when there was the initial debate and question period, if he simply answered the questions that were posed by the member from Steinbach, the former minister of Justice. Not very hard, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Now, we have been doing this for a few days. So I went back and I said, let me look into what actually happened to start this series of events today. And



amongst, you know, very important Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) missing very important deadlines that they now want to just jam through a BITSA bill, we are then forced to talk to Bill 30.

The importance of that is, how is Bill 30 different? The Minister of Justice simply had to stand up and say, this is how it's different, this is why it should go forward.

Now, we don't see it. I'm going to make a very clear and concise argument over the next 25 minutes and 46 seconds for this. Actually, it's actually easier than that. And this is how amazing this House is, Honourable Deputy Speaker. Members opposite can pay attention to this.

It is so easy to prove that there is no substantive differences in the act that was brought forward in 2021 and the one that we are debating today, because the Minister of Justice goes on for five pages in Hansard, from page 1656 to 1661, on May 7, 2024, and does not mention one difference, not one.

#### *The Speaker in the Chair*

Now, members opposite, they say, well, hold on, hold on, hold on, member for Fort Whyte, what are you talking about, what are you talking about? And I'll say, okay, great. Let's get into what the Minister of Justice is talking about, because I believe that is very important to understand what he is saying, where he's coming from, to prove his worthiness of the Minister of Justice. If it is his bill, he should know it inside and out. If he's the Minister of Justice, which he is, he would know what the difference is before the previous one, and he would be able to speak to the differences so that this amendment, this reasoned amendment—not reasonable; I will quote some colleagues in here—this reasoned amendment is different.

It really, really blows my mind that in the two opportunities—sorry, three opportunities—this Minister of Justice has had to talk about the differences, he does not mention differences once. It is really concerning that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) cannot stand up to his own bill and defend what the differences are. But what he can do, very 'articurely,' is take cheap shots at the foreign—former minister of Justice. What he can do is take cheap shots at the member from Brandon West.

#### **An Honourable Member Relevance.**

**Mr. Khan:** And the relevance, again, from the member opposite—because they want to talk about relevance—the relevance of this is we are talking about

how the Minister of Justice can—and I'll read an amendment—provide satisfactory evidence or assurance that this bill is different to the existing legislation that was brought forward and passed in the House in 2022.

And the relevance of that, to the member from Point Douglas, because they want to mention relevance, is that there was no evidence brought forward. Now, the member might say, well, hold on, hold on, hold on. Let's talk about the evidence. What are you talking about, the evidence? I don't believe that. That can't be correct. He must have referenced something different.

And let's go through it. Let's go through and talk about the differences of Bill 30 and bill 58, and words that are available for the public to view; the public can view this. Minister wants to stand up on a point of order; Premier (Mr. Kinew) wants to stand up and table documents and talk about how Bill 30 needs to get done. And yet, ironically, Honourable Speaker, you know what they both lacked? Evidence, facts, something to say that this is 'substantiave' difference than the legislation that was brought forward in 2021.

And it's really telling, Honourable Deputy Speaker, that—or, sorry, Honourable Speaker, apologize; the Deputy Speaker was there before, so I apologize for that mishap there—that they—*[interjection]*

Sorry, I was being heckled by the member for Point Douglas (Ms. Smith). I was trying to listen while I was speaking, and I couldn't hear. Maybe if the member wants to come talk to me, they can come over afterwards. I'm more than happy to have a pleasant conversation with the minister—or, the member from Point Douglas.

So when we talk about substantiate differences, again, if you want to get up and you say, hey, you want me to prove why this is different, I'm going to come out and prove why it's different. And yet what does this Minister of Justice do? And I'll quote from Hansard. It's available in public; anyone can read it. And you know, it's unfortunate that the former failed minister of Justice missed my original—I guess, maybe he wasn't paying attention to what was happening in the House, he missed my original comments. I think it would've helped him educate on the important ways this bill is different and strengthens the current act that was passed before the Legislature.

Okay, so now we're getting into some substance here. The minister is talking about how this is going to be different, other than, you know, being arrogant and disrespectful to the former minister of Justice,

who has spent more time in here than, I would say, almost anybody else in this building, except for maybe a few colleagues. That institution knowledge is important when we're talking about bills like this. That experience, that respect, that knowledge that our member from Steinbach, the former minister of Justice, the integrity, the class that that individual has in his pinky finger would far outweigh anything the Minister of Justice has between his two shoulders.

\* (16:10)

Now—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I've cautioned members repeatedly about what they're talking about. I've cautioned members about trying to show some respect for other members.

The honourable member for Fort Whyte's comments border on unparliamentary. Certainly show a complete lack of respect for this institution.

The point of the debate this afternoon is to be discussing the amendment, the reasoned amendment to the bill. So if the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan) could focus his comments on the reasoned amendment, then we can proceed.

**Mr. Khan:** I always welcome words of reminders, words of wisdom from someone like you, who has a lot more experience than, you know, a young buck as myself, so I appreciate that.

And, you know, my comments on the relevance of that, Honourable Speaker, were merely in regards to the approach that the Minister of Justice took to discussing the reasoned amendment.

The reasoned amendment brought forward, Honourable Speaker, is that he will talk about the differences—point out the differences to show that this is different.

So, as I'm talking about the reasoned amendment, the reasoned amendment goes to talk about providing satisfactory evidence to that.

And yet you can read through this, and I will read through this, and the relevance of this, so that we're clear in the House, is that the minister has an opportunity to set the record straight. And I will quote from Hansard numerous times throughout this where he does not. There are six pages of relevance in here where the minister has an opportunity to do that, and he does not mention the difference the reasoned amendment speaks to. The reasoned amendment speaks to all of these same things.

So if I'm asked to stand up and speak to the reasoned amendment, the reasoned amendment is tied to what the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) has said. I think that is very relevant to what he has said.

So, as I scroll through Hansard, there is not one shred of difference that the Minister of Justice—when the Premier (Mr. Kinew) had an opportunity to stand up, there was not one iota of difference between the two. When they talk about what has been happening with money laundering in the bills, in bill 58 that was brought forward in 2021, and Bill 30, as we're speaking to today. There is not that relevance.

The member—you know, Minister of Justice references a member—a team putting together data for him on how they could break this data down, and yet he doesn't provide any of that.

So here we go here. So he's going to address it—this is exciting. On page 1656, paragraph—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine—10: So to address, specifically, the issues brought forward by the member opposite—this is exciting; everyone's getting ready for it. So, first of all, again, he forgot—he, I don't know if I should characterize this as forgot or, you know, I got to be careful, my language here, about presence in the House. But I will suggest, though, the opening statement, so—which is the opportunity for all members to hear, at second reading, a little bit more detail about the bill, which was given to members opposite. Had the opportunity, again, to hear while I gave it, which was only minutes before this question—so he didn't.

I honestly have no idea what kind of answer that is. It blows my mind that he goes to address specifically the issues brought forward, that's the Minister of Justice's answer.

**An Honourable Member:** That's it?

**Mr. Khan:** No, no, it goes on.

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, there's more.

**Mr. Khan:** You know, it really—it goes on to talk about that.

Okay, it's early in the speech. He's getting a little flustered and worried because the minister—former minister of Justice, is here. So let's talk about, you know, how we can go forward on this. He goes on a tirade about Gary Doer. It further goes on to insult the member from Steinbach. And then we—here we go.

So you fast forward about another dozen paragraphs, and we're excited. This is exciting. So members opposite went: That was our message. That was one

of the first things we talked about. It was one of the things we talked about consistently throughout the campaign, and there's no mention of what it is. Like, it goes on to just insult further members, the member from Brandon West. It is really confusing to me and insulting that the Minister of Justice cannot even talk about it.

So let's go on and talk about the relevance of this reasoned amendment, as the Speaker has asked me to stay focused on the reasoned amendment. So I really want to take a lot of time and discuss what is in this document, this public document that is—blessed us in the presence of this building, where we can quote word for word.

What do we do? We brought it forward to the Legislature as one of the first suite of bills that we brought to this place. And, you know, we expected, well, I know the members opposite, you know, certainly didn't run on this issue, but they would see the common-sense importance of doing this.

And you say, okay, Honourable Speaker. Doing what? Let's get to it. And it does not address it. It does not address the differences between what has been done and what this current bill proposes.

What has been being done and the relevance of this, Honourable Speaker, is, okay, while we're focused on what the minister's talking about, let's focus on what's being done. And maybe, if we can understand what is being done now, we can then look at what's being proposed. I believe that's relevant—correct, Honourable Speaker? That if we understand what's happening now, we can look at this document of what the minister says in the House and say, okay; this is what's happening, this is what he's proposing, here's the difference.

So let's break it down. What's happening now is that money—there was a bill brought forward, the one that we're—reasoned amendment is speaking to, as well, was going to combat money laundering as one's leaders in the country was taking action against organized crime. That was already established in 2022 that the Province of Manitoba was already doing that. So that's already being done. Reasoned amendment, or the new bill, does not enhance that.

Well, let's see what else is being done. That there was already legislative changes that strengthened the ability for the criminal property forfeiture act—sorry, unit—to quickly act on securing money that investigators believe to be illegally acquired and could be subjected to money laundering.

Honourable Speaker, that was already being done in here. If it's being done in here, what does this new bill bring forward? And I have Bill 30 here, and I'm sure every—well, I know everyone on our side of the House has read Bill 30—and I wonder how many members on the opposite side, because I have Bill 30 here and I've read it page to page—oh, no props; sorry. I've read Bill 30. I've read it page to page, and it doesn't distinguish any differences between this.

And when the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) gets an opportunity to stand up to talk about this, he does not. He takes potshots at the minister of Steinbach. He takes shots at the minister of Brandon West. And he does not go into that.

And the relevance of this is that when you have someone who has served in justice for years and years and years as a law enforcement officer and as a chief in Brandon, you would assume that that individual, just like individuals in this room, just like yourself, Honourable Chair, that there is a respect and courtesy paid to the—(a) the title you hold, (b) the experience you have, (c) the knowledge you have, the wisdom that you can impart upon us. We might not agree, but there still is that respect to be paid.

And I'm going to quote this, and this is relevant, Honourable Deputy Speaker, if you lend me a little bit of leniency to talk about this. He did good work out on the streets—and this is the Minister of Justice referring to—sorry—this is the Minister of Justice referring to the member from Brandon West, and this is quoted in here.

And as the Minister of Justice, Honourable Speaker, you have mentioned to the Minister of Justice that he holds a very important title in this building. He is the Minister of Justice for the Crown. You yourself have reprimanded him and condoned him for his language, and I don't think I need to go back to Hansard on that. The member of Concordia is a minister of the Crown and Attorney General of Manitoba.

\* (16:20)

He is also a long-serving member of this Assembly, and I hope he knows his behaviour at this moment is inappropriate. And I strongly recommend the minister reflect on his behaviour in this Chamber.

Further to that, the action and behaviour displayed by the Minister of Justice were not becoming someone in position of such responsibility by repeatedly shouting down another member of the House

who had the the floor in debate. And that member was a female member on our side, I want to point out.

By repeatedly shedding out 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 showed—he showed the Deputy Speaker, who repeatedly tried to call him to order, was appalling. What is not fine is yelling across the Chamber to try and make your point.

This ruling is about the Minister of Justice's behaviour that afternoon, and I hope that he can take this seriously.

And when you mention that, you say, okay, he would have learned. He would have learned his message. And the Minister of Justice showed that sheer disrespect when he called out the member from Brandon West and said, and I quote: He did good work on the streets as a chief of police in Brandon, and then he gets into this place and he loses his spine, end quote.

Now, to me, when we're here debating a bill and the reasoned amendments to what the bill is and how that's different, I don't understand what that accomplishes.

It's unfortunate that—but we'll go on further, and it gets a little bit better where he might actually get into some stuff, and I'm really—when I read this the other day, Honourable Deputy Speaker, promise you, I read this with the whole content that, as I go through this document, it will mention the difference of the previous bill and what he's bringing forward. And you can read through this, all six pages, and there is not one reference.

It's too important. The legislation is too important to play political games. Every day that we delay this legislation, we 'deprave' liven law—sorry—we deprived law enforcement of these tools, these crucial tools that we have.

So we already have these tools? These tools exist already? What are we depriving them of? Every day that we delay this legislation, victims are falling to organized crime. Every day we delay this legislation, 'toxis' drugs come into our communities.

So you would assume, after reading that statement mentioning that, he would then talk about what we're doing. And it's filled with a lot of 'bravada.' It's filled with a lot of commentary on what's happening in here and about members, but there's nothing substantive in here.

And I'll quote again, and this is what I had highlighted here: Let's get to work. Let's do what we're supposed to do here in this legislative—let's support our law enforcement.

I'm excited for that. It honestly has me excited to say that this minister is going to bring forward something of substantive difference.

And he goes on to say: I want to be very clear here, Honourable Speaker, because the failed former Justice minister stood in his place and said, if you simply answer my questions, if you give me examples, if you just—if you tell me—just my questions from, you know, good questions, I would suggest, from, you know, members like the member from Brandon West and others. You know, if you just answer these questions, we will pass this today.

Now the—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

Once again, I must caution the member that he needs to keep his comments relative to the reasoned amendment. I've listened to him for quite a while, and I have no concept of how what he's saying is related to the reasoned amendment.

So, the member can bring it back.

**Mr. Khan:** Thank you. Yes, I apologize, Honourable Speaker, wholeheartedly, sincerely apologize for that.

I guess the question or the—really, the confusing part—and I think this is for everyone in this House, actually, because you have stood up, unfortunately, a few more times today than you would probably like, and the Honourable Deputy Speaker is calling members too. But the issue or the struggle is there is no difference.

That's what the reasoned amendment is speaking to. The reasoned amendment is speaking to, Honourable Deputy Speaker, that, because the House has not received satisfactory evidence or assurances. So there really is no difference between bill 58, which was passed by the former minister of Justice, the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) and the current Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), the member from Concordia.

That's the issue. The issue is that there is no difference between the two. That's why this reasoned amendment's been brought forward. That's why it's deleting all the words after that. A reasoned amendment is quite different than an amendment where the reasoned amendment—and if you can bear with me for 35 seconds here, not even—it's important.

Then this is what a reasoned amendment speaks to, Honourable Deputy Speaker. It's very different than an amendment. And I'm relatively new, so a little bit of grace and if I'm wrong, after I'm done this, maybe you can stand up and correct me and call me to this. But this has been done throughout the legislative process for a very long time. It's been a long time since it was used, but it has been used throughout history.

And the reasoned amendment within the legislative process is an important ability to be able to provide a reason for why a bill shouldn't proceed, so it's a little bit—it's a little less technical than some other amendments you may want to bring forward. If you wanted to bring another amendment forward, as was brought forward—for example, the budget has been brought forward, the tax, the gas tax pause, which was enforced, and amendments were brought forward.

This is a reasoned amendment. So you don't—the reasoned amendment simply brings forward the reason why a bill shouldn't proceed and the bill shouldn't proceed because there is no difference. And the reason why I'm quoting so heavily from Hansard is, the Minister of Justice has opportunity after opportunity to clarify how it's different and he does not do that.

If there was an opportunity in here, he would have done that and he has not. That on its own should stand. Case shut. Slammed. Doogie Howser was a doctor; I'm trying to think of another famous lawyer, Perry Mason, I think was—yes, Perry Mason. I said I'm dating myself—Perry Mason. Sorry, I don't know where that came from. I don't know why. But like, it's done. *[interjection]* Columbo. Like, it's just—there is no reasoned amendment in here.

So, when we want to talk about tying the reasoned amendment to this, let's continue to talk about what was already happening and maybe this Bill 30, which I've read, and the Minister could go through and say, hey you know what, you guys are talking about us using assets from criminals. Well, this is how it enhances on that.

He never did that once. You're talking about online 'sexposation' or shutting down a gang-related operations. Those who have great questions from the members opposite. This is how we address this. It doesn't happen once. That—the concerning issue is that time over time, members on this side and I think members on that side, have brought up relevant issues.

Just the other day, Honourable Speaker, I was sitting in this House and I got a text message saying that my carbon capture—or my carbon tax rebate was

being—I didn't click on the link because that's—that is a criminal activity. I knew that.

But this bill does not talk to that, Honourable Deputy Speaker. It is very concerning that it does—and again, I only have two minutes left so I'm going to wrap up my thoughts here on this reasoned amendment. Unfortunately, I know, I know. I could ask for leave but I'm not sure if that would be approved, to go on for another five hours. I'd be more than happy to talk to you about this.

Quickly, and in a minute and a half here, I do want to talk about staffing capacity within the Criminal Property Forfeiture Unit to combat money laundering. That was increased in the previous bill; this bill doesn't mention that. It doesn't talk about how they're going to do that.

But what it does say is how good the Province of Manitoba was doing in this area. When BC—and we've heard this—and this is, you know, it was like this, I said this, 10 years ago or five years ago or three years—March of 2023. The Attorney General in BC was quoted as saying there's a similar piece of legislation in place in Manitoba. And we actually know that BC copied that.

So on that, there really isn't. It's sad, it's unfortunate that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) felt he had to go that way with members on this side. It's unfortunate that he had the opportunity to clarify the record and really put forward what it is, and that didn't happen.

In my last minute, I do want to say thank you to all of the law enforcement, to all of the support workers out there, to everyone that puts their life on the line every single day making Manitoba a better, safer place. Thank you. Thank you for the work you're doing.

\* (16:30)

We in this building, all of us, regardless if we don't agree with the details of the bill, we all support you. We all thank you for your work. We look forward to meeting with you, to listening with you, whether it be RCMP or Brandon police or Winnipeg Police Service or one of the various many other agencies, even like the downtown security patrol, as I went to get lunch today and you see them walking around, doing a great job in this province to keep everyone safer.

Myself, as the member from Fort Whyte, to—look forward to supporting you, helping you in any way I can do. I know everyone on this side of the House,

everyone on this PC side of the House, actually looks forward to putting forward substantive bill—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

Before recognizing another member to speak, I would remind and caution, people that are speaking are speaking to the reasoned amendment, not to the bill itself, and to keep their comments relevant to that.

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Thank you for your guidance. We all appreciate your guidance in this House on a daily basis and certainly respect your rulings.

I'm here today to follow my colleagues here on speaking to the reasoned amendment to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, criminal 'property' forfeiture act and corporations act amended. Now, my colleague from Interlake-Gimli proposed this amendment, I don't know—it was a couple weeks ago now, so I'm just going to re-read that again.

So this House declines to give second reading to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended) because this House has not received satisfactory evidence or assurance that this bill is different to the existing legislation that was brought forward and passed in this House in 2021.

So I think on this side of the House, it's the—certainly the opposition's role to ensure that any legislation that comes forward in this House is different from legislation that exists currently. So, first of all, I would like—if you give me a little bit of leniency here, I'd like to talk about reasoned amendments, because I'm not sure there's a great understanding on this side or that side what a reasoned amendment actually is, and I have a few definitions here that I think I'd like to—and I'll lead into the—I'll lead into my goal of telling you what the similarities are between the bill 58 and Bill 30. But first I need a little leniency to talk about reasoned amendments, because they've been called reasonable amendments in here, reasoned amendments. What are they about?

So, now, I know they're all ears here, they're all going to pay attention to this, because they likely don't know, and some time they'll be on this side and they'll be doing a reasoned amendment, so here I go. *[interjection]* Okay, just wait for them to quiet down, and then.

A reasoned amendment is a proposed modification to a bill or motion that includes a clear and concise explanation of the reasons behind the suggested

change. And we're saying that there's substantially no difference. So this essential tool enables lawmakers to engage in informed and constructive debate, refining legislation to better serve the public interest, which is what we're trying to do on this side of the House, what we've been trying to do for the, I don't know, five or six sitting days here.

So a reasoned amendment is a specific type of amendment that not only proposes a change to a bill or motion, but also provides a rational justification for the alteration, which I believe this reasoned amendment does. This justification is typically presented in a clear and concise matter—manner, which I know the member from Interlake-Gimli did, outlining the reasons why the amendment is necessary or desirable.

So reasoned amendments can be proposed by individual lawmakers, committees or even parties, and are integral part of the legislative process. Honourable Speaker, reasoned amendments serve several purposes in the legislative process.

Number 1: clarification. Reasoned amendments can help clarify ambiguous or unclear provisions in a bill, ensuring that the intent of the legislation is understood and implemented correctly.

Number 2: improvement. By proposing alternative language or modifications, reasoned amendments can strengthen a bill, addressing potential flaws or weaknesses. Now, in this case, we're saying that Bill 30 is not substantially different from bill 58, which was passed by a Progressive Conservative government in 2021.

And No. 3: compromise. And I mean, I think that's what we're asking on this side of the House. We'd like the Justice Minister to perhaps compromise, or at least tell us the differences between Bill 30 and bill 58. So reasoned amendments can facilitate compromise amongst lawmakers with differing opinions—which we clearly do here—allowing for the finding of common ground and the creation of more effective legislation. Bring us all together to ensure the legislation does what it's supposed to do.

Number 4: transparency. The explanatory nature of reasoned amendments promotes transparency, enabling lawmakers and the public to understand the reasoning behind proposed changes. I think if the public took a look at bill 58 and Bill 30, they would say, they're similar. They're similar. And so far, the Justice Minister hasn't told us how they're different. All we want to be told is how they're different.

Number 5: accountability. By requiring lawmakers to provide clear justifications for their proposed amendments, reasoned amendments promote accountability and responsible governance. We're trying to be a responsible opposition, holding a responsible government to account.

Now, there's best practices for reasoned amendments, and I think on this side of the House, we're certainly abiding by that. So to maximize the effectiveness of reasoned amendments, lawmakers should be clear and concise. And I think all of my colleagues before me have been clear and concise in all their time that they've had the chance to address this Legislature.

So you need to ensure that the explanation accompanying the amendment is easy to understand, and directly addresses the proposed change. And again, clearly, there's no differences between bill 58 and Bill 30, as stated in our reasoned amendment. So you need to focus on the issue, which we are. We're avoiding using reasoned amendments as a vehicle for unrelated policy debates.

So the majority of us are trying to stay on topic, talking about the reasoned amendment so that we can understand if the government can tell us the differences between Bill 30 and bill 58.

Engage in constructive dialogue. You should use a reasoned amendment as a starting point for respectful and informative discussions with fellow lawmakers. We need to consider multiple perspectives, be open to feedback and willing to incorporate suggestions from others into the amendment.

So if the government wanted to add to our reasoned amendment, I'm sure they likely could've. So by employing reasoned amendments, lawmakers can engage in a more informed, transparent, accountable legislative process, ultimately leading to better crafted laws that serve the public interest.

So I'm done with the reasoned amendment explanation; thank you for your leniency, Honourable Speaker. I think that will lead into, now, as I said before, my goal today is not to talk about the differences between the two bills; that's the—or—yes, the two bills: bill 58, which was The Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act, passed, got royal assent in 2021, and Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, criminal property forfeiture act and corporations act amendment. That's my goal today, is to talk about the similarities between 58 and 30, not to talk about the differences.

Because I believe government members should be standing up in their place—maybe when I'm done today—and tell us what the differences are. That's all we want to know. Tell us what the differences are. I mean, I get the sense that the Justice Minister is very frustrated with the reasoned amendment and the fact that, you know, we're perhaps—he thinks we're stalling here. No; all we want to know is the differences.

\* (16:40)

So anyway, I can't talk about the differences; I'm going to talk about the similarities between bill 58—again, which is The Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act, and it was passed in 2021 under a Progressive Conservative government.

So the Justice minister at the time—and I'm not going to name him, he was a good Justice minister, I'm sure—as all Justice ministers, are tasked with upholding the laws here in Manitoba as well as keeping the Great Seal usually, that Great Seal. I don't know where this Justice Minister hides that, but—and Bill 30, which is a current bill in front of this Legislature that we're dealing with the reasonable amendment on. And Bill 30 is about The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended).

So anyway, I'm going to start into the similarities. So both of those bills, 58 which was a PC bill, 30 which is a proposed NDP bill, share several similarities despite their distinct focuses. Both bills aim to strengthen the legal framework for combatting criminal activity, particularly in relation to property and financial transactions.

What I'm proposing to tell you today, it's an analysis I did and it delves into the similarities between the two bills, highlighting common goals, provisions and implications. And actually, on this side of the House, we're quite flattered actually that they would try to propose a bill with so many similarities to bill 58, which was done by a PC government.

And again, all I want the Justice Minister to do, to stand in his place, tell us the differences and we can move on. I'm sure we could.

So, again, I'm talking about the similarities between the two bills. So, first, the first point is in the enhanced power for law enforcement. Both bills grant law enforcement agencies—and that could be the Winnipeg city police, the Brandon city police, to which the member from the Brandon West was the chief. He's very supportive of bill 58 from 2021, I think he spoke out at the time.

So both bills grant law enforcement agencies across this province increased authority to investigate and seize property suspected of being linked to criminal activity. So that's a start of a similarity for point one.

Bill 58 expands the definition of criminal property. Now there's 58 from—in 2021. It expanded the definition of criminal property to include assets used in the commission of a criminal offence, while Bill 30 allows for the forfeiture of unexplained wealth.

So with bill 58, which is similar to Bill 30, enable law enforcement to more effectively target criminal organizations and individuals who use property and financial transactions to 'facilitate' illegal activities. And we know there's illegal activities out there, Honourable Speaker.

So, on this side of the House, we're all for law and order. Our Justice ministers were focused, focused on crime and justice here in Manitoba, as I'm sure the Justice Minister will be here once he gets Bill 30 off his plate.

So No. 2 is dealing with criminal property forfeiture. So bill 58, which is the bill again from 2021, the Progressive Conservative government—I'm not sure who the minister was. We had numerous ministers back then. We had Friesen, we had Stefanson, we had Goertzen, all great Justice ministers. In fact, I think even Cliff Cullen was the Justice minister at the time. Yes, and the member from Spruce Woods would certainly know a great Justice minister when he's seen one.

Bill 58—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I just, once again, caution members, keep their comments relevant to the reasoned amendment.

And also, more importantly, you just used the member for Steinbach's (Mr. Goertzen) name rather than addressing him by his constituency, so please pay attention to that.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** And, again, Honourable Speaker, I'm very sorry about that. I heard that this afternoon, and then I shouldn't have repeated it. I'm very sorry. It's—I'd say it's a rookie mistake, but I'm kind of long in the tooth and been here a long time, and I should know better. I'm very sorry for that.

So, second point I want to make on the similarities between bill 58 and Bill 30 is the criminal property forfeiture. So both bills deal with it, no question about

that. Bill 58 amends The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act to allow for the forfeiture of property used, or intended for use, in criminal activity, regardless of whether a conviction is obtained.

So if you've been charged, they can seize that property. They don't have to wait for a conviction. Similarly, Bill 30 amends the same act to 'enclode'—include unexplained wealth. Well, I mean, I think property and unexplained wealth are the same thing. It's very similar, as a grounds for forfeiture. This shared focus on criminal property forfeiture demonstrates a commitment, again, by the current Justice Minister and the Justice ministers in the past—which I won't mention again—to depriving criminals of their ill-gotten gains.

Both bills are intended to target criminal organizations. Now, a criminal organization could be one person, a couple people in a half-ton truck driving down country roads, or it could be an organized crime ring operating in rural Manitoba or in the city; I think we all know what the—these—both these bills were intended to do, 58 and 30. So both bills aim to disrupt and dismantle criminal organizations by targeting their financial assets.

So bill 58's expanded definition of criminal property, and Bill 30's focus on unexplained wealth, both seek to prevent criminals from using property and financial transactions to further their illegal activities. Again, similar—similar. By targeting the financial roots of criminal organizations, both bills aim to reduce their ability to operate and cause harm. So again, I can't stress enough how similar those two bills are, 58 and 30.

So, increased transparency. So Bill 30 amends The Corporations Act, requiring companies to disclose beneficial ownership and control, and that increases transparency. But similarly, bill 58, the Progressive Conservative bill from 2021—[interjection] And my colleague from Spruce Woods said bill 58's a great bill; he can remember that. So bill 58's provisions for the forfeiture of criminal property can be seen as a means to increase transparency in financial transactions.

So by shedding light on previously hidden or obscure financial dealings, both bills aim to prevent criminal activity and promote accountability. So again, my point is, here, is they're similar. I'm not pointing out differences; I'm telling you how they're similar, and I would love to see members of the government stand up and tell us the differences.



Okay, now we're going to talk about money laundering. So both bills indirectly address money laundering by targeting the financial aspects of criminal activity. Bill 58, which was the 2021 PC bill, expanded the definition of criminal property, and Bill 30's focus on unexplained wealth—both seek to prevent criminals from using financial transactions to conceal their illegal activities. That's the point of bill 58, and on this side of the House, we don't understand how Bill 30 is any different than 58.

So by making it more difficult for criminals to launder money, both of these bills contribute to the global effort to combat money laundering and 'terroris' financing. So—[interjection]

Eleven minutes? Thank you very much to the member for Transcona (MLA Altomare) for telling me how much time I have left. It's going by a lot quicker than I thought, Honourable Speaker.

\* (16:50)

Okay, protection of the public. And that's the most important, maybe, of these bills, is safety. Safety. I mean, you can't even go over to Osborne Village now to Starbucks and feel safe, so I think targeting criminal activity is the right thing to do; there's no question about that. I'm not arguing with the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe). He has a tough task on his hand, and I just don't know perhaps why he needed a Bill 30 when bill 58, which was a PC bill from 2021 that received Royal Assent that year, was working well.

So, protection of the public. Ultimately both bills aim to protect the public from the harmful effects of criminal activity. By targeting criminal property and financial transactions, both bills seek to reduce the abilities of criminals to cause harm and perpetuate illegal activities. This shared focus on public protection demonstrates a commitment to ensuring safety and well-being of citizens.

And I'm sure the Justice minister had good intents, maybe, when he pushed out Bill 30 here, because, you know, I think it was an election promise, if I remember correctly. It was one of the election promises, and they likely didn't consult, and they didn't see bill 58, or they didn't remember it. I'm not sure if they voted for it back in 2021 or not. I would assume they did, because it was such a great bill from everything I'm reading about it now.

So again, bill 58 and Bill 30, they demonstrate a commitment to complying with international standards for combating criminal activity, particularly in relation to money laundering and terrorist financing. So again,

58 and 30 are very similar there. By strengthening the legal framework for criminal property forfeiture and increasing transparency in financial transactions, both bills align with global efforts to combat these issues.

Of course, agencies have to co-operate; there's not question about that. Law enforcement agencies here in Manitoba have to co-operate with, you know, CSIS and Canada Border Services, things like that, when they're doing investigations.

So again, my comparison shows that both bills facilitate enhanced co-operation between law enforcement agencies, financial regulatory bodies and other organizations involved in combating criminal activity. By sharing information and resources, these agencies can more effectively target criminal organizations and individuals, leading to increased success in disrupting and dismantling their operations. And that's the ultimate goal of bill 58 from 2021 and Bill 30 from 2024 at this point.

So, point number nine: Both bills, bill 58 and Bill 30, aim to create a deterrent effect, discouraging individuals and organizations from engaging in criminal activity. I mean, that's similar to the catalytic converter bill that we passed. That discouraged criminal activity, and that's what I think bill 58 did back in its day as well, and Bill 30, which is similar, is doing exactly the same thing.

So by increasing the risk of forfeiture and penalties for criminal property and financial transactions—of course nobody wants to lose the half-ton truck they stole, or the Mercedes they're driving, or the nice red sports car or whatever that they might be stolen from them—that is a real risk as a criminal. And bill 58 addresses that, and Bill 30 is much similar, protecting assets like sports cars, anything that might be stolen, you know.

So both bills seek to prevent criminal activity, keep us safe and promote a culture of compliance with the law.

Now my last point on similarities—and I still have seven minutes left, so I'm just going to—I'm a little parched, so I'm just going to have a little drink.

Now I think the honourable Minister of Education from Transcona might want to talk. If he could ensure me I would talk, I would give up the rest of my time for him to talk, but I'm not sure he will get up. I will get going because I see the Honourable Speaker is—he doesn't like the heckling you're giving me, so I'm going to start talking.

So finally, in this part, both bills demonstrate a commitment to justice and the rule of law, which we should all be looking for. By strengthening the legal framework for combating criminal activity, both bills aim to ensure that those who engage in illegal activities are held accountable for their actions, as they should be. This shared commitment to justice is a fundamental aspect of both bills.

So, Honourable Speaker, in conclusion—it went by a little quicker than I thought—while bill 58, which was—received royal assent in 2021 under a PC government, and Bill 30, which has been proposed by the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) here, have distinct focuses, they share many similarities in their goals, provisions and implications—many, many. Both bills aim to strengthen the legal framework for combatting criminal activity, particularly in relation to property and financial transactions.

By enhancing the power of law enforcement, targeting criminal organizations and increasing 'transparency', see, both bills contribute to the global effort to combat criminal activity and promote a safer, more just society.

So, Honourable Speaker, again, I went to a fair amount of work to get the similarities of the two bills. I would just like to encourage the government, particularly the Justice Minister, to get his staff to come back here and show us the differences between 58 and 30 in a clear, concise manner that I just laid out. I think that's only fair to ask that, you know.

It's—I have one more document I'd like to share, and I might need a little leniency here. I doubt it, but we'll see. So I'm comparing bill 58, which was the PC bill from 2021, I just want to remind the House, the criminal property 'forchfiture' amendment act, and bill 21 in British Columbia, which is my understanding that's what Bill 30 was modelled after, the Civil Forfeiture Amendment Act, 2023.

So it stands to reason: their colleagues in British Columbia put a bill through in 2023. We've got an election coming up; let's promise that we're going to do the same thing in Manitoba. And you have. You put Bill 30. You fulfilled your election promise.

So, bill 58, which again is from 2021, and a PC bill. Again, it's an amendment to The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and allows the director of Criminal Property Forfeiture Unit to initiate civil

forfeiture proceedings against property believed to be the proceeds or instruments of lawful activity.

And we just determined that Bill 30 does the same thing, *[inaudible]*. It's pretty similar. So bill 21, this is the BC version of bill 58, allows the government to apply for—to confiscate property or proceeds of unlawful activity—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The member has kind of vectored off a little bit, talking about bills from BC. The reasoned amendment is talking about the bill before us here.

So if the member could focus his comments on the reasoned amendment it would be appreciated.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Thank you, Honourable Minister, for the leniency you've given me so far. I've been trying not to stray off the path. I just want to show how bill 21 in British Columbia is similar to Bill 30 here—*[interjection]*—maybe not.

Bill 58—see, bill 58 and Bill 30, I'm—connect the dots here: 58 and 30 are the same; 30 is the same as 21. So if you're following me so far, that's why I'm going ahead on this. So all these bills are similar. They deal with 'civilar'—civil torte process of criminal property forfeiture.

The key difference is that bill 58 was an amendment to an existing act. Bill 21 in BC was a stand-alone act; Bill 30 is modelled after bill 21, but bill 21 was modelled after bill 58. Do you see what I'm getting at here?

So, okay. I'm going to—I think you—thank you, Honourable Speaker, for indulging me there. Now I'm going to compare Bill 30 in Manitoba, and the reason we're here today for the reasoned amendment, to show that it's similar to 58, but in order to show it's similar to 58 I have to show it's similar to bill 21 in BC.

I've only got a minute and 40 seconds left and I only have two paragraphs. I'm hoping the Honourable Speaker will indulge me because they're all listening to me. The member for Transcona (MLA Altomare) has been riveted this whole time.

So—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter is next before the House, the honourable member will have one minute remaining.

The hour being 5 o'clock, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, May 9, 2024**

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