

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

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALTOMARE, Nello, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
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 23, 2024

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: Good afternoon. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 214—The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act
(Net-Metering Agreements)**

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan), that Bill 214, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act (Net-Metering Agreements), be now read a first time.

An Honourable Member: You need a different seconder.

Mr. Johnson: Okay. I move, seconded by the member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte), that Bill 214, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act (Net-Metering Amendments), be now read a first time, for the second time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Johnson: The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act is amended to allow residential customers who operate a solar PV system to request Manitoba Hydro enter into a net-metering agreement. Manitoba Hydro must enter into the agreement if the customer's solar PV system meets the requirements set out in the regulations, the customer has the necessary permits and the system is not likely to cause a serious adverse impact.

The person who wishes to install a solar PV system can request Manitoba Hydro to approve the proposed system for the purpose of a net-metering agreement. If Manitoba Hydro approves the proposed system and the customer installs the system within six months, Manitoba Hydro must enter into a net-metering agreement with the customer.

Under a net-metering agreement, the customer provides electricity generated by their solar PV system to Manitoba Hydro. Manitoba Hydro must award the customer credit, measured in kilowatt hours, that is equal to the difference between the amount of electricity the customer produced and consumed in a billing period. The credit must be applied to the customer's future bill.

The Speaker: Further introduction of bills?

Oh. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

**Bill 26—The Residential Tenancies
Amendment Act**

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala), that Bill 26, The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

MLA Naylor: I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 26, The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act.

This bill serves two critical functions. First, it furthers our work of making life more affordable for Manitobans by enhancing rent regulation measures. Second, these amendments will expand the inventory of rental units by leveraging existing commercial buildings for conversion to residential inventory by enabling landlords to recover some of their costs when investing in conversions.

These amendments strike a balance between the interests of tenants and landlords, while addressing stakeholder feedback and promoting greater transparency.

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

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

I declare the resolution carried.

Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Honourable Speaker, I am pleased to table the Manitoba Labour Board Annual Report 2022 to 2023.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Lee Williams

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the late Lee Williams, who was a community mobilizer, faith leader and advocate for fair employment practices for Black- and African-descent rail workers.

Lee Williams was born in Waco, Texas, on November 2, 1907. The Williams family immigrated to Canada when Lee was just a child. He and his descendants chose to make Manitoba their home. Along the way, they established deep roots that formed the foundation of our province's Black- and African-descent community.

Mr. Williams worked as a sleeping car porter for the Canadian National Railway during the 1930s and 1940s. Due to the prevailing anti-Black racial bias of the time, this was the only role available for Black men within the railway system.

Honourable Speaker, Mr. Williams' biggest successes came through challenging the hiring and advancement processes of the Canadian 'brotherhood' of railway employees and Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. His advocacy led to the dismantling of segregated employment practices in 1964, allowing Black and other employees of colour, as well as women, to be eligible for all jobs within the railway system. His dedication and persistence helped pave the way for positive change in the railway industry.

Although human slavery was formally abolished in Canada in 1834, anti-Black racism, segregationist and discriminatory ideas and practices persisted.

Mr. Williams played an active role in ensuring his voice and those of his fellow Black workers were heard. This was done at great risk to his own job security, in order to stand up for his beliefs that all employees had the right to be treated equally. Mr. Williams courageously advocated for and succeeded in getting equitable treatment and improved wages for Black porters, challenging both the national railway system and his own union.

Along the way, Mr. Williams engaged in community mobilization efforts that strengthened the bonds within Manitoba's Black churches and community. He served as a deacon and was involved in one of Winnipeg's oldest Black churches, Pilgrim worship church known as—now known as Pilgrim Baptist Church. His dedication to his family, his faith and his community inspired a lifetime of service.

Today, many of Mr. Williams' descendants remain connected to the church, our province and the preservation and celebration of Black culture and history in Manitoba. His daughter, Valerie Williams, has continued with advocacy work as co-founder of the University of Manitoba's Black Alliance, UMBA. UMBA strives to advance the awareness about Black/African-descent people's contributions to Canadian

society by hosting various events like their annual Black History Month celebrations and other initiatives.

Increasingly, political service is becoming more representative of all who live in our communities. Today, two of Manitoba's first Black MLAs hold highly esteemed positions: the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, and Manitoba's Minister of Economic Development, Investment and Trade and Natural Resources. I am honoured to serve the people of Manitoba alongside both of them.

Honourable Speaker, there are a wealth of contributions from Black- and African-descent pioneers such as Lee Williams. That's why I support celebrating Black history year-round.

His trailblazing actions and thoughts continue to inspire generations. He served as a father figure to many while fighting against unfair employment practices rooted in anti-Black racism. We commemorate his advocacy efforts that not only changed his own future, but the career paths of generations of railway employees.

Thank you.

* (13:40)

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Honourable Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the late Lee Williams, who bravely paved the way for change by standing up for the rights of Black workers in the railroad industry.

Lee Williams passed away in 2002, but his legacy lives on. He was a porter for the Canadian National Railway, which was the only railway job that a Black man could have had at this time, which was throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

Williams and other Black men experienced discrimination and deplorable working conditions. In remembering these experiences, he once said, quote: We were treated as third-class citizens. They gave us food that should have been thrown away.

Mr. Williams eventually became good friends with former prime minister John Diefenbaker, whom he successfully lobbied to force CNR to create better working conditions for porters. Lee fought for the rights of porters on two fronts, one of which was from within his own union, the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees, who had signed the agreement with CNR that Black men could only work as porters for the railway.

Thanks to the effort of Lee Williams and his allies, Lee went on to oversee the dismantling of segregated

employment within CNR, making it so that Black people and other people of colour—including women—could be eligible for other jobs in the railway industry.

Although these accomplishments are already extraordinarily—extraordinary on their own, Lee Williams also became one of the first Black porters to be promoted to a conductor position and later a supervisor on the trains.

Mr. Williams was and always will be a Manitoba hero who is worthy of our remembrance. I therefore encourage all Manitobans to learn about Lee Williams and his heroic efforts that led to the betterment of Canadian society.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Any further ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Recognizing Youth Leaders in Burrows

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): Honourable Speaker, as the member for Burrows, I am continually inspired by the remarkable youth leadership displayed by young Manitobans, especially from our very own Maples Collegiate, Sisler High school and the dedicated team Burrows.

With us today in the gallery we have Riya Rudan, who is a student lead on Eco Crew at Maples Collegiate and will be stepping up as student council co-president next year.

We also have with us Bisman Randhawa, who is currently serving as Maples Collegiate student council co-president, president of Maples4Women and vice-president of Sikh heritage committee.

Next, we have Emily Mann who leads the Maples Debate as team captain and team lead of Maples Theatre Tech.

And, finally, Megh Modha, who also served as student council co-president and is a mental health advocate, honoured for helping drive the #HockeyTalks month and Project 11 campaigns.

Joining these four fantastic students we also have Maples vice-principal, Kamal Dhillon.

I am fortunate to work with many incredible youth leaders on team Burrows: Komalpreet Sangha, Helen Geli, Harjeet Ladhar and Prabhnoor Singh, who was once a member of team Burrows and is now the first turbaned VP in the history of UMSU.

I also want to recognize Anshreet Gill, president of Sikh heritage committee, and the incredible Youth in a Green War co-leaders Hannah Bagalay and Franchesca del Rosario, who promote environmental sustainability at Sisler High school.

Youth leadership is not just a title; it's a force driving positive change across our province. Thank you all for your passion and dedication. Please join me in welcoming these great young leaders in the gallery.

Thank you. Miigwech. Salamat. Shukria.

Tamira Luise Tully

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): On March 20, 2024, the population of Manitoba went from 1,474,439 to 1,474,440 people, with the newest addition of Tamira Luise Tully or, as I call her, Princess.

Tamira arrived in Manitoba at 2:20 a.m. and in the heavyweight category of six pounds, one ounce. And at 19 inches long, she let it be known that she was here to make her mark on society.

Her mother, Brigitta Tamira Schuler Tully, worked for 29 hours to make this big event happen. Her father, Peter Calvin Tully, was there to help in any and all ways possible. She always has a very proud and loving opa, known by most MLAs here as the member for Springfield-Ritchot.

Princess Tully also has a very large and loving extended family. To mention just a few, there is her uncle and her aunt, Stefan and Maya Schuler, and her aunt, Corina Schuler, currently living in Toronto, who just love her.

It was just few hours after being born that I had the opportunity to meet my little granddaughter for the first time, and I immediately fell in love with her. Her pouty little lips and amazing shock of hair instantly had me, and as I held her in my arms, she slept, well, like a baby.

I thank God for the wonderful gift of a perfect little Tamira Luise Tully and for the protection of her mother Brigitta through the whole ordeal, and yes, for her very supportive father, Peter.

In the gallery today we have joining us Tamira Luise Tully and Brigitta and Peter Tully, and I ask my colleagues to welcome them today to the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

Filipino Bilingual Program Students

MLA Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): I rise to recognize the achievements of 12 grade 8 students from

Arthur E. Wright school. They are joining us in the gallery today.

Established in September 2018, these students are the Filipino Bilingual Program's inaugural group, making way for future students in the school.

With the guidance and the support of their teachers and families, these students have embraced the challenge of learning to read, write, speak and sing in a language that holds deep cultural significance. For many, Filipino is not just a subject to be learned, it is part of their identity.

In Winnipeg, where the Filipino community is the largest immigrant group, the introduction of the Filipino language as the official language of instruction opens doors for intergenerational learning, cultural preservation. By investing in the heritage language education, we ensure that Manitoba's diverse cultures continue to thrive in generations to come.

The benefits of bilinguals extend far beyond academic achievement. By embracing bilingual education, we not only empower students to succeed academically but also equip them with the valuable skills that will serve them well into the increasingly interconnected world.

Colleagues, I ask you to join me in welcoming and honouring the 12 students with their teachers, parents and Filipino Bilingual Program at Arthur E. school.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Katy Martin YWCA Award Winner

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Honourable Speaker, I had the great opportunity to attend the YWCA Women of Distinction Awards that was recently held in Brandon. This evening recognized and celebrated the work of many women across our Westman area.

I must congratulate the many nominees. These amazing women have all made significant contributions which have made a difference in our communities and the Westman area. These contributions have been demonstrated through business, volunteerism, arts and culture, leadership, social action, mentorship, healthy living, recreation or wellness. Please know that your dedication has made a difference.

* (13:50)

It gives me great pleasure today to recognize and welcome Agassiz constituent Katy Martin, who joins us here in the gallery with her mom, Carmen Jarvis. Katy is a rural Manitoba artist and winner for this

year's Women of Distinction Award for the category of Arts, Culture and Design.

Katy has been a lifelong artist and has found joy, creativity and inspiration in rural settings. She was born in northern Ontario, attended the University of Guelph and earned a bachelor's degree in fine art, soon after receiving a degree in education.

Katy is a mom, wife, artist, entrepreneur and educator. Currently living in Neepawa she works as an art teacher as well as an artist. She has worked on local mural projects and has had seven exhibitions.

Her paintings are inspired by light colour combinations, deep meaning and many are nature-themed, showcasing her incredible talent.

Katy will be hosting the Gold Thread Gala event. This evening will be showcasing her recent painting collection inspired by breathtaking views of Wasagamung. This will be held in the park at the beautiful Clear Lake Danceland on Friday, July 5. If you're looking for a road trip this is a great way to explore Manitoba and see local talent.

On behalf of all Manitoba Legislature—on behalf of us here at the Manitoba Legislature, congratulations on your recent award and a big thank you for your hard work and for sharing your vision and talents with many Manitobans.

Honourable Speaker, I ask that all members of the House join me in wishing Katy continued success with her arts career.

Acknowledging Teacher-Librarians

Hon. Nello Altomare (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): Libraries change lives, especially the lives of our children. We have libraries to thank for igniting our curiosity and making us life-long learners.

In the River East Transcona School Division, school libraries are enhanced by the incredible teacher-librarians, who work side-by-side with teachers, library techs, to create alternative and interactive spaces for learning.

As a former educator, I know full well that students have unique learning styles. That's why we need knowledgeable individuals that are dedicated to making every school a welcoming environment through their dynamic work with students. Teacher-librarians are attuned to their needs and adapt curriculum so that it can apply to every different learning style.

They are often both literacy and technology experts. In RETSD, these teacher-librarians advocate for every child's right to read through the promotion of literacy in every school. They model proper digital citizenship for students to learn responsible use of technology. Every student needs these tools so that they are respectful and safe online.

Makerspace programs, which are really unique in River East Transcona, also give students the opportunity to work in unison to solve problems, invent, build and play, creatively and in a safe environment.

Through makerspace projects, students are left with unique skills, experiences that they can use throughout their lives. Whether it's building a model bridge, creating an art installation or a robotics project, students come away empowered, with broader understanding of what life will have in store for them.

All in all, the future is bright thanks to teacher-librarians and the technicians who ensure every child can succeed at school. Please join me, members, in thanking teacher-librarians and technicians from the River East Transcona School Division, and I thank you, Honourable Speaker, for this opportunity to honour their work.

Thank you again.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Before we move on to oral questions, I'd like to introduce some guests in the gallery. First we have Josh Braun, who is the guest of the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Ewasko).

Next I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us today guests from the Heart & Stroke Foundation. They're here at the Legislature for their MLA Engagement Day. We have Katrina Rogan, Audrey Goertzen, Shannon Bayluk, Dale Oughton, Kaitlyn Archibald, Christine Houde, Robyn Stewart. They're all the guests of the honourable member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Call for the Tuxedo By-election Inquiry into Use of Government Resources

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I understand that the Premier was in a rush to call the Tuxedo by-election, but

he probably forgot to call a Cabinet meeting and express to his colleagues on the rules of by-elections.

As the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) loves to say, they've only been here for a minute, Honourable Speaker.

Yesterday, the Minister of Municipal Relations thought it was appropriate to announce new funding. And who does the media interview but frustrated Manitobans like Camp Massad, headquartered in Tuxedo.

Will the Premier apologize for his minister's attempt to use government resources for his own partisan advantage in a by-election, and will he commit to co-operating with the Commissioner of Elections?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): You know, there is a by-election going on right now. We've got a great candidate. We're running on health care, the same thing we ran in, in last year's provincial election. We're fixing health care for you, the people of Manitoba.

On the other side of the aisle, their message to the people of Tuxedo is apparently, no fair, we're not ready, even though everybody knew since 10 p.m. on October 3, 2023, that there was going to be a by-election.

What's more, Heather Stefanson herself announced on April 25, giving them more than 10 days before her official date of resignation to get ready. Then, after that, we gave them a further two weeks to get ready before dropping the writ. And then after that, here we are multiple days later and apparently just later on this afternoon, they're going to bring forward a candidate to put in front of the good people of Tuxedo.

We respect you in Tuxedo. We're working hard to earn your support. We're fixing—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Ewasko: And our side of the House actually believes in a nomination race, Honourable Speaker, as opposed to plopping in a candidate that run a few elections ago.

Allocating new funding and implying that it's available to groups the minister knows are headquartered in Tuxedo is a clear violation of both the letter and intent of The Election Financing Act. It's a blatant attempt to use government dollars to win over people the minister's reckless cuts have alienated.

The minister had every opportunity to address the \$4-million cut before the by-election was called.

If the intent was not to violate the act, why did he delay the announcement for a maximum political impact?

Mr. Kinew: You know, I firmly believe if you want to be in charge of our provincial health-care system, you should be able to nominate a candidate for a by-election. That's why we've had a nurse running for the people at Tuxedo since writ drop day. We're fixing your health care.

On the other side of the aisle, well, there's a ton of literature on the PC nomination race, where they're throwing shade at once—once another. Once again, nothing has changed since Heather Stefanson's divisive campaign.

But this time, not only are they trying to divide Manitobans against one another; they're trying to divide people with PC memberships in Tuxedo against one another. And if the member opposite wants to talk about nominations, perhaps he'd like to indicate why the PC executive moved up this nomination date to today, when one of the candidates apparently is not even going to be in the country.

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

Mr. Ewasko: Honourable Speaker, once again, there's nothing new with you-know-who, the MLA for Fort Rouge. He's dodging, he's ducking the questions. Why? Because he knows that the Minister of Municipal Relations broke the law yet again.

Honourable Speaker, I'd like to table a CBC article that directly refutes the talking points of the Minister of Municipal Relations, who has stood in this House and insisted less is more.

The fact of the matter is, this NDP government made a \$4-million cut to community groups and refused to act when called on it until it was politically expedient.

* (14:00)

The Premier can stand in his place and attempt to explain it all away, but the fact is, they've just added in 7.5 per cent of the \$4-million cut. The minister could have promised this funding last week when the groups were in the gallery; he did not. He waited for political impact.

Why does the Premier think, once again, that he and his—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Kinew: Three questions about the good people at Tuxedo, and here's the third answer. We're working hard for you, the people of Tuxedo, with a balanced approach. Yesterday, S&P Global said that our government is committed to fiscal sustainability and that we've charted a path towards balance for you, the good people of Manitoba.

At the same time, we're investing in health care, and we've got people from the front lines on our team, with the hopes that perhaps you'll send more people from the front lines of health care to work with us. On the other side, it's the same old playbook of division, except this time, they've turned on each other. That's why later today, you're going to see the opposition benches clear out when the nomination meeting starts at 4 p.m. so that they can go campaign against one another.

Of course, they've stacked the deck in favour of one of their own staffers at the expense of one candidate who's out of the country and apparently is going to be joining by Zoom. That's not democracy. That's taking Tuxedo for granted.

We never will. We're fixing your health care and working hard to earn your support.

Provincial Float Pool Nurses Employment Incentives

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): When I asked them in Estimates yesterday what incentives the NDP are providing to get nurses into our public health-care system, the best the minister could come up with was that they were, quote, listening. Luckily, the Premier had more to say about the topic.

The Premier said in Estimates yesterday that the chief mechanism to end mandatory overtime will be to expand the provincial float pool. But I'll remind him that float pool nurses are represented by Shared Health, meaning float pool nurses have rejected the contract the Premier is currently claiming he designed to incentivize them.

The Premier also said in Estimates yesterday that float pool nurses would have the same work-life balance and financial incentives offered to agency nurses.

So my question is: What additional incentives will the Premier offer to float pool nurses who have currently deemed his offer insufficient?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Fixing health care is a top priority for people right across this province, and that's why we were honoured to receive a mandate from you, the people of Manitoba, to get to work.

Already, our provincial Health Minister has led an important series of remaking health care after years of cuts and chaos that we saw under the PCs.

The new tentative agreement that we've arrived at offers a series of incentives for people to leave the agencies and to come back in the public health-care system. Many people say that what we're working on is an important goal. In fact, one person actually said, and I quote: "I think we all agree that reducing reliance on agency nurses is an important goal." End quote.

And do you know who said that? It was the member from Roblin in this Chamber yesterday.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Roblin, on a supplementary question. [*interjection*]

Order.

Nurses Working Part Time Employment Incentives

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I did say that, and it's too bad that the NDP government isn't doing anything to accomplish that goal.

The new collective agreement has, quote, an incentive that will draw nurses back from private agencies to working at the bedside in the public system. End quote.

But as I noted yesterday, we know the agreement has a stipulation that agency nurses can no longer work in their home region. We also know the Premier's refusing to give any details on how he'll verify agencies in Manitoba.

But what we don't know, as the Premier has so far refused to answer, is how these changes will impact nurses who need flexibility with their hours and how they will impact health-care services to Manitobans.

I'll ask again: What incentive is the Premier offering to nurses who want to stay part time? It's nothing.

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Well, we're offering nurses who want to continue their existing work arrangements more money. And what we're offering to people who want to come back from the private agencies and join the public system is not only 12 grand a year, but a promise that you'll be able to rejoin the public system within 48 hours.

Our plan, while still a lot of work ahead, is beginning to show results. Our Health Minister has already doubled the provincial float pool.

I really have to wonder about the members opposite who lead off question period with saying we're

doing a great job running our Tuxedo by-election campaign and then follow up with saying that our health-care initiatives are important goals that we share in common.

Listen, we agree. Fixing health care is the top priority. But if this is the case, maybe you shouldn't nominate anyone in Tuxedo whatsoever and just let us have the seat.

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

Mrs. Cook: I'll table another document provided to MNU members regarding the collective agreement. It clearly states that the new \$12,000 incentive is for full-time hours only. As the Premier noted in Estimates, one of the main reasons nurses leave to work for agencies is so that they can work flexible part-time hours to have the time to spend with their kids and live their lives.

But the Premier is now telling these nurses that they no longer have that option. He claims he is incentivizing them back, but in the same breath telling them they only get a top-up if they work full time. In the same agreement he claims he designed for them, he takes away the choice of flexibility and work-life balance. That is not an incentive; that is a threat.

What does the Premier have to say to nurses who are not able to work full time?

Mr. Kinew: What I say to all nurses in Manitoba is that finally you have a government that's listening to you. What I say to nurses in Manitoba is that you have a Health Minister who knows what it's like to work mandated OT, who comes from the front lines themselves.

What I say is that here's a candidate in Tuxedo right now who comes from the front lines at this very moment, who, when is not canvassing in Tuxedo, is working at the bedside to care for you and other patients across the province. The member opposite is standing up and demanding more money for nurses who work part time? Check. That's in the tentative agreement.

But what we're saying is they also get extra \$12,000 if you agree to the provincial float pool to earn more money. More money for part time, more money for full time, but most importantly, a better approach to health care. That's what we're running on. The only thing they ever run on is trying to turn Manitobans against one another, even people within their own party.

Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth Committee Presenters—Intimidation Concerns

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Speaker, during the committee for Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, countless presenters stated that they were fearful to speak up and were threatened if they came forward. Many others slated to present did not show up.

The fear of punishment and consequences by this NDP government discouraged many individuals from sharing their voice and their stories about children and youth in care.

How is this minister responding to these allegations of threats from her department?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): The member for Midland knows that in the committee of MACY, those concerns that were raised were not about the Department of Families, and I take exception to the member standing up in the House and putting wrong facts on the record. In fact, the member for Midland will remember that members that came to present expressed concerns about agencies.

So I'm going to ask the member to stand in her place and retract the wrong facts that she just put on the record.

Children in CFS Care—Protest at Committee

Mrs. Stone: Instead, I will table a letter that was sent to care providers stating, and I quote: It's not appropriate for youth to attend a rally that pertains to their care. Children in care cannot participate. This, coming from the minister's department.

Children in care and youth in care deserve to have a voice and deserve to have their voices heard. Just because youth are in care does not mean that they shouldn't be able to exercise their democratic right to protest.

Why is this minister infringing on Charter of Rights and Freedoms and using coercive tactics to prohibit the peaceful gathering of individuals here at the Manitoba Legislature?

MLA Fontaine: The member for Midland has to get it straight. She has to figure out what side she's on. Either she's on the side of kids that are in care or she's on the side of making up all kinds of facts to fix—to fit her narrative.

In fact, the member of Midland would know that the children that we're talking about were the children from Spirit Rising House. So on the one hand, the

member gets up in the House and ask us, what are you doing about Spirit Rising House, and then on the other hand, she's trying to defend Spirit Rising House, an organization that gave unprescribed, unauthorized drugs to vulnerable children.

* (14:10)

Shame on you. *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please.

I'd just remind all members to direct their comments through the Chair, through the Speaker, and not directly at other members.

Mrs. Stone: All Manitobans and all Canadians deserve to protest and deserve to have freedom of speech and freedom of protest, and I will always respect their right to speak freely.

Under this NDP government, doctors are quitting because their voices are being silenced. Foster parents are fearful for speaking up. International students are being threatened for deportation if they protest. And now youth are being told that they are not allowed to exercise their democratic right to speak up about—against this NDP government.

Does this minister want to censor all Manitobans or just the Manitobans that disagree with her decisions?

MLA Fontaine: Again, I'm getting whiplash from the member opposite of her flip-flopping on what day it is today, on who she's going to support.

I just want to put this on the record: it is sheer audacity for the member opposite to stand up and talk about violating Charter rights in this Chamber, when every single member opposite took away the Charter rights of Indigenous children to come back and sue the government for dollars that they were rightfully owed.

Who took away the constitutional rights of Indigenous children? You all did. We actually settled and made Indigenous children whole. The member opposite—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Fontaine: —keeps getting up in the House and putting erroneous facts on the record. She needs to figure out—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Energy Use—Five-Year Projection Timeline for Release of Data

Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): Manitoba Hydro's CEO, former CEO and board chair have all gone on

the record saying that Manitoba will run out of energy capacity and production in the next five years. The Minister of Finance committed to providing data within three weeks on how much energy Manitobans use in the next five years. It's now been 14 weeks and this minister has not provided anything.

Now the Minister of Environment is hiding information from Manitobans, and worst, she is hiding her environmental act changes within the BITSAs bill. This Minister of Environment had committed to providing data within three weeks of committee meetings, and now it's been 14 weeks later and she hasn't provided anything.

So the question is simple, to the Minister of Environment: What is she hiding from Manitobans?

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro): I'm happy to have a chance to respond to the question here, fundamentally about Manitoba Hydro and what we're doing to move the province forward after seven and a half years of Manitobans having a government that was not focused on ensuring Manitobans were having their energy needs met in a good way.

For seven and a half years, what did we see in Manitoba? We saw a government focused on raising rates and privatizing pieces of Manitoba Hydro.

We know that's not the direction that Manitobans want to see us go. They want a government that's going to focus on ensuring that we have the energy we need to build our economy, to meet our needs, to make sure we develop affordable, reliable energy and we keep Manitoba Hydro public.

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

Efficiency Manitoba Standing Committee Number of Geothermal Pump Installations

Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): That question was clearly for the Minister of Environment. I said that three times. I'm not sure why the Minister of Finance needs to stand up and mansplain for the Minister of Environment. She's more than capable of asking the questions.

So I'll ask the Minister of Environment again. At the Efficiency Manitoba committee, Manitobans learned that only a handful of geothermal pumps have been installed in Manitoba under the NDP. The government ran on installing 5,000 heat pumps in Manitoba at the price tag of \$200 million to Manitobans.

So can the Minister of Environment tell us today how many heat exchangers and geothermal projects have been installed in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister responsible for Efficiency Manitoba): I would just like to start my comments by just saying that I take great exception to the comment of mansplaining. On this side of the House, unlike members opposite, we are a team.

It is my—[interjection] The members opposite, including the member for Fort Whyte, can keep spewing their divisive rhetoric, but I am pleased to work with the Minister of Finance and the minister of Hydro on our policy. I can't wait for our affordable home energy program to be delivered to Manitobans to save Manitobans money and also reduce our greenhouse gas emissions here in Manitoba.

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

Natural Gas Customers Hydro Advisor Recommendations

Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): So for those keeping track, that's 64 non-answers by the Minister of Finance and now one—nine answer by the Minister of Environment. We still can track her there.

The NDP are breaking their promises to install 5,000 homes with new geothermal systems. And then they fired the CEO of Manitoba Hydro, the only person that had a plan for Manitoba's energy future.

But wait—it gets worse. The NDP then hired a special adviser that said, on the record, he wants to increase the Liberal-NDP carbon tax and rapidly phase out natural gas, while over 600,000 houses in Manitoba use natural gas.

Can the Minister of Environment tell us what is she going to do for the other 600,000 houses in Manitoba that use natural gas to heat their homes?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister responsible for Efficiency Manitoba): Again, we can't wait to deliver our affordable home energy program. I've been working very closely with the minister for Manitoba Hydro and our energy advisers to work on a new energy policy here in Manitoba. And at the centre of that policy is going to be affordability—affordability, as well as environmental protections.

The minister of Hydro and myself have been working very closely on this, and we can't wait to deliver our geothermal program here in Manitoba. We understand that members opposite can't see our vision because

for seven and a half years they had no vision on this file.

Skilled Trade Apprentices Request to Restore 2:1 Ratio

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Honourable Speaker, I table a briefing note on the top 10 workforce shortages in Manitoba. It comes from the Advanced Education minister's own briefing binder. These shortages include heavy-duty mechanics, plumbers, welders, and automotive service and vehicle repair technicians. There are over 2,300 apprentices in these occupations, yet the minister has slashed training ratios in half.

Can she explain to Manitobans why she wants to put half of these apprentices out of work and make Manitoba's labour shortages worse?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): Honourable Speaker, it's too bad that the workers in Manitoba had to suffer through seven and a half years of a government who didn't invest in their training or education.

But, happy to—happy day for those workers. So glad that they have a government, is now invested in their education, that now cares about ensuring they have high-quality and safe training. That's what we prioritize, what we'll continue to prioritize to ensure that workers have the best chance of growing our economy in Manitoba.

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

Mr. Perchotte: Once again, no answer from that side, Honourable Speaker. This minister hasn't talked to a single business worried about the NDP's cuts and forced layoffs. If she did, she would have known her actions certainly wouldn't help industry train more skilled workers.

The Winnipeg Construction Association says 80 per cent of its members will need to cut the number of apprentices they can hire due to these ratio changes. Honourable Speaker, 63 per cent will be forced to lay off apprentices.

Will this minister change direction, prevent these layoffs from happening, and continue with the two-to-one ratio?

Mr. Moses: Honourable Speaker, the member 'opposis' is just wrong. That, actually, line of comments that he made is not true. Employers—employees will not lose

their contracts. No contracts will be terminated as a result of the change. In fact, what we're actually doing is investing an additional \$1.5 million in training seats for apprenticeships.

It means that more Manitobans, they have the opportunity to enter into skilled trades, boost their skills and help us grow our workforce and grow our economy. That's work that we're proud to do on this side of the House.

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

Mr. Perchotte: Honourable Speaker, the minister has zero clue. You can make as many seats as you want; if you don't have the journeymen there, they won't fill the seats.

* (14:20)

We are estimating over 114,000 job openings over the next five years. Almost 70 per cent of those jobs will open because workers are retiring. The journeymen will be gone, hey? We are now looking at this minister cutting that apprentice training in half, kicking them off the job and forcing them into unemployment line.

I will ask again: Will he prevent these job losses and continue with the two-to-one ratio?

Mr. Moses: Well, the one-to-one ratio is good enough for Doug Ford in Ontario. I mean, here in Manitoba, we prioritize high-quality training. And we prioritize safety. That's the sort of initiatives that I think—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Moses: —we can all get around as we build a stronger Manitoba workforce: \$1.5 million for additional workforce training and apprenticeships to make sure that we're boosting the skills of Manitobans and growing a stronger and brighter economy.

Let's be—get one thing clear: No contracts are going to get terminated. Manitobans will still be able to work as we increase the safety and as we increase the high-quality training—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Moses: —right across Manitoba for all skilled trades, something that members opposite never, ever understood.

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

I would caution members about saying something along the lines of what another member said is not

true. And I would also caution members about some other comments that I've heard in this series of questions and answers that—a little bit of respect both ways, and be—please be very careful about the language that we're using.

The honourable member for Turtle Mountain—Riding Mountain.

Funding to Combat Aquatic Invasive Species Inspection Station Locations and Opening Date

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Thank you, Honourable Speaker. We've got turtles.

Manitobans are still looking for answers from this Minister of Natural Resources. The minister has promised \$500,000 in additional spending on aquatic invasive species this year, and two new watercraft inspection stations.

Yet, day after day, he refuses to tell municipalities, media and the public how he will spend all this money, where these new inspection stations will be located and when they will be open.

I urge the minister to give this House and all Manitobans a clear answer today: What is he spending this money on, where is he locating these new inspection stations and when will they be open?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): Well, Honourable Speaker, maybe the member opposite should get outside the perimeter because the water stations have been open for two weeks.

Honourable Speaker, we know that the previous government failed when it came to natural resources; not only slashing the department, but failing to keep up with the real threat of aquatic invasive species. That's why we took it seriously and invested an additional \$500,000 in making sure that we can prevent the cases of zebra mussels and all aquatic invasive species right across Manitoba.

We'll continue to do this work to protect our waterways right across Manitoba.

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

Closure of Clear Lake Economic Relief for Businesses

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Manitobans are tired of the non-answers from this minister.

While he's excited that people can still bring their beach toys to Clear Lake, businesses are already losing out with cancelled bookings and an uncertain future. The Province has a duty to step up with support so these businesses can continue to serve visitors this season in the—and in the years to come.

Both the Tourism Industry Association of Manitoba and Indigenous Tourism Manitoba have asked the provincial and federal governments for \$1 million to provide economic relief and support visitor experiences.

So I ask the minister and his government today: Will he commit to putting up half of the economic relief package?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): Well, Honourable Speaker, I know the challenges that business communities will have in the Wasagaming area as a result of the federal government decision on Clear Lake.

And I know that because I met with them personally in Wasagaming. And I also know that for our part as a government, we take it seriously, and that's why we've stepped up our efforts to prevent the spread of zebra mussels right across Manitoba with an additional \$500,000 investment.

The reality is that I want to make sure all Manitobans know that as they move watercraft in between water bodies in Manitoba, they should always clean, drain and dry their watercraft to prevent the spread of zebra mussels across Manitoba.

That's my message to you, to my—message to members opposite and to all Manitobans, so we can protect our waterways in Manitoba.

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

Aquatic Invasive Species Waterway Testing for Zebra Mussels

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): I have asked this minister three times whether he's testing the rivers and waterways downstream of Clear Lake. If there are zebra mussels in Clear Lake, their effects will be felt downstream in Minnedosa, Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Winnipeg and all points in between, including First Nations.

Manitobans must be assured that this government takes invasive species seriously, and that efforts are

under way to monitor and prevent their spread into downstream tributaries and community infrastructure.

So I will ask a fourth time: Is this government taking this incredibly important action? And if they are, will they share the results with this Assembly and the public?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): So, Honourable Speaker, I'll try to answer the question more directly so Manitobans can be clear on the answer.

Are we testing? Yes. Are—do we have more watering stations? Yes. Did we invest more money to fight against zebra mussels? Yes.

That's real action to keep all of our waterways safe in Manitoba, something members opposite never did.

\$10-a-Day Child Care Summer Availability Inquiry

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Summer is sneaking up quickly, and Manitoba parents want assurances that their children have affordable child care. The cost of child care often costs parents more in the summer because of out-of-school schedules.

Will the minister guarantee to Manitoba families that their \$10-a-day child-care contribution will be in place for all school-age children this summer?

Hon. Nello Altomare (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I do want to thank the member for that question. It's an important one. It's one that, we know, where inflation and rising costs are hitting families hard.

That's why in Budget 2024 we outline a whole suite of inflation-fighting measures that have paid dividends right now, including for families. We are going to be rolling out \$10-a-day child care, as it was outlined in our budget.

It's too bad that member didn't vote for the budget, because that would've happened going forward anyway.

Thank you.

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

Qualification Criteria

MLA Lamoureux: He can outline it right here for us here today.

Numerous constituents and facilities have reached out to me as recent as this morning, indicating that they

have not yet heard anything from this government when the \$10-a-day child care will be implemented.

In fact, one constituent told me that her daycare bill will literally double, from \$400 to \$800 for four weeks. Families should not be forced to give up careers or use sick time or holidays because the cost of child care is more than their paycheque.

Will this government clarify for Manitoban families what ages, if any, children will be able to qualify for \$10-a-day child care this summer?

MLA Altomare: Again, I do want to thank the member for that question, because it's an important one because it highlights the very important work being done in the early learning and child-care sector in my department.

These people have been working tirelessly since we've been elected. I can tell that member as well that we're creating thousands of spaces—affordable spaces—for parents and families in our communities, and these are the things that we were voted in to do.

They voted in an NDP government to get the work done that wasn't clearly being done before. We'll continue to do this; we'll work tirelessly with our people that work in the early learning and child-care sector to make sure that there's space that's affordable and available for parents.

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

Child-Care Spaces at Tyndall Park School Request to Reinstate Construction Plan

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): So again, no timeline or plan for when this \$10-a-day child-care plan will actually take effect for Manitoban families.

This government's own child care and schools policy promises that all new schools must include a child-care centre but, unfortunately, plans to create a new school in Tyndall Park and numerous other communities have been cut by this NDP government.

Trustees have been calling for new schools, many of which would have also had new child-care centres. The member for Burrows (Mr. Brar) and I recently had a meeting with Winnipeg School Division 1 on this very issue.

Will the government reverse their decision and restore the construction of Tyndall Park school, to assist with the desperate need of child care in northwest Winnipeg?

* (14:30)

Hon. Nello Altomare (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): Again, I do want to thank the member for that question because it's important one.

You can't cut what was never planned, what was never budgeted for. That was clearly what went on before. I can tell you the irresponsibility of the former government in promising these things that were never paid for, never budgeted for, played on the emotions of parents that want the best for their children.

They finally elected a government that's going to look forward to providing the supports in the schools that they need. In Budget 2024, two schools planned, two schools will be built, two schools budgeted for. What did they do? Nothing.

Ride for Dad Cancer Charity MPI Speciality Licence Plate

MLA Mike Moyes (Riel): Honourable Speaker, more than 1.2 million men in Canada have prostate cancer, and 80 per cent of them do not know it.

Established in 2000, the Ride for Dad aims to change this. This event raises money toward research and awareness to help save men's lives and improve the quality of life for men and their families living with this disease.

Can the Minister of Justice please update the House on this work his department is doing with Manitoba Public Insurance to increase awareness and support of this charity?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): For decades, Ride for Dad has been saving lives by supporting the Prostate Cancer Fight Foundation, raising awareness about the importance of early detection and supporting innovative medical research on the road to a cure.

This Saturday, the annual Motorcycle Ride for Dad will go from Polo Park to Assiniboia Downs through Selkirk and Gimli, raising awareness for funds along the way. The goal of every rider and every donor to the cause is the same as ours: to have more Manitobans hear those four amazing words, you are cancer free.

That's why I'm honoured today to share that the—in the months ahead, Manitoba Public Insurance will be developing a specialty licence plate to celebrate ride for dad and direct the proceeds towards their important charitable work.

Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

International Peace Garden Timeline to Receive Operating Grant

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain): Honourable Speaker, this Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage represents the government on the board of the International Peace Garden. At least, he should be.

So I have an easy question for him: Why is this government refusing to release operating grants for the international symbol of co-operation?

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism): As I have answered before in this Chamber, big believer in the International Peace Garden. As the member opposite is aware, I was at the AGM earlier this year. Glad to see that he was there as well.

We're a big fan of Turtle Mountain national park, of the work that the Peace Garden does. And I will allow—*[interjection]* Hey, listen.

We believe in parks, we believe in Manitoba. Real simple.

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

Mr. Piwniuk: Honourable Speaker, you know, the member—the minister has to realize that when the International Peace Gardens is in operation, they have to get ready for the season.

And the thing is, the minister doesn't realize that the fact is we actually have—the PC government gave money right before this time because the fact is they had to get ready for the tourism season.

Why is this government not giving the grant money to International Peace Gardens for the co-operation with the—North Dakota, to match North Dakota's funding?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): I'll take the opportunity to educate the member opposite that actually—I will educate the member opposite that the grant funding to the International Peace Gardens actually is provided—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Schmidt: —by the Department of Environment and Climate Change, not the department of sports, heritage, culture and tourism. So correction for the record.

I'd also like to share with the House some very exciting Green Team funding that came to the International Peace Gardens this year, out of the Office of Municipal Relations, to the tune of \$33,620 for their grounds maintenance.

So again, our government is here to support Manitobans. We're here to support—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Piwniuk: This minister should be ashamed of herself, because the fact is when it comes to the International Peace Gardens, they cannot even actually—
[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Piwniuk: —at this point in time. They're looking for funding that—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order. Order.

I should not have to holler at the top of my lungs to call you folks to order. So, please, a little respect for each other and for the Speaker.

Mr. Simard: I just wanted to take—

The Speaker: The honourable minister—the honourable ministers—of Environment was not finished her answer. [interjection] Sorry, my mistake.

The honourable minister—the honourable member for Turtle Mountain was not finished his question.

Mr. Piwniuk: Thank you, Honourable Speaker, for giving me another opportunity.

Like, I said, the minister should be really ashamed because the fact is, you know, the International Peace Garden is actually looking for funding so that they could cover for payroll. Right now they cannot cover their payroll right now.

This minister should be—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage. [interjection]

Order.

Mr. Simard: I'm extremely proud to sit alongside the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (MLA Schmidt).

I'm extremely proud to be standing here with this team that invests in Manitoba, that invests in parks.

And I'd like to welcome everyone from Manitoba to take the drive down to the International Peace Garden. This spring, this summer, take in all of the beauty of that region. Go there for peace. [interjection]

Why you yelling? Why you giving hate a chance? Give peace a chance.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

The time for oral questions has expired.

As agreed to by the House on May 21, this afternoon the House will debate second reading of Bill 33, The—

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

The Speaker: As agreed to by the House on May 21, this afternoon the House will debate second reading of Bill 33, The Change of Name Amendment Act (3), followed by Bill 34, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act, then Bill 36, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act.

Speaker's still standing. [interjection] Order.

For each bill, the minister can speak for a maximum of 10 minutes, followed by an up to 15-minute question period and answer period. The critic from the official opposition and the independent member may then speak for a maximum of 10 minutes per bill, following which, I will put the question on second reading of the bill.

Therefore, I will call second reading of Bill 33, The Change of Name Amendment Act.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 33—The Change of Name Amendment Act (3)

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Consumer Protection and Government Services): I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care (MLA Asagwara), that Bill 33, The Change of Name Amendment Act (3), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Before we proceed with the reading that, I'd like to acknowledge that we have with us in the gallery—seated in the public gallery from the University of Manitoba English Language Centre, 25 students under the direction of Tracey Giesbrecht. And they're guests of the honourable member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses).

* * *

The Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure, Consumer Protection and Government Services, seconded by the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care (MLA Asagwara), that Bill 33, The Change of Name Amendment Act (3), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

* (14:40)

MLA Naylor: I am pleased to speak to the House today about Bill 33, The Change of Name Amendment Act (3).

This bill will exempt name-related changes under The Change of Name Act requirement to publish in the Manitoba Gazette if the reason for the name change relates to the person being transgender, two-spirit Indigenous, non-binary or gender diverse. The amendments also update the legislation with gender-neutral language.

The proposed amendments will apply to both adult and child applications. Currently, in accordance with The Change of Name Act, once a legal change-of-name application has been approved by the director of the Vital Statistics branch, a notice is published in the Manitoba Gazette. The person's new name, their original name and city or town of residence are then published in the Gazette.

Under the current legislation, a person may request a waiver to be exempt from the publication requirements for specified reasons that may cause undue hardship. However, to obtain an exemption waiver, they must submit an exemption request to the director of the Vital Statistics branch. This process is onerous and creates unnecessary barriers to service for the trans, non-binary, gender diverse and two-spirit community.

I would like to provide you with examples of increased and unnecessary barriers that the current legislation creates for the affected community.

The first example relates to applications submitted by Manitoba residents who were born in other Canadian jurisdictions. When an exemption is made

under the current legislation because publication of the name change will cause undue hardship, the Vital Statistics branch is not able to send a change-of-name notification to the applicant's Canadian jurisdiction of birth, which requires them to update the applicant's birth record. If a notification is not sent, then it is up to the applicant to provide proof of change of name to their Canadian jurisdiction of birth in order to have their birth record updated to their preferred name.

Applicants who are born in Manitoba and are exempt from the publication requirement currently experience delays when applying for replacement birth certificates or change-of-name certificates due to additional security screening measures. These measures are in place to confirm eligibility of applicants and to ensure information is not being released to ineligible recipients, as these name changes are confidential.

Additionally, the Vital Statistics branch is not able to include these name changes in the reports being sent to other service providers like Manitoba Public Insurance and Elections Manitoba, which results in the applicant having to provide proof of their name change in order to link their former and current names. This change will also save applicants \$20 that's now spent on the gazetting fee.

Community members have been advocating for the Vital Statistics branch to remove the requirement to publish legal name changes in the Manitoba Gazette in order to prevent discrimination, harassment, or even violence. The Vital Statistics branch will implement immediately once these changes are enacted.

I'm excited about these amendments we're proposing here today. I know that they will, in fact, benefit all Manitobans by building a more inclusive province. This is another step that our government is taking to support the rights of gender-diverse individuals, and we will advocate for the right to self-expression and identification for all Manitobans.

I look forward to the opportunity to hear from Manitobans on this important change during the committee stage.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Questions

The Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be—no, 15—a question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any opposition or independent member in the following sequence: first question by an official

opposition critic or designate; subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized oppositional parties; subsequent questions asked by each independent member; remaining questions asked by any opposition member; and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): Can the minister clarify how they plan to ensure that, for those people who request that their name change is not published, that that information does not get accidentally released by officials? What protections will the department put in place?

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Consumer Protection and Government Services): Sorry, I'm not sure I fully understand the question. I mean, obviously all the work that is done with the Vital Statistics is completely confidential, so there's no accidental releasing of names.

Currently, anyone who changes their name legally, their original name and their new name, as well as their—where they live is published in the Manitoba Gazette. That is a fact for everyone who's changing their name.

What this does is protect people who are trans, non-binary, Indigenous two-spirit or gender diverse so that they aren't at risk of that name being made public.

Mrs. Cook: And, yes, if we accept that these changes are necessary to protect people, it then follows that additional measures should be put in place, particularly in an era of cyberattacks like we've seen in multiple places recently.

So, again, I'll just ask, is the department planning to put extra measures in place to ensure that this information does not get hacked, released or shared with somebody it shouldn't be shared with?

MLA Naylor: The Vital Statistics branch has responsibility for birth certificates, death certificates, change of names and a host of extremely confidential information. It is, in fact, one of the most secure office buildings I've ever been in. If you work in one part of the department that registers a birth, for example, you actually cannot even enter the part of the building where the certificates are printed off.

It—there's so much has been done. I think, historically, there were some significant challenges in that department that were raised by the Auditor General several years ago, and they have all been addressed. And I

have utter confidence in the confidentiality of that office.

Mrs. Cook: So what measures will be put in place to prevent people from using the provisions of this bill for purposes other than what they are intended for? I'm speaking of people who might seek to change their name to avoid creditors or other legal issues and ask to not have their name published.

Are there any measures in place to prevent that?

MLA Naylor: Well, if you're avoiding a creditor, it's a pretty big step to go to to change your gender and your entire life and identity.

So, I guess, just like with the use of bathrooms, we have to have some confidence and belief that people living with the challenges of living in a transphobic world don't take that lightly.

Mrs. Cook: To clarify, I'm not talking about trans people. I'm talking about people who are going to see this as an opportunity to use these provisions for other purposes, for people who simply want to avoid the law.

I'm just wondering if there are any provisions going to be put in place to prevent people who shouldn't be using these provisions from using these provisions.

MLA Naylor: Yes.

There's an incredibly onerous—far too onerous—system that one needs to go through to change their gender markers within the province. And so if someone is changing their name for reason of gender change, that data is all available within the Vital Statistics branch.

Mrs. Cook: And does this bill create any new requirements for Vital Statistics or the director of Vital Statistics? Is there any possibility that this will require additional resources for the department?

MLA Naylor: This bill actually will make the process a little smoother.

Right now, if someone is changing their name for reason of gender and they make a special request, they can go through the steps to have their name removed from gazetting.

Instead, this makes it just an automatic step if people are changing for reason of gender, that it won't be put in the Gazette. So it's actually less work, less administration in the department.

* (14:50)

The other thing, the most important thing, I think, besides protecting people's confidentiality, is that this then automatically updates the name change to other government services like MPI and that kind of thing.

Any of you who've knocked doors have probably met someone at the door who has said, oh, that's not my name—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Mrs. Cook: Can the minister tell us a little bit more about the changes that have been made at Vital Statistics to clear the backlog and to address the security and privacy requirements raised by the Auditor General that she alluded to in a previous answer?

MLA Naylor: Yes, absolutely. I had the pleasure of sitting in that meeting as a member of PAC when the Auditor General addressed many of the concerns in that branch a few years ago.

I'm really proud of the work that's happened in that branch; the security measures that are in place; the additional training that's been provided to staff; and the updates to the—you know, to systems. Even our new death registry, which is finally going to be electronic; so there's a lot of exciting updates and changes.

In terms of backlog, there isn't one. We've cleared the backlog.

Debate

The Speaker: If there are no more questions, the floor is open for debate.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I am pleased to rise and put a few words on the record with respect to Bill 33, The Change of Name Amendment Act.

I learned a lot in reading this bill and doing a little bit of research about it. I was not aware of what happens when a person changes their name. I didn't know that it was published anywhere. I assumed that that was, you know, a private process that people underwent, so that was news to me.

And under this bill, this will provide an exemption from the requirement to publish in the gazette if the reason for the name change relates to the person being transgender, non-binary, gender-diverse, two-spirit Indigenous, non-binary or gender-diverse.

And I certainly understand why some folks might want some privacy around this name change, and I think the protection of privacy is very important to

most Manitobans; and certainly privacy in cases where there's potential for harassment.

I think that our side of the House has always supported privacy rights and making public safety a priority. I think we support ensuring that our regulatory framework here in Manitoba takes into account people's safety and the right to be free from harassment.

I don't have a lot of words to put on the record about this bill, so I'm not going to waste a lot of time doing so. I appreciate that this has been brought forward, and with that I will conclude my remarks.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

Bill 34—The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act

The Deputy Speaker: We will now move on to second reading of Bill 34, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister for Agriculture, that Bill 34, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act, be now read a second time and referred to to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Wiebe: I'm pleased to rise today in the House for second reading of Bill 34, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act.

The repeal would align Manitoba with provinces across Canada by allowing adults age 19 and older to grow up to four cannabis plants per residence, as permitted under the federal Cannabis Act.

The proposed legislative amendments also create the authority for robust safety and security requirements to be established in regulation so that we can keep our kids and our communities safe.

Let's be clear, Honourable Speaker. Consumer interest in growing their own cannabis will vary. For the vast majority of Manitobans, they will choose to consume cannabis by doing so by purchasing it at a well-established retail market, and that will not change.

However, this bill provides Manitobans the flexibility to grow cannabis at home, should they choose

to do so, while abiding by the measures we will bring in to ensure the safety and security for our kids.

Recreational cannabis has been legal in Manitoba for over five years now. Eight other provinces allow home-grown cannabis in addition to the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

And so, as we move forward, we will have the benefit of learning the best practices in other jurisdictions and learning from those changes, specifically those that have related to safety and security.

The regulatory framework will be developed through a robust consultation in coordination with organizations like MADD Canada, with law enforcement, and with others to prioritize that public safety and with a specific focus on protecting youth.

Honourable Speaker, I look forward to this House's support for this bill.

Thank you.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any opposition or independent member in the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic or designate; subsequent questions should be asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties; subsequent questions asked by each independent member; remaining questions asked by any opposition member, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): My first question for the Minister of Justice on this bill is, can he explain whether the bill will allow for individuals renting an apartment or house to grow cannabis plants at the home, or is this specifically for individuals who own their own principal residence?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): This legislation, as I said, will allow a person 19 years of age and older to cultivate cannabis in their residence, as defined under part 4.1 of The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Act.

However, I want to be clear: requirements under other provincial legislation like The Residential Tenancies Act, must be complied with, and home grow may be restricted in rental properties, as are other activities as defined in The Residential Tenancies Act.

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North): Can the member explain how the bill—or how we can ensure that the cannabis grown in a private residence will not be

blended potentially with dangerous additional substances that could hurt not only the user but the children in the home?

Mr. Wiebe: So I'm not sure if I heard the member's question correctly, so maybe I'll ask him to repeat it. I'm sure if he was asking specifically about safety of cannabis with regards to cannabis, or if he was implying that other substances or other plants may be grown in lieu of cannabis. So maybe if he can just clarify what his question was.

Mr. Wharton: Happy to clarify the question for the minister. Specifically, the concern is for the minister to explain what—there is probably a potential for a blending in—while the individual's growing a plant, potentially maybe putting a more potential potent drug within the plant. Is there any protection or any way that that can be stopped during the growth of the plant in the house?

* (15:00)

Mr. Wiebe: I'm not sure. I don't have an intimate knowledge of horticulture in the same way, apparently, the member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton) does, and so, you know, I appreciate him raising this. Safety for children, though, is going to be paramount, and that's why when regulations are developed, we're going to be looking at best practices.

We are not the first in the country to do this. In fact, we're just bringing ourselves in line with other provinces under the federal act. But what that does is it gives us the benefit of looking at best practices in how we can ensure the safety of children and others.

Mr. Balcaen: Just continuing on with my first question. So if a renter of an apartment or a renter of a house decides to grow this, and the landlord or the owner of the property does not want this, which law will supersede which?

Mr. Wiebe: The Residential Tenancies Act.

Mr. Wharton: The minister just mentioned in one of his answers about best practices. Who and what other jurisdictions that currently offer a four-plant-grow in their residence, who did he consult with?

Mr. Wiebe: So, again, just be very clear with members opposite, what this repeal of this act is initiating is the regulatory process as being undertaken by the L-C-G-A. We have full confidence in the work that they are able to do. But if members are curious, it is eight other provinces which allow homegrown cannabis, as well as the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

This is a federal act, a federal act that, in fact, was brought in alongside legalization of cannabis. So other provinces have in many cases been doing this for five years, up to five years. And so we have full confidence in the L-C-G-A to be able to work with other provinces, other jurisdictions, to get it right and to protect children here in Manitoba.

Mr. Wharton: Appreciate the answer from the minister, but there really wasn't an answer specifically to my question, so I'll ask it again. He talked about best practices, not—I didn't put that on the record; he did. And eight provinces are already doing it, so in talking to those other provinces, what has he learned in order to incorporate safety into this bill?

Mr. Wiebe: So it's incredibly important to recognize the work that the L-C-G-A does in terms of ensuring the safety of everybody when it comes to cannabis, and I would suggest, as well, with liquor in the province. That's what they do. They are a regulator, and they are good at what they do in the sense that they are going to take the best practices from across the country. They're going to implement it in a way that will prioritize safety; that's been the directive that we've given them and that all Manitobans would expect. So we have full confidence in the work that they're able to do.

Mr. Wharton: Who did the LGCA consult with?

Mr. Wiebe: Right, so, again, to be clear, what we're doing here this afternoon is we are hopefully moving through second reading of Bill 34. And what Bill 34 does is it actually repeals a section of the act that was created when cannabis was legalized here in Manitoba, and what this will then do is then start the process for the L-C-G-A. Once the Legislature has given our—made this change at the legislative level, that will allow for those regulations to follow.

So, again, great work that's done over there. I think the minister—or, the member opposite, who may have, in fact, been the minister responsible, would probably share my feelings about the L-C-G-A, but I believe that they're doing good work, and we want to work with them to ensure safety for all.

Mr. Wharton: Absolutely appreciate the great work that the staff at LGCA do. However, I will correct the record. I was the member—the minister for Liquor & Lotteries, not the member—the minister for LGCA; that runs under Justice, as the minister knows.

However, again, eight provinces have—are already doing this. Just wondering if the minister and/or the LGCA staff were able to communicate. And some of

those best practices, the minister has put on the record. That's my question. Yes or no?

Mr. Wiebe: Yes, certainly, this work has been begun in the sense of making sure that we get the legislation right. And that's why it's important to move quickly on this.

Unfortunately, this bill was held up with many others here in this Legislature, several days of what I've heard described as procedural poppycock, you know, day after day, holding up important legislation.

This is another example of that legislation that was held up, and I do hope that the member opposite will allow us to pass this, get to work with the L-C-G-A and get these regulations right.

Mr. Balcaen: I'm sure the procedural poppycock would not have continued if the House leader had moved the agenda forward as she was supposed to.

However, my question on this legislation is, the age of majority in Manitoba is 18. Why is the age 19 being put into this legislation?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, first of all, I'll just say it's interesting, after our days and days of debate on Bill 30, now the member opposite just concedes to the House that, in fact, it was just a political ploy by the House leader to block legislation to get a deal. I'm kind of surprised by that.

You know, I think the member opposite should maybe stop reading notes from failed Conservative candidates in Tuxedo—well, I guess time's ticking, it could be successful candidates in Tuxedo.

Anyway, I digress, Honourable Speaker. I think there's an important question here about the age of 19. Other provinces have certainly done that, but he might want to ask Brian Pallister exactly why age 19 was chosen.

Mr. Balcaen: Again, as I brought up in other questioning, we wouldn't have these long drawn-out debates on bills if they were put forward properly and we didn't have to ask so many questions and put so many words on the record.

However, with that I will say, what is the minister's plan with the revenue loss that is going to come from people that now grow their cannabis instead of buying it, and how will this impact the social and supportive programs that this NDP government keeps talking about that they support so much?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, I appreciate that the member opposite is now putting on the record clearly that our government does take social responsibility very seriously, and specifically when it comes to the use of drugs, of alcohol, prioritizes those and wants—we want, as a government, to ensure that they're used in a responsible way.

I think it is, as I said, a fairly small part of the market. Time will tell.

But we do want to ensure Manitobans that we are taking the social responsibility piece of this very seriously, and that's why we're continuing to fund and ensure that there's strength in those programs. And that's going to be an important part of what we're doing going forward.

Mr. Wharton: Again, on social responsibility, will the minister be looking at moving forward potentially with a regulation on increasing the funds towards social responsibility to ensure that Manitobans that are growing their own plants are fully aware of the outcomes that are possible and the health risks and other areas that need to be funded so that government is going their job?

Mr. Wiebe: Again, we expect the market to stay strong in terms of the retail cannabis market and, you know, in fact, this is something that, you know, is still a developing market, but certainly one that we expect to stay fairly strong and continuing to be stable, even with these changes.

But again, I believe that we're all on the same page here. I'm hearing the members opposite applauding our government for the social responsibility aspect that we've already undertaken, and they will be assured that we're going to continue that. That's going to be a focus going forward.

Mr. Balcaen: My final question for the minister is, with this new legislation and bringing forward cannabis growing now, is this a segue into the next step of bringing hard drugs decriminalization into Manitoba?

* (15:10)

Mr. Wiebe: No, and the member's heard this answer multiple times, specifically from the Premier (Mr. Kinew) of this province and, in fact, heard it in debate this morning every single time it was brought up.

And it's quite unfortunate. I think we heard the Deputy Premier (MLA Asagwara) speak very clearly about the need for unity on important issues, especially important issues where we're talking about the health

and well-being of Manitobans, and in many cases their very lives.

This is not a point to try to divide Manitobans on, and I hear once again the member opposite taking that hard right turn into that language of division. He went to the doorsteps with that message. I hope he's learned his lesson, and I hope together we can work on passing important legislation like this.

Mr. Wharton: We know the minister has not answered the question on whether—and who—what other provinces that he spoke to to work on best practices that he put on the record. So I'll ask him, though, did he have a chance to speak to the current retailers that have been growing this sector and, again, revenue for our province that'll help in education, health care and other services? Has he talked to the private sector about what impacts this potentially could have on their businesses?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, of course, Honourable Speaker, we've been in constant contact and communication with the retail—retailers and the retail market. Those folks understand, again, that this is a fairly niche potential market and there might even be some opportunities for them to enter this market and supply this market.

I find it curious, though, that this is where the former minister goes. And I know he's currently under an ethics commissioner investigation, and I'm not suggesting that they want to broaden out that investigation, but maybe all members opposite who have any kind of interest in the cannabis market, you know, maybe want to just make sure that their ethics commissioner forms are properly filled out.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further questions, the floor is open to debate.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Again, always appreciate the opportunity to put some words on the record, especially when it comes to bills that will have an impact on our community and law enforcement specifically.

So I was hoping in my bill briefings and in discussions with the minister that I would get opportunity to understand what clear regulations were going to be put into place to guarantee the safety and security of children and youth when potential toxic substances are being grown within a residence. And I say this not to downplay cannabis marijuana.

However, cannabis products are very toxic to young children, and there has been numerous cases of ingestion on record that shows the negative health effects to the youth. So I certainly would like to see very robust regulations that will protect our youth and children when this legislation is finalized.

Also have to ask, who will monitor these grows, and who will monitor the sale of the seeds to produce these cannabis products?

Again, with every piece of legislation, there's extra authority and extra work that has to be done by people on the back end, and particularly, and near and dear to myself, is the work that will be put onto law enforcement. This will put additional pressure on law enforcement, who will undoubtedly get called to investigate whether there's four plants, whether there's six plants, whether there's five, whether there's three.

So, again, it will put that pressure back onto an already burdened law enforcement system, and I thought that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) would have supported law enforcement rather than put additional burden onto them.

I'm also wondering if thought has gone into the opportunities that this will be creating for organized crime and organized crime groups. And I'm led to believe that it must have, because this minister brought in legislation that we spoke at length on here regarding criminal property forfeiture and the effects that that has on organized crime.

So I'm sure the minister has put two and two together that organized crime will fully inject themselves into this opportunity; this new lucrative opportunity.

So Honourable Deputy Speaker, what I can say is that our Criminal Property Forfeiture Units, their investigators and organized crime investigators in every major centre in Manitoba will become extremely busy.

I'll leave this with one final note, Honourable Deputy Speaker, is that great leaders make difficult decisions and often stand alone. Our current legislation ensures Manitoba is a leader in protecting the safety and well-being of its citizens.

I would encourage the minister to finally show some great leadership and leave the present legislation as is, status quo.

Thank you, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

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

Bill 36—The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act

The Deputy Speaker: We will now consider a second reading of Bill 36, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I move, seconded by the Minister for Justice, that Bill 36, the regulated health professionals amendment act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

The Deputy Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), that Bill 36, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

MLA Asagwara: Our government is taking steps to maintain high levels of trust and transparency in health professionals through proposed changes to the regulated health professional amendment act.

Under this proposed legislation, cases would be open to the public when a health professional's registration or certificate of practice is being considered for cancellation by their college due to a conviction for an offence relevant to the suitability to practise.

We've seen examples where people who testified in court or filed complaints against a physician were invited to attend the council meeting at which the physician's registration was cancelled, but the meeting at which this action was taken by the council was not open to the public.

Concerns were raised that this lack of transparency and decision-making was harmful to the integrity of the health system overall. We shared those concerns and took steps to help address them.

Transparency by colleges in their decision-making is important to foster public trust, particularly in responding to situations like this in which there has been a significant breach of that trust by a regulated health professional.

Manitobans must be able to trust their health-care providers and, when that trust is broken and a health professional is convicted of an offence that impacts that trust, it's important the public understands how the colleges respond.

The proposed amendments contain limited exceptions. Colleges would be required to disclose the reasons for invoking exceptions orally at the meeting and make them available to the public in writing.

The exceptions include: matters involving public security that may be disclosed at the meeting; financial, personal or other matters which may be disclosed that are a nature—that are of such nature, rather, that the desirability of avoiding public disclosure of those matters outweighs the desirability of adhering to the public principle that meetings be open to the public; a person involved in a civil or criminal proceeding may be prejudiced or a person's safety may be jeopardized.

These amendments will ensure increased transparency and accountability in decision-making by colleges, enabling the public to observe, rather, how they deal with a breach of the public's trust when one of their members commits an offence relevant to their suitability to practise is the norm and not the exception, and ensuring that if they determine that the public should not be permitted to observe how they deal with such a breach to the public's trust, they must provide the public with clear reasons why this will not be permitted.

* (15:20)

Our government continues to take steps to change the culture in health care, both for those delivering the care and for those receiving it. Bringing in this legislation will help rebuild trust and confidence.

Thank you.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any opposition or independent member in the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic or designate; subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties; subsequent questions asked by each independent member; remaining questions asked by an opposition member. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): Could the minister elaborate on who they've consulted on this bill?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I appreciate that question from the member opposite, and I certainly understand her enthusiasm for wanting to get some clarity around how we came to this point.

So we certainly have consulted with the colleges. We have consulted with folks on the front lines of health care and health-care leadership. We've also heard directly from Manitobans who access health care on a regular basis that this is a step that they're thrilled to see happen.

And I do want to note that there are survivors in our communities here in Manitoba, including in rural Manitoba, who spoke out very, very bravely due to trust being missed—trust being broken at the hands of a physician in this province. And that incident and those concerns also inspired the steps being taken with this legislation.

Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): I want to thank the member for bringing this bill forward. Of course, transparency, trust, safety for patients is of utmost importance, I believe, for everyone in this building.

Just curious if the minister can maybe comment on other jurisdictions across Canada, what they may be doing, are other provinces on board with this, are they ahead of us, are they behind us? Where does Manitoba fit in that scope of work across jurisdictional scan?

MLA Asagwara: Other jurisdictions are taking their own particular approaches. Other jurisdictions deal with regulated health professionals—professions act, or whatever structures they have, a little bit differently. So it varies across the country.

I will say that there has been a lot of conversation at the national level, be it ministers or health leaders in the organizations and bodies talking about the ways in which you can enhance trust and transparency with the general public.

Colleges here in Manitoba are doing that work independently as well. I was thrilled to be able to meet with the college of physicians and surgeons, who not only support this but are also looking at other measures as well, to make sure that the public has increased trust and not less.

So it varies across the country, but I would say that Manitoba's doing a great job under our government in working with our partners to move in the right direction.

Mrs. Cook: Which regulatory colleges would immediately come under the provisions of this bill?

MLA Asagwara: So this legislation does impact the current colleges that fall under the regulated health professionals act. So I think that a lot of folks automatically think of the College of Physicians and

Surgeons of Manitoba, but there are several other colleges that fall under this as well. And as new colleges are brought under the legislation as we progress, they will also fall under this new legislation.

So our hope is in that making sure that, you know, all colleges are not only well aware—which, at this time, they are—we're making folks who are going to fall under the act aware as they proceed, but that folks will also take steps on their own to enhance transparency and trust with the public.

Mr. Khan: I'm curious if the minister can maybe comment on how many other regulatory bodies in Manitoba currently already release details of the decisions to the public, whether it be within the medical field or outside of the medical field, if other public bodies are releasing this information.

MLA Asagwara: I don't know that I fully appreciate the entirety of that member's question, but I'll speak specifically to this legislation.

And so this legislation and the amendment will ensure that all those convicted of an offense related to—or having their—rather, having their license removed as it related to a conviction that's specific to their field of practice, that those proceedings will be public and those proceedings or decisions around that will be transparent for the public.

And so there are other incidents where somebody may be reprimanded or steps taken based on an offense that is not specific to their licensure, but this legislation is specific to an offense that relates to their practice and having their license revoked or changed in some other manner.

Mrs. Cook: This bill contains some pretty broad exceptions that colleges can use in order to hold these hearings in private, as they do currently. And I'm just wondering if the minister has any concern about colleges using those exceptions more broadly than is intended.

MLA Asagwara: The exceptions that are outlined, while they may seem broad, are fairly specific in nature. They pertain to issues around safety, issues that may prejudice an—a separate proceeding of some kind. I can certainly—I take the member's point, however, and that is where the decision to make sure that whatever the colleges decide to do needs to be made public, is key.

If, for whatever reason, choose to not have the proceedings happen publicly, they have to not only provide that orally; they have to provide that publicly

in writing. So there's an accountability measure that's been implemented in this legislation to help address that, and it's always important to note that we are a listening government and we'll continue to enhance legislation to protect folks in the health-care system as needed.

Mr. Khan: We might be getting lost in the weeds here a little bit, but after reading some of the amendments in the subsection bill breakdown, I'm curious if the minister has an idea or, if in the bill, there's a timeline on when the public will be notified of the meeting to review disciplinary hearing to cancel the licences?

MLA Asagwara: That's a really good question. That's something that I can take away.

The colleges, under their regulations, would have stipulations around that. But certainly, you know, this legislation allows for folks who have something they didn't have previously, and that is a level of transparency and accountability for the decisions made by the colleges.

In my experience with the colleges thus far, they have been very, very willing to take measures and steps that will enhance trust, foster trust, rebuild and repair trust.

And so I think that if anybody, any Manitoban, has concerns about whether or not, you know, legislation goes far enough, or the colleges can do more, I know that they're very open, like our government, to hearing that and addressing it.

Mrs. Cook: I know that there is still a fair amount of work to do to bring other professions under The Regulated Health Professions Act, and I'm just wondering if the minister foresees these provisions being an impediment to other professions being brought under the act.

MLA Asagwara: No. Not at all.

Mr. Khan: To follow the previous question, does the minister believe that massage therapists would fall under this Regulated Health Professions Act? There have been numerous reports in the last few years of sexual assault and misconduct within a massage therapist's workplace. So I'm just curious if this bill would bring massage therapists under there, and if not, does the minister believe that they will, at some point in the future, be covered under this bill?

MLA Asagwara: No. This legislation has nothing to do with bringing anybody under the regulated health professionals act. It's specific to strengthening legislation to protect the public and to foster trust and transparency when a health-care provider violates that trust.

There's a lot of work being done to bring different service providers and professionals under the regulated health professionals act. Our government is actively doing the work of enhancing capacity in that area, recognizing that it's been in place now for many years and it's still taking probably more time than what a lot of people would like in order for organizations to fall under that legislation.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further questions, the floor is open to debate.

* (15:30)

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I am pleased to rise and put a few words on the record with respect to Bill 36, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act. As the minister has stated, the intent of the act is to increase transparency. Generally, that's a laudable goal, particularly when it comes to the protection of patients in Manitoba.

And I know that there was a significant media attention and public outcry recently with respect to a couple of high-profile physicians who were convicted criminally and had their licences revoked. And I know that some other provinces have done—taken similar measures, and that this act will bring Manitoba into line with some of those other jurisdictions including Alberta, BC, Ontario and Newfoundland.

I imagine there was significant stakeholder consultation done on the bill, because there are a great number of regulated health professions in Manitoba operating with their own self-governing regulatory colleges, who would be, eventually, once they're all brought under the act, subject to this legislation. So I take the minister at their word when they say that the colleges are generally supportive of or understand this legislation and the intent of it.

Certainly, I believe that Manitoba patients have a right to know if a doctor or other health-care professional has been convicted of a criminal offence, and that's why their licence has been revoked. It's important in terms of improving transparency in Manitoba and patient safety.

And so with that, I will conclude my comments on Bill 36.

Thank you very much.

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

House Business

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Acting Government House Leader): I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Monday, May 27, 2024, at 6 p.m. to consider Bill 29, The Body Armour and Fortified Vehicle Control Amendment Act; Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended); Bill 31, The Captured Carbon Storage Act; Bill 33, The Change of Name Amendment Act (3); Bill 34, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act; Bill 36, the regulated health professions amendment act; Bill 201, The Manitoba Emblems Amendment Act (Provincial Stone); Bill 211, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act (Manitoba Parks Licence Plates).

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Monday, May 27, 2024, at 6 p.m., to consider Bill 29, The Body Armour and Fortified Vehicle Control Amendment Act; Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended); Bill 31, The Captured Carbon Storage Act; Bill 33, the change of name act (3); Bill 34, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act; Bill 36, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act; Bill 201, The Manitoba Emblems Amendment Act (Provincial Stone); Bill 211, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act (Manitoba Parks Licence Plates).

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Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): As per the leave—the sessional leave request that was made earlier, as there is no further House business, I would ask leave of the House to see the clock as 5 p.m.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there leave of the House to see the clock as 5 p.m.? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 5 p.m., the House is—sorry? *[interjection]* The House is adjourned and stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 23, 2024

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Byram	2088		
Members' Statements		Funding to Combat Aquatic Invasive Species	
Recognizing Youth Leaders in Burrows		Nesbitt	2097
Brar	2089	Moses	2097
Tamira Luise Tully		Closure of Clear Lake	
Schuler	2089	Nesbitt	2097
		Moses	2097
Filipino Bilingual Program Students		Aquatic Invasive Species	
Sandhu	2089	Nesbitt	2097
Katy Martin YWCA Award Winner		Moses	2098
Byram	2090		
Acknowledging Teacher-Librarians		\$10-a-Day Child Care	
Altomare	2090	Lamoureux	2098
		Altomare	2098
Oral Questions		Child-Care Spaces at Tyndall Park School	
Call for the Tuxedo By-election		Lamoureux	2098
Ewasko	2091	Altomare	2099
Kinew	2091		
Provincial Float Pool Nurses		Ride for Dad Cancer Charity	
Cook	2092	Moyes	2099
Kinew	2092	Wiebe	2099
Nurses Working Part Time		International Peace Garden	
Cook	2093	Piwniuk	2099
Kinew	2093	Simard	2099
		Schmidt	2099

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Debate on Second Readings

Bill 33—The Change of Name Amendment Act
(3)

Naylor 2100

Questions

Cook 2102

Naylor 2102

Debate

Cook 2103

Bill 34—The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis
Control Amendment Act

Wiebe 2103

Questions

Balcaen 2104

Wiebe 2104

Wharton 2104

Debate

Balcaen 2106

Bill 36—The Regulated Health Professions
Amendment Act

Asagwara 2107

Questions

Cook 2108

Asagwara 2108

Khan 2108

Debate

Cook 2110

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings

are also available on the Internet at the following address:

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