

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

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The Honourable Myrna Driedger  
Speaker*

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	Man.
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	Ind.
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen, Hon.	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 30, 2018

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**Madam Speaker:** O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Please be seated. Good morning, everybody.

**House Business**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** Can you canvass the House to see if there's leave to call Bill 223 on Thursday, November 1st, with a vote at 10:55 a.m., please?

**Madam Speaker:** Is there—*[interjection]*

The honourable government—the honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

**An Honourable Member:** It's 233.

**Madam Speaker:** Could the member just repeat it for the record?

**Ms. Fontaine:** Madam Speaker, can you canvass the House to see if there is leave to call Bill 233 on Thursday, November 1st, with a vote at 10:55 a.m.?

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to call Bill 233 on Thursday morning with a vote at 10:55?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield).

**Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Acting Government House Leader):** Yes, I'm just curious as to whether or not leave is required of the House. It is opposition hour, and I'm unsure as to whether or not leave is required.

**Madam Speaker:** She—I would point out to the member that she does need leave because she is asking for a vote at that same time. So, because of requesting the vote at 10:55, she does require leave for that.

And I'm asking you, is there leave to debate Bill 233 on Thursday morning with a vote at 10:55? *[Agreed]*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Acting Government House Leader):** I'm seeking leave of the House to move to debate this morning on Bill 201, The Manitoba Conservation Officers Recognition Day Act.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to move to debate on second reading of Bill 201, The Manitoba Conservation Officers Recognition Day Act? *[Agreed]*

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—  
PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 201—The Manitoba Conservation Officers  
Recognition Day Act**

**Madam Speaker:** We will move, then, to debate on second reading of Bill 201, The Manitoba Conservation Officers Recognition Day Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Johns who has eight minutes remaining.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I'm pleased to get up this morning and put a couple of words on the record in respect of Bill 201, The Manitoba Conservation Officers Recognition Day Act, which would, as members in the House know, proclaim October 1st in each year as Manitoba Conservation Officers Recognition Day.

And, you know, I think that I've actually spoken before in the House in respect of recognizing Manitoba conservation officers in the province and the amazing work that they do in respect of conservation. We honour the work that—and the dedication and the time and the energy that is put in by Manitoba conservation officers to protect, you know, our wildlife and our parks.

We are so blessed, Madam Speaker, to be home to such beautiful natural spaces, and I'm sure that everyone in the province recognizes our sacred responsibility to actually protect these spaces and to ensure that they're there for our children, our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren. In fact,

I know everybody—or everybody in the House should know that, you know, one of the basic tenets or core principles with indigenous world views and understandings is to always think seven generations ahead. And, certainly, in that respect we all have a responsibility to ensure that the environment and the animals that live and have the right to live within that environment are protected, and to protect our natural resources.

While educating the public in respect of our duties as citizens to ensure that our spaces—our beautiful spaces that we're so, so blessed to have—are protected and the roles of each of us in that responsibility. Certainly, we also, you know, stand with and continue to fight for public-sector workers. Particularly, you know, when we—particularly against the—this Pallister government that has frozen wages for about 120,000 public sector workers.

So, on the one hand, I do recognize that this is a private member's bill attempting to, you know, honour Manitoba conservation officers. And while that's great—it's great that there would be an official day, a provincial day to be able to do so. On the other hand, you can't say that you recognize and honour the work that these amazing individuals do, but at the same time and on the other hand freeze their wages or, Madam Speaker, I would suggest to you, not fill positions that are currently vacant.

I had the opportunity to meet with an individual who will remain nameless just because I don't want to get him in trouble. But he did share a story with me a couple of weeks ago about a pelican who was struggling in the waterways—actually, behind Wellington Crescent, where the Premier (Mr. Pallister) lives. And the pelican was really struggling and people didn't know what to do, Madam Speaker. And they were calling Manitoba Conservation. But the—that particular day, for a vast area which included Winnipeg, there was only one conservation officer on duty.

And so people had reached out to another organization, and this individual—who is the executive director—called Manitoba Conservation and said, you know, there's a pelican. It needs—you know, its wings are injured. Are you going to be able to come down? And the conservation officer relayed to this individual that he was in Dauphin and he would be—there was no way that he—it would take him a couple of hours to get back to the city. And this individual said, well—like, isn't there another conservation officer working? And he said no. He

said that the boundaries are changed, or I have more responsibilities.

\* (10:10)

So the responsibility of that one conservation officer included huge areas of Manitoba. And so this individual from this other agency took it upon himself with one of his staff to actually go get a boat—which is not his responsibility. He's involved in a complete other different organization—and went on—by—took the responsibility on his own, got a boat. They went out and—to a lot—a lot—of effort were actually able to save the pelican.

And so that's just one example of, you know, the Pallister government, you know, kind of talking out of their side of their mouth about, you know, we honour—you know, we stand for front-line workers, and we honour public sector workers, and we want to honour Manitoba conservation officers, but actually limiting, taking away, or not, you know, filling those positions of the very officers that they're talking about.

And so, you know, I would suggest to you, Madam Speaker, and everybody in the House here, it's pretty disingenuous to put forward just a bill, and yet, at the same time, you're creating the conditions that are the antithesis to what the bill is trying to do. The bill is trying to recognize Manitoba conservation officers, and in that recognition, trying to protect and maintain what we are so blessed to be a part of here in Manitoba and to protect those animals. But at the same time, you're basically tying the hands of these individuals to do the work that they're supposed to do.

So, you know, I would suggest to the Pallister government and to members opposite that if they really want to honour and recognize the amazing work of Manitoba conservation officers in a recognition day act—which I think is great. I think that that's beautiful—but actually don't tear apart the system in which they are supposed to do their work. Build up that system; give back the resources that you've taken; fill the positions that are currently empty, and then come back to us, and let's talk about a recognition day for these very, very important public sector workers here in Manitoba.

And again, Madam Speaker, not only on behalf of us here in the House, but for our children, for your grandchildren, for my grandchildren and for their grandchildren. Like, if you really, really want to recognize, and if you really, really want to protect

and education on the—our responsibilities, then give them the resources. Lift up that department; give them the resources that they need to be able to do the work that they have to do on behalf of all of us.

Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** Thank you, Madam Speaker—[*interjection*—and thank you for that.

It's an honour today to stand up and speak a little bit about this particular bill. I want to start off by talking about a fellow by the name of Ken Skwark. Now, many people in this Chamber probably haven't got a clue who Ken Skwark was, so I'll give you a little history of who he was.

Obviously, we're talking about conservation officers. That's what Ken Skwark did. He was a conservation officer stationed first in Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, spent many years there as a conservation officer, started his family there, had quite with connection to the community there, certainly a small community, a thriving community at that time, and everybody in the community knew who Ken was.

At one point in his career, the decision was made to try and get a little more southern, so they moved to Winnipegosis. But Ken was always drawn to the North. He was born in the North. As a matter of fact, he was born in Flin Flon—well, Creighton, actually, which is just across the border on the Saskatchewan side. Grew up, spent his life with his father hunting, fishing. Loved the outdoors and was naturally drawn to a career that involved being in the outdoors. As a conservation officer, he certainly continued to enjoy everything that the North had to offer: camping, fishing.

Ken Skwark was also my brother-in-law. There's a memorial in the town of Leaf Rapids outside the community centre recognizing several people that died in a helicopter crash fighting forest fires, and Ken's name is on that memorial.

So it is really important to recognize the work that conservation officers do in this province, and it's important to always remember the tough job that they have to do.

Now, Ken died helping fight forest fires up in Leaf Rapids, even though wasn't stationed there anymore. He was, by that point in time, stationed in Winnipegosis, but was always drawn back to the North, so any opportunity he got to go and help out his friends and his community, he did that.

Whether it was fighting forest fires in Leaf Rapids or going to Churchill on polar bear patrol—that was one of the other things that he did and always made sure that he made time to go back and do that.

So we talk a little bit—and everybody recognizes conservation officers, you know, during hunting season or when they're out fishing they might see a conservation officer, but it's the things they do in between those special times, if you will, that, really, they should be recognized more for.

So it was a bit of a honour today to stand up and talk a little bit about Ken Skwark's life and his life in the North, his life a conservation officer. Certainly, there was other people that died in that same helicopter crash, and their names are also inscribed on that memorial, which, every time I go to Leaf Rapids—because Leaf Rapids is part of my constituency now—I always make sure that I stop there and remember those people, not just Ken but all of them that died in that helicopter crash.

So we certainly want to recognize Manitoba conservation officers and the work that they do all year long. As the member from St. Johns pointed out, it's somewhat of a mixed message that this government gives those conservation officers, where on the one hand, they want to introduce a bill to recognize them, while at the same time starving them from resources to be able to do their jobs properly, safely and adequately.

Certainly, I know from the few dealings that I have nowadays with conservation officers in my constituency, there's not enough of them to go around. They have a tough time doing the jobs that they're assigned to do.

When they think that people want to recognize them but don't want to recognize them by honouring them with their rights to collective bargaining and pay increases, it's kind of a backhanded slap to say that we want to thank them for all they do—but we don't really want to thank them that much, along with other public servants that we should be recognizing for all the good work that all those public servants do.

Instead, this government seems bent on doing just the exact opposite, which is shameful and something that I would hope the member that brought this bill forward stands up and talks at his caucus meetings and makes them understand that just having one day to recognize this group of public

servants, when they should be recognizing them every day of the week.

\* (10:20)

Every time there—talk of collective bargaining, they should be recognized, rewarded, awarded for the work that they do in not just protecting the wildlife but in protecting hunters and fishers that are out there trying to enjoy such things or trying to earn a living for to feed their families.

So, certainly, recognition day is—it's a nice little gesture; recognizing their rights under the constitution would be an even better gesture, I think, and I certainly hope that the member that brought this forward will take that back to his caucus and say, listen, just having a day isn't enough; we need to do more as a government. We need to make sure that we recognize our public servants all the time.

I mean, we had a different minister that stood up and accused them of being disloyal and later had to apologize, and this government should apologize. It should apologize to conservation officers. They should apologize to all public servants for the disservice that they continue to do to each and every one of those people that works for the public good.

Some of the bills they brought forward are very regressive and probably unconstitutional. I guess some of those challenges are yet to be heard out in the courts, and we'll see where that goes. Other jurisdictions have tried similar things and have been proven to be unconstitutional.

So, really, we recognize that conservation officers are crucial to the overall strategy of conservation, environmental stewardship, environmental protection that should be more prevalent in this province, certainly with this government, than what it is. They play a critical role in part of that conservation effort—part of the sustainable wildlife management, conservation officers certainly are a critical part of that. Government policies are also critical part of it.

So, certainly, if we want to have the best conservation officers we need to make sure that they're properly trained, as all workers need to be properly trained. We need to make sure that they have sufficient resources to do their jobs properly, safely and with the dedication that I know from my dealings with Ken Skwark, that all conservation officers really want to make sure that they're doing the best possible job to protect and serve and make sure that they have the ability to do that which

they've chosen to do and that which they're committed to do.

I hope the government will recognize that every day and stand with them and honour them.

Thank you.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** I did pause momentarily before I stood because I did want to give a chance for the government, whose caucus brought forward this particular bill, the opportunity to speak. I was happy to give them an opportunity to put some words on the record. There are 37—sorry—40, 39 members that are capable of speaking to this particular bill, and yet, quite strangely, none of them were eager to stand up to support this bill to put some words on the record in support of conservation officers in this province. I think that's quite strange. Maybe I could just leave it at that. I could say more, but I do think that it speaks to this government's commitment to those workers and to all front-line workers in this province.

I do—I am quite happy, though, Madam Speaker, to put some words on the record about a subject that I feel very strongly about, about the work of conservation officers in this province. I have an opportunity in my recreational life to cross paths with conservation officers in a number of different ways, and I look forward to speaking a little bit about that—all in positive ways, I would add, so far, because I do really respect their work and appreciate their presence out in our wild places here in Manitoba and appreciate their work that they do in making sure that people are conducting themselves in a safe and respectful way.

But, before I get to that, Madam Speaker, I did want to just quickly return to the—sort of the premise of this discussion this morning and that is that this is a bill that, if I am understanding it correctly, is now labeled as Bill 201, but this is a bill that has come before this Legislature before, and this is an opportunity now, once again, to speak to it.

But we did have an opportunity to move forward on it, and it's my understanding that the government didn't prioritize this for whatever reason. I mean, it could be incompetence; it could be a lack of understanding of the legislative process. There are a lot of new members in the opposite benches there. It could be that, or it could be that the resolve that members opposite claim they have with regards to supporting conservation officers is not genuine, and if this is something that they really do feel strongly

about, I'm quite surprised that they didn't move forward more quickly on this and step up and recognize conservation officers in this province.

Because that is something that the previous government did, and it was one of the things that, as a member of that caucus, I was very proud to do, and I remember that day very, very clearly, in two thousand—I think it was 2015 when we had, you know, a gallery full of conservation officers who came to this House to recognize the work that our government had done leading up to that point.

This was a—you know, I was a part of some of those conversations. That was a true collaboration and a true process of reaching out and working with conservation officers, understanding what their unique needs were in terms of recognition and respect, and then moving forward with it, and the result of that was that we came forward as a Legislature with The Conservation Officers Act in 2015, and it was an important piece of legislation. It moved the ball down the field, so to speak, Madam Speaker, in recognizing conservation officers.

And, you know, I can't remember how the opposition at the time voted on that, but I would imagine it was a unanimous vote, you know. I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't have been, that every member of this House stood in lockstep in saying how important it was to not only recognize conservation officers, which is what this bill here is attempting to do, but actually give them the authority that they were asking for out in the field.

And this is what is absolutely crucial to understand when understanding the role that we've asked conservation officers to play.

So The Conservation Officers Act established the conservation officers' service, officers who are tasked with enforcing acts dealing with natural resources, fish, wildlife, protected areas, environmental protection, as well as other provincial acts prescribed by regulation.

The Conservation Officers Act sets out training, qualification requirements, and established a formal complaints process. Officers were transitioned from natural resource officers at that time to help fulfill their role in catching poachers, issuing summons, conducting investigations and testifying in court.

It was, as I said, a truly—a step forward in allowing conservation officers the ability to carry out their duties that we expect them to carry out and, as I said, I have a number of different ways in which

I interact with conservation officers throughout the year.

As members know, I enjoy hunting, although I don't get out as often as I would like to because of sometimes the demands of this job, but we're coming up on hunting season here in this province and I know, just talking with friends, family and other constituents who I've come to know through that interest in hunting in this province, that they are very excited to be out there to enjoy nature, to go on the hunt, and they understand that the safety for themselves and for their loved ones is paramount when you're out in the bush.

This is absolutely the most important thing that every hunter will tell you is, is that safety is No. 1, and everyone that I know looks to conservation officers to be those enforcers in the field who are able to catch poachers, to enforce safety in—out in—when they're hunting, and they respect the work that they do.

\* (10:30)

Likewise, Madam Speaker—and, you know, not that I'm wishing that the lake will freeze up any time soon, but ice fishing has become a family pastime and something that my children enjoy, you know, and they love getting out there.

And it's a great family activity and it's not just our family, but it is an exploding pastime for so many Manitobans. It's just gotten more and more popular as, you know, the ease of it, maybe has gotten a little bit more accessible for some families. And we go out on the ice and, absolutely, we are doing—we are fishing in a responsible and a respectful way. And we appreciate when we see those conservation officers come out on the lake and do their usual checks and make sure everybody's following the rules.

What I am noticing, Madam Speaker, is that there is—and, you know, some of this is anecdotal—but there is less contact with those conservation officers. And, again, for people who respect their role, you know, we want to see more conservation officers out there. We want to see more respect and more ability for them to do their job. But we know that those conservation officers are under attack, as is every other front-line worker in this province. They're, you know, feeling the pinch from this government who's freezing wages, who's, you know, cutting back in absolutely every way they can.

And so, when we come to an opportunity to discuss a bill like this which, again, I—you know, this is the kind of thing that I love to stand up and talk about on a Tuesday morning and absolutely every opportunity I can, because it's something that I'm passionate about—when the—when there's nothing behind it, when it's simply, you know, words on a page, when it's simply a recognition, I don't think that goes far enough.

So I hope that this is the beginning of a conversation. I hope that there's more emphasis put on respecting those conservation officers in terms of the work that they do, making sure they're getting paid the correct wages, they're getting the training that they need, they have the numbers—that there's enough of them out there, because I think there's a lot of work that could be done to make sure that they're absolutely everywhere in this province.

You know, I—as I said, I'm looking forward to all of these opportunities to get out in these places in Manitoba and enjoy wild places in Manitoba in a variety of different ways. Conservation officers, in my mind, are absolutely crucial not only for myself and the safety that I feel when I'm out enjoying these spaces, but the other side of this is, you know, we have so many places, provincial parks. We have so many great spaces that we've actually asked visitors now, to come and enjoy.

And you, Madam Speaker, will know, this summer, we had folks from the Midwest States come up here and that was a topic of conversation I had with so many of those legislators that came up to Manitoba. You know, where are you going fishing? Which lake are you going to? How are you enjoying the wild spaces that we have in Manitoba? And it was just an eye-opener as I talked to so many people throughout the province. Whether they enjoy it, whether they see the economic benefit of it, they understand how important those places are for Manitobans and they understand the absolutely crucial part that conservation officers play in that. We want to respect them, we want to show real respect by giving them the resources they need.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I'm pleased to get up and speak to the resolution this morning.

And, of course I want to, as all members on this side of the House, want to pay tribute to conservation officers and the incredibly important work that they

do on our behalf throughout the province in ensuring that there is a proper and lasting and enduring engagement with nature and the natural world that we can both enjoy, appreciate and something that will last on into future generations.

And I have to say that conservation has played a very important role in my own life. I—my academic work involved the history of environmental politics and my MA was on an organization called the Commission of Conservation which was established by the Laurier government in 1909, ran for about 10 years to 1918, and then was taken down by R.B. Bennett in a difference of opinion about the role of the commission and its relationship to government. In that era, of course, the First World War intervened during that time, also, to undercut, at that point, one of the earliest environmental movements in Canada.

But, having said that, for a short period of time between 1909 and the start of the first war in 1914, the Commission of Conservation highlighted the very important need, even early in the 20th century, for Canadians to appreciate the value of nature, its role in our economies and its role in ensuring that citizens live a productive life. So—I should also note that that organization was chaired by Winnipeg's own Clifford Sifton, and he's remained chair until about 1913 if memory works for me on that account.

And so, for me, it's a reminder that conservation is not merely a modern idea that has just sort of come to be in the past couple of decades. People often say to me, you know, well, how could you write on environmental history? The environmental movement really only began with Rachel Carson in the early 1960s. But, in fact, people have been engaging with nature since time immemorial and, more to the point, they've been fighting about that engagement with nature. And the Commission of Conservation was one of those organizations that highlighted the very real need to treat natural resources and the natural world both efficiently and effectively, not only for the present, but for the future.

And so I feel very strongly that we do need to pay tribute to our conservation officers and the work that they do each and every day, but like so many of my colleagues before me have indicated, actions—words without actions are meaningless, Madam Speaker. And we've seen time and again this government pay lip service to the value of the civil service, of the public service, of each and every



individual public servant, whether or not they're a conservation officer or engaged in some other role in the public service. But that—all it ever seems to be is lip service. There never follows concrete action with respect to either supporting the work of officials like conservation officers or providing the necessary investments for them to do their job properly or, in fact, to pay them their due respect in terms of the very difficult work that they often do.

And it needs to be said that, really, from the moment this government was elected in April 2016—*[interjection]* It's a dark, dark day in my memory but nevertheless a happy one from my—for my friend from Lac du Bonnet, not so much for those of us on this side of the House. But right from the get-go, Madam Speaker, this government has made it their business to have a war not merely on labour and the 'lavmour' movement more broadly, but on the civil service itself. Many have lost their jobs as a result of the cost-saving agenda, the austerity agenda, of this government. Others have been moved out into positions and moved around in such a way that—their can interrupt the effective delivery of the services that they provide.

And in still other ways, legislation brought to the floor of this House has been intended to scare and intimidate public service—public servants. And then—but we turn around, and then we have a day of—a resolution like this one that says, well, let's have an awareness day, but let's not actually do anything fundamentally to support their work, to invest properly in the work that they do and then to have their back when the time comes, because that's all part of the piece of having a relationship—a productive relationship with public servants.

As you know, I'm a former public servant with the City of Winnipeg myself, and it was the relationship between elected officials and public servants that often was the most important thing in ensuring that you get the very best out of what the public service has to offer. And it's disappointing to me, like it has been for so many of my colleagues, that we stand up and have these kind of resolutions, we have awareness days for any number of things. And these are all unarguably good causes, but, Madam Speaker, actions speak louder than words. And it's been one of the biggest failings of this government, in my judgment, in my opinion, that they have said one thing but then do quite another, to the detriment to the province of Manitoba, to the people of Manitoba, and, in particular, to the public service.

\* (10:40)

So I, along with my colleagues here today, want to ensure that we recognize the work of conservation officers. They really do remarkable work under really extraordinary circumstances and are called on to do a variety of things—a 'myrad' of things—as the word my friend from St. Johns often likes to use, and I like her for using it—a 'myrad' of things that we don't properly appreciate, often don't understand and probably don't recognize for the value that it offers.

So I—we on this side of the House want to ensure that conservation officers and, by extension, all public servants, are duly and properly recognized, appreciated, respected. But unless I've—I note a musical interlude going on here, Madam Speaker. That might help to improve the quality and character of this speech, with a little music on the side, although I have to say for my friend I would prefer a different kind of tune than the one he was just playing on his phone just a moment ago. *[interjection]* Yes. They're always—my friend from Flin Flon, as he so often right says, that the government side is always playing the wrong tune. And I can hardly disagree with him on that.

So, Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to get up and speak to this motion. I hope every conservation officer will hear the words by all members but, in particular, members on this side of the House that know that we appreciate the work. We endorse their work and we respect them for the very, very, very difficult job that they do, day in and day out, when they're not being appreciated one day of the year, as being called for in this particular resolution. But, at the same time, we also want those conservation officers to know—and all public servants to know—that we stand with them. We will never try to undermine them. We will do everything in our power to support their work. And we will stand against a government that consistently says one thing but then does something quite different.

I mean, who could imagine a government that would disband the Department of Labour? I mean, that makes no sense to us on this side of the House and, actually, I think speaks volumes about the government's relationship with workers writ large when it diminishes that very, very important department over many generations. To suddenly have it pushed aside and lowered in rank and 'consolid' into some department where it doesn't get the proper attention is not something that we would support.

But, on this moment, Madam Speaker, thank you to conservation officers for the work they do.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** It gives me great pleasure to stand up today and give some props to our conservation officers. They're doing amazing work out there to keep, you know, our animals safe, our waterways safe. And, you know, this government—although, you know, this is something that's great; we should be doing this every day—they continue to take resources and deplete, you know, the conservation workers. But yet, you know, they want to uplift and honour them for one day in a year.

You know, we continue to stand up for workers of Manitoba, unlike this government across here, who continues to cut services—cut, cut, cut. You know, they've been, in the community, named the party of cuts, which is, you know, a good nickname for them because that's all they seem to be doing is cutting at the expense of people, putting money in front of people.

So, you know, I want to tell a little story about a conservation officer that helped my brother. My brother was out hunting and he was in the bush and he witnessed this eagle coming. And he was with his girlfriend. They were both out hunting together, and this eagle came and there was a hydro line. And they witnessed this eagle hit this power line. And it went down. And his girlfriend saw a feather go down and, to us as indigenous people, you know, feathers from eagles are very sacred. So she wanted to go look and make sure this eagle was okay, and as they got there they came across the feather first. And they were looking around to make sure this eagle was okay and they couldn't find it, and as they were going back into the bush they came upon it. And this eagle got on its back right away and had its talons out and, you know, was frightened. It obviously had hurt its wing. It couldn't go anywhere.

And my brother phoned me, and he says, what do I do? Like, this eagle can't fly. We can't pick it up because it would go into attack mode. And I said, well, phone, you know, phone Conservation. So I looked up the number for him, he called Conservation and they couldn't go out to assist him; so what they had give—what they had said to him, they gave him some advice to call the Wildlife Haven Rehabilitation Centre. So he called there and they told him what to do, and there's my brother, chasing this eagle around in the bush. And, you know, they didn't want to leave it because they knew

what would happen. You know, someone would come along and probably kill the eagle or it would die from its injuries.

And this man was going by—a gas truck was going by and witnessed what my brother was doing, running around in the bush. And he came out and assisted, and they threw my brother's sweater onto the eagle, and right away the eagle just, like, you know, stopped moving. They picked the eagle up; they put it in the back of my brother's truck. And the gas guy had some—I don't know what you call them, but to, you know, put their talons together so they wouldn't attack, like, run around my brother's truck. So they drove to Île des Chênes and they brought this eagle to the wildlife rehabilitation centre. And he took a bunch of pictures, and it was quite big; like, it took up almost the whole back of his truck. And he got there and the eagle was saved. They called him when they let this eagle go, and, you know, at—they nursed it back to health and this eagle went and flew. And it was quite remarkable and he was quite proud of himself that he had done that.

But had the—he not called the Conservation, you know, he didn't know what to do. He had no idea. He might have left it. I don't know, because he was very scared of it because it kept going into attack mode.

But that's the kind of work that our conservation officers do on a daily basis. You know, they're out there making sure people aren't poaching, they're not overhunting, they're not overfishing. And as an indigenous person, you know, our communities, that's part of our life. That's how we feed our families in our community.

As you know, in our fly-in communities, in our First Nation communities, food is very high-priced. Everything's high-priced, so our families rely a lot on, you know, the meat that our hunters go out and bring back; and it's not about, you know, going out and hunting for sport. It's about feeding the community.

And I know when my brother goes out hunting, like, he gives our side of the family food. He gives his side of the family food. He gives our aunts and uncles, so it's not just about us keeping, you know, that food for just us who's going out to hunt, but it's about feeding everyone and sharing with everyone.

And, you know, back in the day everything used to be made from these animals. We used to take the bone and we would use that to make tools, hunting tools, tools to use to eat. We would take the tendons

from, you know, these animals, and we would use them to sew. We would take the fur and we would use that for clothing to keep us warm and for shelter.

And it's not something that we take lightly. We've, you know, always continued to work with conservation officers in our communities. I go—I love fishing. So I love ice fishing, so in the winter I like to get out onto the ice and drill a hole and, you know, sit for four, five, six hours, sometimes not catch anything. But it's just being out in the nature, on the water, in the bush and being able to do those kinds of things.

\* (10:50)

And it's because of our conservation officers and the work that they do. They keep those spaces safe so that, you know, people aren't running around with guns in all areas of, you know, our city and outside of our city, but that, you know, they're keeping our community safe.

You know, this government has taken resources away from our conservation officers. They's—they've also laid off a bunch of conservation officers, you know, and here they want to say, oh, let's recognize them. Well, why not recognize them by giving back the resources that they took? Why not recognize them by giving them the wage increases that they deserve? You know, this government says we need to freeze all, you know, wages and, you know, people are doing hard work; they deserve to be paid for the work they're doing. But this government doesn't recognize workers in Manitoba. They recognize, you know, that there's money to be saved and it doesn't matter at what cost, and if it's the safety of the community—which is what exactly they're doing by eliminating some of these positions and taking away these resources—they are putting people's safety at risk.

So, you know, although it's a beautiful thing to do, to recognize, they also need to recognize the void that they're leaving by making all of these cuts. And, you know, this party seems to think, oh, we're doing good; we're seeing results. Well, you know, I don't know who they're talking to, but I know that the results that they're getting aren't good results. We see tuition rise, you know, that's making it harder for low-income families. If we want to lift people out of poverty, we need to make education accessible, and this government has taken that accessibility away from Manitobans.

If we look at our health-care system, 95 less nurses in our hospitals. You know, is that results?

Absolutely not. You know, we—we'll continue to stand up for, you know, Manitobans and their rights and, you know, to have conservation officers in the community making sure our waterways are good.

You know, we're getting mixed messages. You know, the member that brought this bill forward, he's—I don't know what he's doing in his caucus because he's sure not standing up for conservation officers. He's saying, yay, let's, you know, recognize these officers, but at the same time, he's not standing up for their wages, he's not standing up for the resources that are being cut, he's not standing up for their jobs and the many that have been laid off.

So, you know, I implore him to stand up, you know, speak out, start—[interjection]—and the member over here from Radisson, you know, he's laughing over there about people's jobs being lost and about asking the member to stand up for the rights of workers in Manitoba. You know, we don't think that's funny over on this side of the House. We're constantly, you know, bringing this government to task and saying, workers in this province deserve, you know, to be recognized, but recognized every day, by putting the resources back that they took, by giving the people back their job that they laid off, by giving the resources that they took and quit sending miss—or mixed messages. If you want to recognize and really uplift, then give them back their resources.

So beautiful bill but, you know, it doesn't go far enough. Miigwech.

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** The subject of today is a recognition day act. And it was—I was hoping that it would be a salary increase act for conservation officers.

When I first came to Canada in 1980 and went hunting, it is—it was a very good experience for me because I did realize that there were officers undercover, natural resource officers—they—who were not in uniform, who were checking up on our hunting licences. And the first encounter was, who are you? Why are you asking for my licence?

He says—he shows me his ID and—but he did not have a badge. So I said, you can do this? He says, yes, it's one of my powers. And we showed him our licences.

The first thing that struck me was that they appeared to be very passionate about the work that they do. They appear to be very concerned about the wildlife whose environment we have invaded. And it's—when we say conservation, it relates entirely to the fears that we have, that sometimes we overhunt, overfish, and we abuse the environment, and we don't obey the rules of—that are of that day or of that period that would suggest that we should at least try to conserve our natural resources and the environment where they live in for posterity. That we should at least try and attempt to restore into its natural state the environment that we sometimes violate by cutting down trees, or putting something else in the environment that animals live in; their natural habitat.

And I wanted to speak more about the recent collisions that we have, us humans, in those highways that are supposed to be serving us to reach the developed areas, especially in the southeastern portion of our province. The most sinful thing that we have done is that we have developed areas where wildlife is supposed to stay.

And during my earlier years living at Seven Oaks near Leila, there was a family of red foxes—a family of red foxes that have lived there, perhaps, for decades. And before the fences at our Seven Oaks Crossings area were put up, those foxes were visiting with us. But my sons and my wife were all in amazement of the beauty of those red foxes. And those red foxes still remind me of the red fox that I saw in the sand dunes of Prince Edward Island.

And we have lost—we have lost almost all the habitat that they had just because we wanted to develop more and more of the suburban of our city. And the suburban areas of our city—

**An Honourable Member:** Question. Come on, Ted. Question.

**An Honourable Member:** Really.

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Marcelino:** I still have four minutes. *[interjection]* What right do they have to stop me from speaking. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have four minutes remaining.

\* (11:00)

### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private members' resolutions, but before we move into that, I would like to introduce to you some students that are in the gallery for a short period of time.

We have, seated in the public gallery, from Manitoba Parents for Ukrainian Education, 40 grade 5 students from Springfield Heights School, Ralph Brown School and R.F. Morrison School, and these schools are located in the constituencies of the honourable members for Rossmere, St. Johns and Kildonan.

On behalf of all members here, we welcome you all to the Manitoba Legislature.

### House Business

**Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Acting Government House Leader):** Pursuant to rule 33(11), I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Saran). The title of the resolution is Relaxation of Federal Immigration Rules for the Seniors' Live-in Family Caregivers.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for The Maples. The title of the resolution is Relaxation of Federal Immigration Rules for the Seniors' Live-in Family Caregivers.

### RESOLUTIONS

#### Res. 22—Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities

**Madam Speaker:** The resolution before us this morning is the resolution Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, being brought forward by the honourable member for Riding Mountain.

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** I move, seconded by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson),

*WHEREAS the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) was formed on January 1st 1999, with the merger of Union of Manitoba*

*Municipalities (UMM) and the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities (MAUM); and*

*WHEREAS the AMM provides valuable services to its members such as assistance with human resources issues and job postings, and bulk purchasing of products and services; and*

*WHEREAS the AMM's annual conference brings together mayors, reeves, councillors and provincial ministers from across the province in a valuable networking and advocacy opportunity; and*

*WHEREAS the provincial government has acted on a longstanding call for the AMM to adopt basket funding respecting the ability of municipalities to set their own priorities with less provincial red tape; and*

*WHEREAS the provincial government is committed to continue working collaboratively with municipalities and respecting the principle of fair say as set out by the AMM.*

THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba congratulates the Association of Manitoba Municipalities on its 20th anniversary and extends its best wishes for many more years to come.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt), seconded by the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba congratulates the Association of Manitoba Municipalities on its 20th anniversary and extends its best wishes for many more years to come.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** It has been said that municipal government is the most important level of government. It's an apt description because municipal government deals with matters which directly concern every resident of a community.

Those were the words of the late Ronald Tuckwell, as printed in the Western Municipal News in 1959. Tuckwell would know better than anyone, as he wore two hats, serving on the Pilot Mound town council and also as a publisher of the Pilot Mound Sentinel Courier community newspaper.

*Mr. Doyle Piwniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

After leaving Pilot Mound, he was active as a legislative reporter for Manitoba's weekly newspapers for 21 years.

It is indeed a pleasure to introduce this resolution today that congratulates the Association of Manitoba Municipalities on their 20th anniversary coming up on January 1st, 2019.

However, the history of the organizations representing municipalities in this province dates back much further than two decades.

In 1905, Brandon Mayor John W. Fleming invited municipal politicians from around the province to the western Manitoba city to discuss the formation of an organization to represent municipal governments.

Fifty people arrived in Brandon from 31 rural and urban municipalities in time for the opening session. It was reported that the mood was upbeat and the group promptly passed a motion approving the creation of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities or UMM,

Membership in the UMM grew rapidly, leveling off at a little over 100 municipalities by 1950. By 1949, some urban municipalities decided the time was right to go their own way. On the invitation of Dauphin Mayor William Bullmore, a group of 65 to 70 urbans met to discuss his proposal of a new organization for urban municipalities.

The vote was nearly unanimous to form a new organization called the Manitoba Urban Association. This name was used until 1970 when the name was changed to the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities, or MAUM.

Eventually, both UMM and MAUM officials determined that having two municipal organizations in the province was counterproductive.

In 1985, the two organizations formed a task force to investigate a merger on the grounds that, quote: One association that represents all municipal corporations in the province would have a much stronger voice than two separate associations. End quote.

Motions were subsequently passed by the membership of both organizations that resulted in the formation of the present-day Association of Manitoba Municipalities on January 1st, 1999.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the mission of the AMM is to identify and address the needs and concerns of their 137 members to achieve strong and effective municipal government. I would submit this mission is likely very similar to the ideals put forth by Mayor Fleming in 1905 and Mayor Bullmore in

1949. Our Progressive Conservative government recognizes that elected municipal officials are the front-line representatives for the citizens who live in our cities, towns, villages and municipalities. They are the people citizens turn to for local government, governance and improvements to their communities.

Our government's actions over the past 30 months since we were elected have proven our government is committed to listening to the ideas and issues that municipalities raise through their resolutions that are debated on at AMM's annual convention. We are proud of the partnership we have established with AMM and look forward to continuing to work collaboratively to develop new positive framework for municipalities moving forward.

One of the most important things our government has done to date is to give municipalities a fair say in allowing them to best determine their own priorities. We acted on a long-standing request from AMM to adopt a basket funding model, respecting that the municipalities who are closest to the people they serve should have the final say in setting their own priorities for spending money with less provincial red tape. This is totally different than with the previous government, who believed in a top-down, itemized approach which outlined exactly how funds were to be spent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there have been hundreds of municipal representatives who have served on the executives of UMM, MOM and AMM over the past 114 years, giving of their time freely to serve their respective associations. Currently, the board of AMM consists of a president and two vice-presidents, as well as two representatives from each of the seven regions across Manitoba, along with a representative from the City of Winnipeg and the Manitoba Municipal Administrators' Association.

If I could, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to put on the record the names of the people from my area who have served as the president of either the UMM, MOM or AMM.

The community of Birtle has the distinction of having three former presidents: Ron Bell, Margaret Hodson and Ray Howard, all of whom I had the pleasure of knowing personally and working with as the owner of the local community newspaper.

Robert Cochran and JC Scott from the Blanshard municipality served; as did Ken Rapley of Strathclair; James Burgess of Russell; James Chipperfield of Minnedosa; and W. Courtney Wroth of Ellice.

I would like to recognize the MLA for Agassiz, who served as the urban vice-president of AMM when she was the mayor of Gladstone.

Several other MLAs on our side of the House have been elected to municipal councils and served. They include the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Fielding); the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson); the member for Dauphin (Mr. Michaleski); the member for Gimli (Mr. Wharton); and the member for Interlake (Mr. Johnson). I myself served as one term as a councillor in the village of Shoal Lake.

The AMM has been in the practice of alternating their annual convention between Brandon and Winnipeg. This year, the 20th annual convention entitled Two Decades, One Voice, will be held at the RBC Convention Centre in Winnipeg from November 26th to 28th. This year's convention will be extra special, as coming off the recent municipal elections many new councillors will be attending for the first time.

I know that attending this convention is very high on the priority list of MLAs in this House. It is a time when ministers have the opportunity to meet with councils, to listen to their concerns, and as MLAs, it's always a pleasure to renew acquaintances with elected officials from our constituencies as well as meet new friends from around the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all work and no play would make for a dull convention, so the AMM has several social events planned for networking in a very relaxed atmosphere. Our great Canadian, Rick Mercer, will be one of those people who will be at the convention this year.

\* (11:10)

In closing, I'd like to welcome AMM Executive Director Joe Masi in the gallery with us today, and I would ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Joe and the AMM on their 20th anniversary and extend best wishes in the years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

### Questions

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party; any 'subquestions' must follow a rotation between parties. Each independent member may ask one question, and no questions or answers shall exceed 45 seconds.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Well, thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Pallister government gutted the Municipal Road and Bridge Program, cutting the funding levels by 84 per cent. Over 80 communities have recently signed an AMM resolution, calling on the Province to reinstate the program.

Why did this minister and this government cut this funding?

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think we heard the same question in question period yesterday and I'll try to—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** —reiterate what's going on. I think our government is—what is prudent is re-evaluating programs. We certainly support municipalities, and I think we're going to be looking at some new federal funding. And we'll be working with municipalities collaboratively, moving forward.

**Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East):** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know when, even using my experience on AMM and with the City and working with AMM, and attending some of their meetings, is very productive. They do a lot of hard work and I welcome Joe here, today, joining us.

I know one of the things with our government and anything that we've done with AMM prior, it all comes down to consultations and working together collaboratively as one big team, so I'm just wondering if the member could maybe touch base with us on what kind of consultations he's done in preparation of this resolution.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Well, thank you to the member for Brandon East for that question. The MLAs on this side of the House have a very positive relationship with members of their municipal councils and their constituencies.

It would be fair to say that we consult with these councils on a very regular basis. We find they are keen to work in partnership with our government to create better communities and a better Manitoba.

**Mr. Maloway:** And the member's answer to my first question wasn't any better than the non-answers that we got yesterday with the present administration.

So, now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to ask this member, does he support the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) cuts to the Municipal Roads and Bridges Program?

**Mr. Nesbitt:** On that side of the House, they always like to talk about cuts, and I think it's—we certainly take a look at all of our programs and we were trying—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** —to get value for money with any program we put forward. And we'll be working alongside AMM and the municipal councils to ensure that they have good roads in this province, moving forward.

**Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin):** I want to thank the member from Riding Mountain for bringing this really positive resolution to this House. And I do want to welcome Joe Masi here from the AMM. He's—I've known him for—I've seen him for many, many years and the great work that he's doing with AMM.

But, can I ask the member, what—why did the member decide to recognize the 20th anniversary of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Well, thank you to the member for Dauphin who, as I told you in my speech, also served on council. I thank him for his service.

Recognizing any anniversary is important whether it be personal, business, or municipal. On this side of the House, and I would hope amongst the ranks of the two opposition parties and independent members, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they are also proud of the good work done by AMM.

The 20th anniversary seemed like a fitting time to make our views known in an official resolution.

**Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook):** Thank you. An issue that we've been hearing from our municipalities is that they're concerned that the Province has yet to make a deal with them, as it relates to cannabis.

Has the team across the way there made any progress in this respect.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have certainly allowed municipalities to have their own independence on cannabis sales in their communities. They—there—I think there were some plebiscites in the recent election about cannabis sales, and we'll continue to work 'collavorty' with municipalities in terms of revenue sharing, moving forward.

**Mr. Maloway:** I'd like to ask this member whether the cuts of this government to this Municipal Road and Bridge Program embodies the spirit of his particular resolution today.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Well, Mr. Speaker, that member on the other side seems to be obsessed with that particular program, and I can assure him that our minister is working—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** —our minister is working closely with AMM and with the municipalities and will be liaising on with them at the convention to discuss this further. We have no intention of abandoning municipalities and their roads, moving forward.

**Mr. Isleifson:** I want to go back just a few years when I was involved with municipal politics and I chaired the City of Brandon Environment Committee. And I attended a function to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities through AMM and had the great opportunity of touring a facility, a recycling facility in Niagara Falls, Ontario. And a lot of that information came back and allowed us in—working with AMM and with the City of Brandon to implement a lot of those things.

I'm wondering if the member can give us further details on contributions made by AMM for the Province of Manitoba.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** The member from Brandon East certainly has a lot of municipal council experience, and I thank him for his service as well.

So AMM and its executive work with the provincial government to bring forward ideas and concerns of their membership. Through resolutions passed at their annual convention, AMM lobbies the government for changes to The Municipal Act or programming that is delivered to their members. AMM counts on its members to tell them what they need, and our government counts on AMM to be the

conduit to pass that information up the ladder in a unified way.

**Mr. Maloway:** With Joe Masi in the gallery, I'd like to ask this member whether he will approach the Premier (Mr. Pallister), talk to the Premier and try to get him to reverse these cuts to the bridge program.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** I don't know what happens on that side of the House, but we have the opportunity to talk to the Premier all the time. We discuss many topics. Anything can be discussed around the table in a very open and transparent manner, and—

**Mr. Michaleski:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Michaleski:** —I know—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Michaleski:** You know, I'd—this resolution recognizes the 20-year anniversary of AMM. And as a councillor, I did value the work of the AMM, and I just would like to ask the member, can he tell us why addressing this—addressing our commitment to AMM is so important for Manitobans?

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Quite frankly, since being elected, we have worked diligently to rebuild the trust between AMM and the provincial government. Municipalities were still smarting from being forced to amalgamate in a heavy-handed, dictatorial way after an ultimatum was delivered to them on the eve of their 2013 annual convention, forcing them—any municipalities under 1,000 to merge, effective January 2015.

We promised municipalities a fairer say, and we are delivering by working collaboratively with AMM and its members.

**Mr. Maloway:** I'd like to ask this member why this government's ignoring the AMM's request for predictable funding that will address the infrastructure deficit, which is, by the way, increasing.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Well, the member on the other side should know a lot about deficits. He handed us a huge deficit when we took office, and once again, we're working collaboratively with AMM to solve issues, to hear their voices and to put funding models in place that will be sustainable now and into the future.



**Ms. Klassen:** We introduced a municipal harassment bill recently to protect our municipal councillors from harassment and bullying. The PC government voted against it. So I'm wondering, when will they present their version of our bill?

\* (11:20)

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Our minister is certainly working on that. On this side of the House, we take harassment very seriously, and we're fully prepared to support a bill moved from this side of the House that will deal with the issue to protect all municipal councillors, officials and employees.

**Mr. Isleifson:** I want to ask the member a straightforward, simple question, because we know that the work that AMM does for the province of Manitoba is immaculate, it's incredible and it's something that's needed.

Can you provide us with a little extra opportunity of explaining why it is important that we, as legislatures, pass a resolution in this House to recognize the 20th anniversary of AMM?

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it's about relationships. I think everyone in this House has relationships with their municipal officials. They're the primary level of government that we deal with locally. They count on us, we count on them and recognizing them on this important occasion, I think, is—giving somebody a pat on the back at any time is great, and on a 20th anniversary, I think it's especially important.

So hats off to the AMM and best wishes for a great convention, Joe.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The time—time for question period has expired.

#### Debate

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The debate is open.

Any speakers?

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I'm very pleased to speak to the resolution today, and I did want to begin by noting that the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association sent out—they have a—newsletters that come out regularly, and they had one out recently talking about the huge cuts in infrastructure spending in Manitoba, which in fact, I think, on a percentage basis, are the largest in the—in Canada.

And they rely on information—as far as looking at the health, the financial health of construction

companies in Manitoba, they rely on the bonding companies. And for people that don't know how that system works, bonding is sort of—is insurance, but is sort of like banking.

And, if you were to set up a construction company, you just cannot go out and build on—or bid on multi-million-dollar contracts without experience in the business and without having successfully completed smaller contracts.

So it's very structured and when you apply for a bid bond, when you're bidding on a contract, you have to go to that bonding company and you have to get the approval by them in order to successfully bid on the contract. And the idea here is that if the company goes out of business while working on the project, the bonding company has a legal obligation to make up the shortfall.

So they are a very good source of getting internal information, as opposed to the association or individually, because a lot of people would not want to give their financial information out, whereas the bonding company has all this financial information without tying names to it. They can make predictable—they would have good information, I guess that's the way to describe it.

So what they say—and I don't have the newsletter in front of me at the moment, but what they say is that the health of the construction industry in Manitoba, because of all these cuts by the government, is very dire, that we are going to have construction companies in the—not long from now, you know, going into receivership, reorganizing.

Some companies are just bidding for cash flow. They are—they're deliberately bidding too low, knowingly bidding too low because they need the cash flow to just keep their employees and their operations going. And this is a problem when you have a government—or when you had a previous government that was, in some ways, probably doing too much construction for the industry.

Because if you—you can overdo it, too, if you don't have—if you have more construction projects on the go than you have Manitoba companies and workers to be able to complete the projects, then essentially what happens is you have an escalation in pricing and the cost to the taxpayers is higher, and then you have interprovincial companies coming in to bid on the programs.

So there is some merit in having a sweet spot in the number of construction projects that a—any market in any part of the country is actually proceeding on. And then, on that basis, the governments tend to do planning over a number of years and let projects, you know, go out, and they would do the airport first, and then we did the arena, and we had an order to it; we didn't do it all the same time. That's my point here.

So what has happened is that construction has been ratcheted up for a number of years under the NDP in a predictable fashion, and all of a sudden, we've just seen, since the Conservatives got elected, a huge, just like walking over the cliff—so, you know, all these people had thought that somehow the—you know, things were going to be rosy if we change governments, well, welcome to the future, folks, because we're seeing shades of Sterling Lyon here. When he was in government from 1977 to '81, those glorious years of acute, protracted restraint, you know, this—that government of that day just shut down projects. If a project was, like, in the middle of construction, they shut it down, just as simple as that. I remember a seniors home that they were building, and the basement was already constructed and they just, like, shut it down. I don't think they filled in the hole; they just built a, you know, sort of a ring around the thing and left it until the NDP came in power.

And I have to tell you, because in those days I used to do fundraising for the NDP, and I did visit with—I did—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** —I did visit with architects and engineers, and let me tell you what at least one of them told me, and certainly is—was a sentiment throughout. He said, you know, we're not NDP supporters. Matter of fact, we don't even like the NDP much—*[interjection]*—but we can't—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** —but we can't support the Conservatives because they shut the province down. They're—my business is going out of business with Conservatives.

So, as much as they agree with the Conservative philosophy and they normally would support the Conservatives, they in fact were writing cheques to the NDP because they wanted to get the economy working again, and the result was, after four terrible

years under the Conservatives, Howard Pawley won the next election in convincing fashion and restored—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** —and restored—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** —construction projects.

And so the Conservatives have a problem right now, and we're going to see, you know, whether the bonding companies' predictions actually, you know, come to fruition. But I can tell you, that when they issue statements like that, that because of the government drop in construction projects, huge, precipitous drop, the largest drop in the entire country, because of that, you know, construction companies in Manitoba are on life support. And, if they don't believe that, well, then, simply go out and talk to the construction company people themselves about what this government has actually done.

Now, if they think that, for example, they're going to rectify the problem by revving things up just before the next election, which is what I suspect they're up to, well, that doesn't do much good for the construction companies because how can you run a construction company when you have to hire a couple hundred people for the year of the election and then you lay them all off the next election? *[interjection]* Well, you know, the—I've made the point that Manitoba—the previous Manitoba government had a very, very busy, active schedule of construction, and the argument at the time was, well, you know, we can do these projects because—and we should do these projects—because interest rates are so low, and we should be doing them because of those reasons and keep the economy going. That was what—that's what prompted us to do—*[interjection]* Well, you know, the member wants to talk about bankrupt. I'd like to know which projects he would've wished we hadn't done. Would he want to get rid of the arena, the stadium—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order. Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** —the airport, the—you know, like all of these projects—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

Come on, you guys. You have to have some decorum in this building here. Like, let's have civil—listen to everybody respectfully.

And, the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

\* (11:30)

**Mr. Maloway:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy.

And, you know, they're playing the same game on Hydro right now. They running around, they're like Chicken Little saying, oh, the sky is falling, we've—you know, I didn't see them stop the Keeyask project. They're finishing the project.

But then they go out on the other side when the argument suits them, and they argue that, oh, Manitoba should be given carbon credits because it's got huge electric projects. Well, where did all these electric projects come from? They sure didn't come from the Conservatives. I don't think the Conservatives initiated any new construction on hydro dams since the old Duff Roblin days. That's how long ago a Conservative has initiated any hydro construction project in Manitoba—and if you don't believe me, check the records. I mean, every single major project initiated by the NDP, attacked and criticized by the Conservatives or the Liberals.

I remember the former Liberal leader, Ms. Carstairs, talking about Lemonstone. This is a project that has returned multiples and multiples of its initial investment, right? All done—all done by the NDP. So we can, you know, rest assured that we're going to see no new construction by this government. Take a new NDP—

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

**Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin):** I'm quite sure, I don't know, I'm just going to suspect the AMM is pretty relieved of the outcome of the last provincial election after listening to that. After listening to that, I'm quite certain they're happy with the change of government that happened here just over two years ago.

But thanks, Madam Speaker, and thank the member from Riding Mounting for bringing this really important resolution that recognizes the role of the AMM over the last 20 years and its—we're just on the eve of their AMM convention, and what a fitting time for this House to recognize the work, the good work of the AMM.

So, again, passing this resolution it extends our congratulations to AMM, and AMM has changed somewhat over the year. I think the member from

Riding Mountain has alluded to that fact, that it has changed from time to time. But their goal and their mission has essentially remained the same.

And our government is committed to partnering with municipalities and the AMM, and we're both here to listen to the concerns of all of our constituents. And that's something that the AMM does very, very well. I know as—again, as a former councillor, there's mechanisms for—or of the process that we work from local government level, at the council level, through AMM—GM districts and the annual convention. And AMM plays a pretty prominent role in that process.

So AMM's mission is to identify and address the needs and concerns of elected members representing municipalities, and those being the mayors, the Reeves and the councillors, and the ones who serve the order of government closest to the people. And, again, it's the people on the ground, the ones that are the front lines of government, our local elected officials at—on the municipal governments. The AMM represents 137 incorporated municipalities, and it's divided up into representation of seven districts and they have a great—AMM has a great team of staff ready to help.

So with that, I—just we had the recent municipal elections here not the long ago. So I'd just like to congratulate everybody that put their name on the ballot to serve public office, its—and those who—not only those who were elected, but also the ones that—everybody that put their name on that ballot. It's quite a exercise and commitment to put your name forward to serve the public, and congratulations to all of them.

But, yes, if you haven't been on local council, local council is a great place to hear the honest truth from the public and our constituents. And it's really a place for—it's a non-partisan environment, and it does get quite heated. And you get a very wide-ranging set of opinions, and usually the head of council has to, you know, try to keep order in this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no different than what you try to do here.

And coming out of that—again, when I saw it, the value of AMM as a rural councillor, I saw it as a important process for—to bringing change and to try and affect the government. So I know we had one of our roles—and again, it was—is working with the AMM towards the June district meetings, and that's where resolutions could come from, from our

council. And it would be presented at the June district meetings. And the June district meetings—and if it passed there, it sort of went through the next stage of the regional representatives whether that thing would hit the floor on the convention resolutions.

So AMM was instrumental in those steps, and what it ended up making was very clean, well-vetted legislation, well-thought-out, multiple perspectives coming into legislation before it hit the annual convention and then ultimately gave the mandate to the AMM directors to go and lobby 'goverem' on behalf of all the municipalities.

So for me, I did the—again, the district meeting is the resolution sections were just an excellent display of how people could effect change. And the AMM was—one was overseeing that, and they did a very good job of doing that. So the AMM does provide an effective umbrella for municipalities to operate out—under, to sound out ideas, and I do see it as a very, very effective step of responsible government, whether it's government legislation or regulation. It's a very important spot, a very important role that the AMM provides.

And again, I—even as now sitting here as an MLA, I still do enjoy going to the June district meetings. It's a place and time to talk to the people that are listening to the constituents, and it really is the best place to get the pulse of the constituents and what's going on in any particular region.

So, in short, again, AMM does a very good job, and our government does respect the work of AMM, and it does respect the work of our elected officials.

So it was pretty—in terms of this basket funding, I know it was very frustrating us—for us as councillors to have to deal, essentially, with the previous government and their top-down approach to spending. So we are—and we delivered the basket funding model and providing municipalities with the fair say they've been asking for on municipal training. Our government has held most extensive municipal funding consultations in decades in—to help shape the basket funding model. And in a lot of cases, that basket funding model is, rather than—again, rather than the previous government who would just come down and impose numbers on budgets and tell municipalities where they should be, what their priorities were, I'm glad that our government's taken the approach where we're letting

the municipalities have more say in what their priorities are. I know I've seen that many times. The—very frustrating at the council level not being heard, so I'm glad that our government has taken that approach.

The other thing is the single-window funding. It's, again, from the municipal level, very, very frustrating sometimes to navigate some of these grants and programmings that were coming out of the provincial government when I was there probably 10 years ago. So I'm—again, I'm glad that our government is adopting the single-window funding. It's going to make it easier for the municipalities to access these grants.

\* (11:40)

And, again, working with AMM on developing that, working with the municipalities in figuring that out—it's great that our government is moving forward on that and working to help the municipalities and AMM do the work.

So that—they have—AMM also does some other—provides some other benefits, like volume buying. And they provide a human resource sort of pool for municipalities to access. And that's an effective tool for—sometimes it can be difficult to find or establish human resource departments within some of the municipalities. So again, AMM plays those roles and it does it very well.

So, just in closing, AMM's original purpose was to highlight common problems, develop collective responses to matters of mutual concern and pass along useful information, essentially being the liaison between all the municipalities in government. They do a great job for all Manitobans, and I ask the members of this House to join us in passing this resolution and send congratulations and extend our best wishes to AMM for many years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook):** I'm happy to rise today to speak to the resolution brought forward by the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) on AMM's 20th anniversary.

I'd like to start by congratulating all the newly elected and re-elected municipal officials, who, I'm sure, will represent their communities both on the local councils and at the AMM. I would also like to thank those who have not returned this term, for their services to those communities. I'd also like to take special note of the small but significant increase in

elected women on our municipal councils, with a special shout-out to Joy Sul, elected mayor in St. Andrews, and Cheryl Christian, elected mayor of West St. Paul, who were instrumental in the municipal harassment bill our caucus brought forward. I know they will do an amazing job.

The reason we brought the bill forward was at the last AMM convention, there were two resolutions brought forward to protect councillors from harassment and bullying. It was interesting to find out that many of our small councils have no recourse or protections that we'd enjoy here—albeit they are flawed here. One of those resolutions passed with 91 per cent of the votes. So it's quite amazing to see what communities can do when they come together.

Another issue that we've been hearing from our municipalities is their concern that the Province has yet to make a deal with them as it relates to cannabis. There is an expectation that 25 per cent of this revenue is meant to be going to our municipal—our municipalities to cover their costs. I know that the Province has some issues taking meetings or making plans, but I hope that they will make some movement on this issue, as many of our municipalities are also facing opioid and meth issues and could use this funding to combat the issues. And they could also use this funding to combat addictions at the local level. Our municipalities want to take action, even if this provincial government doesn't.

Many of our municipalities also have large infrastructure deficits and are unfortunately getting less and less support from this province. This includes unsigned deals being left in limbo, federal money being left on the table and cancelled projects. So, as we celebrate AMM's 20th anniversary, I ask all members to consider their communities and the support they're getting from this government, if any.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I was slow to rise from my chair because I just assumed that members on the government side would want to support the resolution put forward by my friend from Riding Mountain. And I'll say that the member from Dauphin did get up and offer a few words of encouragement and support, but it's surprising to me that the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) should be abandoned by his own colleagues.

But, then, that's not the first time it's happened. Those of us on this side of the House remember just

Bill 8, last week at committee, or Bill 19 before that, where my friend from Riding Mountain was abandoned by his own Premier (Mr. Pallister), his own Cabinet, his own colleagues and it took the NDP to stand up on his behalf. And we're with you every step of the way, and we'll continue to do that.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we don't really need a private member's resolution to congratulate the AMM on its 20th anniversary. I can merely look up into the gallery and say to Joe Masi, congratulations, Joe, on your 20th anniversary and that should be sufficient.

What the member for Riding Mountain should have done—should have done—and I just had a text from my wife saying I am always telling you what to do and I said, well, I'm glad you do; I depend on it. So I'm going to tell him what to do and I know he's going to depend on it. What he should have done is present a private member's resolution that dealt with the restoration of the Municipal Road and Bridge Program which would have made the AMM very, very happy.

Or what he should have done is tabled a private member's resolution that talked about the restoration of the 50-50 transit funding agreement. That would have made municipalities very, very happy.

He could have introduced a private member's resolution on EMS closures all across rural Manitoba. He could have done that. That would have made municipalities very, very happy.

But, sadly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my friend from Riding Mountain chose to do none of those things. He instead chose to provide a little bit of fluff into the government's agenda following the little bit of fluff we did earlier this morning in which every single member on this side of the House got up and said, you know, we support conservation officers but actions speak louder than words.

We support the AMM but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, actions speak louder than words. And in three short years this government has done more to damage the relationship with municipalities than any government in the past 17 years.

And the members like to come across to us and say to us, you know, we've got the great relationship with the AMM. Well, let me tell you something. I sat in many, many meetings with the AMM during our time in government. We had a great relationship with the AMM.

And just two weeks ago or a month ago, the leader of the opposition and myself sat in a meeting with Mr. Masi and Mayor Goertzen, the good Goertzen from Steinbach, and other members of the AMM in which we had a very, very productive meeting in which they said to us, our top priority, our No. 1 priority is the restoration of the Municipal Road and Bridge Program because the government cut it and they're letting us down.

And what happened? What happened out of this? Did the government respond by putting a bill, a resolution, anything on the floor to deal with that most important program? Nothing. Nada. Not a word. Just about the relationship; we're good buddies; we're friends. But anything on doing real action to make a difference in municipalities across Manitoba, that's not happening, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's a real disappointment to me, not that the government itself, that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and the Cabinets so deliberately mislead municipalities in this province.

But I'm sorry to see my friends on the backbench of the Tory caucus be brought into that ruse that has been perpetrated on the people of Manitoba since April 2016 in which the government says one thing but does quite another.

Now let's think seriously about the consequences to municipal governments as a result of the considerable cuts in capital funding, in transit funding, in operating funding and in helping to provide services that Manitoba municipalities provide to their own citizens.

On transit alone—transit alone—the immediate thing that happened once the government cut that 50-50 funding relationship was simply for fares to be raised, making life harder for those who can least afford it. That shouldn't happen in our province. That shouldn't happen in Manitoba. That shouldn't be happening here in Winnipeg or in Brandon or, as my friend from Flin Flon pointed out, it's even happening in Thompson, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where transit services, as a result of one government delinquency or another, has resulted in transit becoming more unaffordable for people, less reliable, and, as a result, undercutting the very, very critical parts of a modern city that virtually every city in the world has: a first-rate public transit system. This government has done nothing but to diminish that very important feature of what municipal governments provide.

\* (11:50)

To raise the fares—I think it was almost by about 30, 35 cents—is inexcusable, a rank insult to moms who are getting their kids on the bus, either to get to school, to the—get to the community club to play some sport or simply to visit places of wellness in their community.

**An Honourable Member:** You missed the bus.

**Mr. Allum:** And well—yes, my friend from Elmwood says that the government side has missed the bus; in fact, they've thrown municipalities under the bus. And that has been—*[interjection]*—that is—I hear from my friend from St. James, who ought to know better—who ought to know better—heckling from the other side of the House, and I don't know why he would do that—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Allum:** I—if we had a really good rapid transit system, a proper public transit system, he could get on the bus in St. James and go right down Portage Avenue and get to work, not only save himself some fees in parking, not only do something positive for the environment, but maybe even save some gas on that very nice but very large vehicle that takes up more than just one space in the parking lot. You know, as I'm riding my bike into work—riding my bike into work—I'm trying to get around him and move around him because of this extraordinarily large vehicle—

**An Honourable Member:** He parks this way.

**Mr. Allum:** Yes—that he has, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But all this to say that for the government to put forward a resolution of this kind in the face of very, very real cuts to funding, is more than just a little disingenuous and everybody in this House, all 57 of us, recognize the real truth at the heart of this, which is always to say one thing but do another. Facts speak louder than misinformation. And what we've tried to do this morning is to put the real information on the table, in order to ensure that the people of Manitoba, the residents of municipalities understand quite clearly the significant and severe damage done by this government over the past few years. And, unless we stand up on this side of the House and fight back every single day, nothing's going to change; it's only going to get worse.

That's why we'll never lay down for these folks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's why we'll never roll back

our fight on behalf of the people of Manitoba. We know what it takes on this side of the House, to build modern, progressive communities; to build modern, progressive cities; to build a modern, progressive Manitoba. They're never going to get it from this side. In short order, in two years' time, the people of Manitoba will be returning the NDP to its proper place, sending these guys to the dustbin of history and making sure we have a progressive, modern province for generations to come.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there any other speakers?

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** It gives me great pleasure to stand up today and give some props to our AMM brothers and sisters for all of the work that they're doing on behalf of our municipalities and congratulate them on 20 years of, you know, supporting our communities.

And congratulations to our newly elected and re-elected officials here in our province of Manitoba. We, on this side, get it, and, of course, that side don't get it. They, you know, say that they claim to be giving municipalities fair share, this basket funding, when we know it's just, you know, this farce to blame the municipalities when things are coming short, like 50-50 funding for transit. Oh, we gave them enough funding. We gave them even more funding than they should've gotten; they don't know how to manage their money.

You know, that's the narrative from this side. Unfortunately, you know, it's the blame game. It's never this government. It's either the City, the municipalities or the federal government. You know, it's time for this government to start taking responsibility and quit putting money before people.

Our Manitobans deserve quality services and you continue to cut those quality services. Here, I'll give you some—so let's see. Our bridge and road program: funding them at 84 per cent. Wow. You know, 16 per cent underfunding them, cutting 16 per cent from their budget, and then you blame it on them because they don't have enough funding to support their municipalities. Wow. *[interjection]*

You know, and I hear the member from Riding Mountain, you know, speaking up over there. Where was he speaking up when his government was making these cuts to municipalities? You know, it's nice that you want to honour and uplift and bring this resolution forward.

We agree on this side of the House. They're doing great work, but you're making it harder and harder for them to do their work by continually underfunding them, making cuts to their budgets, blaming them because you're giving them less funding.

Let's see. Let's take a look at another one here: 50-50 funding. Well, you know, transit is something that Manitobans rely on, and by you cutting that funding, well, buses, you know, aren't running as much as they should be. Winter's coming. I know people in my community of Point Douglas often are standing there, a bus is supposed to come: there's no bus. Wonder why? Because this Province has cut funding.

And they claim to have good relationships with municipalities. Well, I seem to remember our mayor who was re-elected and, you know, congratulations to Mayor Brian Bowman on his re-election—saying in the media that he has no relationship with our Premier (Mr. Pallister), that he can't even get a sit-down with our Premier.

So I—you know, it makes me question where these relationships are coming from, if there even is a relationship, because, you know, that's not what we're hearing.

EMS closures—you know, my brother here from—oh, he's gone—mentioned about EMS closures. Closures to: Baldur, Birtle, Boissevain, Cartwright, Elkhorn, Ethelbert, Grandview, Hamiota, Hartney, McCreary, Oak Lake, Reston, Rossburn, Treherne—oh, I'm losing breath here, oh, my goodness, so many—Wawanesa, Elie, Manitou—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —and my—the government's laughing over there about these EMS closures. Shame. You know, how many communities—and I'll go on: Swan Lake, Bissett, Lundar, Pinawa, Reynolds, Riverton, and I'm sure there's more, but you know, I'll leave it there.

Ambulance funding: you know, this Premier decided to abandon a long-standing city-provincial 50-50 cut cost-sharing agreement. Well—and then they blame it on the city. Oh, it's—we give them enough funding. They get all this money. They just don't know how to manage it.

Well, it's time for this government to start taking responsibility for underfunding and continuing to underfund our communities. Shame on them.

Let's see. There was ambulance cuts to Brandon, Gilbert Plains municipality, Prairie View municipality, Town of Rapid City, Thompson, you know, Cross Lake, Wabowden.

All of these rural communities that rely on this funding, and what does this government do? What does the member from Riding Mountain do? He sits on his hands and says nothing while allows—while he allows this to happen, you know. Shame.

Who's standing up?

This side of the House is standing up for Manitobans.

Let's see: infrastructure.

Oh, you know, this government pledged \$1.942 billion for infrastructure in their first budget. Well, this Pallister government intentionally underspent while—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

When this matter is before the House, the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) will have four minutes remaining.

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



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, October 30, 2018**

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