



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: Good afternoon. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

House Business

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):

I would like to announce the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 48, The Protective Detention and Care of Intoxicated Persons Act.

The Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 48, The Protective Detention and Care of Intoxicated Persons Act.

Introduction of bills?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Standing Committee on Social
and Economic Development
Sixth Report**

MLA Billie Cross (Chairperson): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development.

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Your Standing Committee on Social and—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development presents the following as its Sixth Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on October 9, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 210) – The Indigenous Veterans Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)/Loi sur la Journée des anciens combattants autochtones (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)**

Committee Membership

- Hon. Mr. BUSHIE
- MLA CROSS
- Hon. Min. FONTAINE
- MLA LOISELLE
- Mr. PERCHOTTE
- Mrs. ROBBINS

Your Committee elected MLA CROSS as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected MLA LOISELLE as the Vice-Chairperson.

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record

- MLA PANKRATZ

Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 210) – The Indigenous Veterans Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)/Loi sur la Journée des anciens combattants autochtones (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs):***

Randi Gage, Private citizen

Justin Woodcock, Private citizen

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 210) – The Indigenous Veterans Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)/Loi sur la Journée des anciens combattants autochtones (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

MLA Cross: Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable for Waverley (MLA Pankratz), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: And I have a report to table. I would like to draw attention to all honourable—I table the report of amounts paid and payable to members of the Assembly for the year ended March 31, 2025.

No further tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Acknowledging Response to Neelin School Incident

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): As students and staff across Manitoba begin a new school year, I want to take a moment to recognize the strength and resilience of the students, educators and families at École Secondaire Neelin High School.

On June 10, 2025, as the school year was drawing to a close, École Secondaire Neelin High School experienced an act that no student or staff member should ever have to witness, especially in a place that should be defined by safety, learning and belonging.

In the face of this tragedy, the response from the Brandon School Division was swift and compassionate. Their preparedness and commitment to safety ensured that staff acted quickly and effectively to protect students and one another.

What followed was a powerful demonstration of community. The school and the city of Brandon came together in support of Chinonso Onuke and his family, showing that Neelin high school is not only a place of learning but a place of compassion, strength and solidarity.

I also want to acknowledge Principal Bas Nundu, Vice Principal Malcolm Oldcorn and their entire school team for their courage during the lockdown and for supporting their school community in the weeks and months since the tragedy.

As Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning—at Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, pardon me, we remain deeply committed to fostering environments where every student feels safe, respected and included. As part of this work, we are currently developing an anti-racism policy for Manitoba's K-to-12 education system to help ensure that every child can thrive in school, can respect one another and celebrate each other's diversity.

So as the doors of École Secondaire Neelin High School have opened for a new year, on behalf of our government, on behalf of our Premier (Mr. Kinew), on behalf of our Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations (Mr. Simard), I want to extend a heartfelt thanks to the students, the staff, the Brandon School Division, the first responders and the entire Brandon school community. Your unity and compassion in the face of adversity remind us that schools are not just places of learning; they're communities where care,

courage and connection can overcome even the most challenging of times.

All of Manitoba stands with you and wishes you a successful, joyful and very safe learning year.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Just before a response, I have to reiterate that we are currently in routine proceedings.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): As I had the fortune to deliver a private member's statement on the actions of the Brandon Police Service and the Brandon School Division regarding the regrettable actions that happened at École Secondaire Neelin High School in Brandon in June, it was with incredible pride that I recognized the Brandon Police Service. But not only the Brandon Police Service; the Brandon School Division, E911 and the many other first responders that attended the school to make sure that each student was kept safe.

And I must say that during my time as chief of police with the Brandon Police Service, I was able to work very closely with Neelin High School, the principal, with their executive as well as the school division, Mr. Mat Gustafson and his executive.

As a matter of fact, we had an agreement to make use of the schools for such situations like this, and the incredible work of criminal property forfeiture providing equipment and training dollars to the Brandon Police Service under our former PC government ensured that each student could be safe.

So in the words of Mike Adamski, the late Mike Adamski who was principal at Neelin High School: Once a Spartan, always a Spartan.

Thank you.

The Speaker: No further ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Diane Buck

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas-Kameesak): Today I rise to recognize an extraordinary woman whose strength, skill and dedication and—made her a legend in northern Manitoba: Ms. Diane Buck of Opaskwayak Cree Nation.

Diane has proudly held the title of Queen Trapper at the Northern Manitoba Trappers' Festival for an incredible 24 years, a record endurance at excellence that reflects lifelong commitment to traditional skills and community pride.

Over the years, Diane has competed in 12 events ranging from goose and moose calling to bannock and tea-boiling and fish-fiddling and trying to—log-sawing, log-throwing, trap-setting, nail-pounding and three-mile snow-shoe race, which she calls her favourite.

In earlier years, she even participated in the women's flour-packing competition, once carrying 625 pounds of flour a distance of 20 feet, a true display of northern strength and spirit.

Beyond competition, Diane has lived what she calls a healthy and active lifestyle. As a runner, canoeist, a teacher of traditional crafts, a talented snowshoe-maker, she has crafted racing snowshoes for hundreds of athletes across Manitoba and shared her knowledge in communities such as Moose Lake, OCN, Sapotaweyak, Easterville, Bakers Narrows, Grand Rapids, Pukatawagan and Black Sturgeon.

Diane's legacy is not only in her athletic achievements, but also the generations she has guided and inspired. She raised three children and four grandchildren, all now adults caring toward the same resilience and love for community that she has embodied throughout her life.

Honourable Speaker, Diane Buck represents the very best of northern Manitoba—

The Speaker: Honourable member's time has expired.

Is there leave for the honourable member to finish her statement? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Lathlin: Honourable Speaker, Diane Buck represents the very best of northern Manitoba, traditional strength, perseverance and pride.

Please join me on congratulating her on her incredible accomplishments and thanking her for preserving and sharing the rich heritage of our northern communities.

Sergeant Tommy Prince— Community Celebration Event

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Honourable Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to introduce Holly and Brad Whall, 12 years into their journey to commemorate and memorialize the significant contributions of Sergeant Tommy Prince.

* (13:40)

Sergeant Tommy Prince is the most decorated Indigenous war hero in Canada, born in Petersfield, Manitoba, on October 15, 1915.

A special celebration is taking place on October 25 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Petersfield community hall, and all are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

The event is free and will commemorate what would have been Tommy Prince's 110th birthday.

Members of the Prince family will be coming from all across Canada. Veterans from the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and First Special Service Force will be in attendance as well as all levels of government.

Activities will include a traditional ceremony and feast.

The event is only beginning, as a 5.5-kilometre-long active transportation path is being proposed, named the Sergeant Tommy Prince memorial trail. Starting at the hero's birthplace, it will wind through the picturesque village of Petersfield, making its way to a memorial park located at Highway 9.

Holly, Brad and their group is advocating in the spirit of truth and reconciliation for the trail and park to be a sacred place for healing and to create a destination for all Canadians to come and play homage to Sergeant Tommy Prince and every Indigenous war veteran.

May it become a place to show respect and honour to the sacrifice and service that all Indigenous veterans bravely gave to Canada.

Please join me in thanking Holly and Brad Whall for their continued efforts on such an important matter.

United Way Brandon & District

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations): Honourable Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge the vital work of our local United Way Brandon & District, whose efforts are making a profound difference in the lives of people across our rural region, and have for more than 88 years.

This United Way is in the process of transition to United Way West Central Manitoba, following their commitment to embrace and support the Portage la Prairie and central Manitoba region where their local office closed.

Through their leadership, they have been at the forefront of addressing the most pressing challenges facing our communities. Their recent focus on mental health, support for our youth, food security and strengthening the social sector speaks directly to the needs of our constituents. These are not abstract

priorities; they are concrete supports that ensure families can put food on the table, young people can have opportunities to thrive, and those struggling with mental health challenges are not left behind.

This month, United Way launched its Be The One 2025 fall campaign, co-chaired by Q Country morning hosts Shelly Thompson and Tim Black. Together, they bring great community spirit and experience to the effort, setting an ambitious goal of \$800,000.

Their Be The One 2025 campaign encourages residents to give back through donations, volunteering and local events like the Holiday Tree Auction and Brandon's Largest Garage Sale, all supporting programs that strengthen families and communities across Westman.

Equally important, United Way is supporting the workers and organizations who care for our most vulnerable and at-risk neighbours. With a strong commitment to inclusion and accessibility, they are ensuring that every person in our region has a chance to participate fully in community life.

Colleagues, join me in applauding our essential partner in building stronger communities and brighter futures: United Way Brandon & District, now United Way West Central Manitoba, with Cynamon Mychasiw and Jennifer McMillan in the gallery—

The Speaker: Honourable member's time is expired.

Interlake-Gimli's Fall Suppers

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): As the leaves turn and harvest season is coming to an end, communities across Interlake-Gimli, from Ashern to Arborg or St. Laurent to Steep Rock, are once again gathering for one of Manitoba's most cherished traditions: the fall supper.

These suppers have been a staple of rural life for generations, bringing neighbours, families and friends together to share a meal, swap stories and celebrate the bounty of the season.

Whether it's turkey with all the trimmings, farm-fresh vegetables or trays of homemade pies, every dish represents hours of volunteer effort and community pride.

They're more than just fundraisers, they're of—a reflection of who we are as Manitobans: generous, welcoming and deeply concerned for one another.

In communities like Fraserwood, for example, where it's estimated that Fraserwood Hall has served tens of millions of perogies over its more than 100 years,

fall suppers keep community halls open, support local projects and remind us of the importance of coming together to share food and friendship.

These events also connect generations; grand-parents passing down recipes, parents volunteering alongside their children and visitors experiencing small-town hospitality at its best.

Fall suppers remind us that community isn't something that just happens, it's something that we build, one plate at a time.

To every volunteer peeling potatoes, slicing pies and pouring coffee this season: Thank you. Your efforts keep our small towns strong, our traditions alive and our communities connected.

I ask that my colleagues rise with me today and recognize all the volunteers who are joining us virtually here today.

Kirkfield Park Outdoor Play Spaces

Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park): Honourable Speaker, today I recognize the people of Kirkfield Park and I want to acknowledge the recent improvements to our park spaces over the past few months.

Kirkfield Park is lucky to have an abundance of green space, but this is only possible thanks to the efforts of the people and organizations in our constituency who do the hard work on the ground of advocating, fundraising and planning for constant improvement and upkeep of these facilities.

For a long time, the Sansome School Parent Council has been tirelessly raising funds for the construction of a new play structure and outdoor play area. Earlier this year, our government was able to secure funding to make this project possible. The new play area will provide a safe, accessible and exciting outdoor space for the students of Sansome School, nearby daycares and the wider Westwood community. This would never have happened if not for the engaged and motivated residents like the Sansome School Parent Council.

Recently, I joined city councillor Evan Duncan in cutting the ribbon at the newly renovated John Steel Park. With the co-operation of municipal, provincial and federal governments, the people of Westwood now have a brand new, fully accessible play space.

Ribbons in Kirkfield Park, watch out. Just a few weeks ago, I was fortunate enough to attend the grand opening of another play space. The daycare at

the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg, West Portage branch, inaugurated their new, thoughtfully designed outdoor play area. This space has been made possible with the joint provincial and federal investments, so just as outdoor play spaces are a benefit for all in the community, they are made possible through the collaboration of all stakeholders in the community.

Please join me in congratulating the good people of Kirkfield Park on their new and upcoming outdoor spaces.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Prior to oral questions, there are some guests in the gallery in addition to the Whalls who were introduced earlier. They are joined by Linda Jonasson and Randi Gage, and they're all guests of the honourable member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte), and we welcome you all here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Justice Department FOI Requests

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, the five-year average of violent crime in Winnipeg shows a 20.6 per cent increase. Sexual assaults with weapons increased by 75 per cent in 2023. Police have reported a 27.3 per cent uptick in extortion and police investigated a 41 per cent increase in shoplifting.

Crime is a major problem in Manitoba under this NDP government. When the media tried looking into the mismanaged justice system by the NDP, they were denied access to critical files.

Why is the Premier blocking the media and the public from really knowing what's going on with his failed Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe)?

* (13:50)

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Honourable Speaker, our Justice Minister is doing a great job, the best in the country.

The member opposite knows, when he talks about a five-year average, it was three years of crime going up under them and two years of crime getting better under us. Now, there's still a lot more work to do and that's why we're working with you and working with law enforcement.

Today, however, I do feel compelled to comment on perhaps a new day in the Middle East. Peace in the Middle East. Since our government took office, we

have been working hard to try and balance the concerns of people who wanted the hostages released with those who wanted an immediate ceasefire with those who protested being victims of anti-Semitism or Islamophobia. It is my hope that a peace will endure in the Middle East and we can focus on bringing people together here at home.

We have been there to support the Jewish community through challenging moments these past two years. We've brought children from Gaza to get life-saving medical attention—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Khan: The Premier thinks his Minister of Justice is doing a great job when violent crimes have increased by 20.6 per cent, when assault with weapons have gone up 75 per cent since 2023 when this NDP took government.

It isn't just the media this Premier's blocking. The Premier's also blocked my office. We have put in dozens of requests for Freedom of Information. The deadline is 45 days, which is legislative. They've now over 100 days and we still don't have replies from this Minister of Justice.

The Premier's not only blocking media, he's blocking us from doing our job on this side of the House. I'm holding him to account to Manitobans.

So, the question is simple: Why is the Premier— or, what is the Premier hiding from Manitobans?

Mr. Kinew: Well, I've blocked the member's job from being a Cabinet minister. That's what happened in the last election.

And since then, we've been working with you; we've been working with law enforcement; we've been working with community. We've been working on prevention, universal school food program in every school in Manitoba. But we've also been working on enforcement—55 new police officers in the city of Winnipeg alone.

What have the PCs been up to over that period of time? Well, I'd like to share with the members of the PC caucus that their leader came to us and asked for new furniture for his office, and you see that he raises the office point here in question period again.

So, perhaps when they have their next caucus meeting, they can all turn to him and ask: How long are you planning to stay in opposition anyways?

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

Mr. Khan: The Premier once again resorts to jokes when we're asking serious questions on this side of the House. Sexual assaults and extortion have gone up 27.3 per cent in Manitoba, and what does this Premier want to do? Make jokes in the Chamber.

Manitobans, that is disgusting and we will hold him to account.

So will the Premier simply answer the question: Why is his failing Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) blocking media from Freedom of Information requests, and why is he blocking us, on this side of the House, from doing our job on getting information on why this Minister of Justice is failing?

Mr. Kinew: You know, those are very strong words from somebody who had to apologize the very last time we were in this very esteemed Chamber for something that he thought was a joke and his seat-mates apparently also thought was a joke, but every mature person in Manitoba would recognize as deeply inappropriate.

Now, what's deeply inappropriate coming from the PC Party, is the fact that they have the temerity to insult not just us as a government, but you, the people of Manitoba, who asked for a mature, adult plan to combat lawlessness and crime in Manitoba.

They tried to put it on a bumper sticker; Manitobans showed them the door. We said, let's focus on a five-point plan on bail; let's work with the other levels of government; let's get in the schools and prevent crime before it happens; and let's continue this effort over many years to come.

You watch us here today, nothing has changed. We're the team with the plan; they're the team still fighting amongst themselves.

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

Provincial Jobs and the Economy Union and Non-Unionized Workforce

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, unlike this Premier, I have no problem recognizing when I made a mistake, and I did make a mistake last week. I apologized twice last week, and I stand here today and apologize to all members in this Chamber and all Manitobans for my mistake. That's more than I can say for this Premier and his failed ministers on that side of the House.

Honourable Speaker, I've asked some question about why this Premier thinks that he can divide Manitobans. He falsely says one Manitoba, but what he really means is Manitobans that donate to the NDP party and Manitobans that don't. He has two sets of rules when it comes to jobs in this province: (1) his union buddies will get first dibs, and then non-union workers will get scraps from the table.

So the question to the Premier is simple: Why is the Premier trying to punish Manitobans for being non-unionized?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): You know, Honourable Speaker, the PCs were shown the door in the last election because they tried to divide Manitobans. Of all the issues to try and pick to run an attack ad on, they chose to run an attack ad on the landfill search. Targeting the victims of a serial murderer? Why would any political party do that?

Again, what was the other big choice? Going after the LGBTQ community? What sort of leadership is that? I think Manitobans, wherever you thought about the issue, wherever you stood, they recognized that that was mean-spirited. And that's one of the many reasons that the PCs were shown the door.

For us, on the other hand, well, like I said on the one of the most divisive issues in the Middle East, we've been working hard to bring Manitobans together—Jewish, Muslim, people protesting the war, people protesting for peace here at home.

There's one Manitoba. We share a common future together. Let's get on with building it.

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

Mr. Khan: The question was about jobs and our economy, and the Premier didn't mention anything remotely close to that in his answer.

Under this NDP government, Manitoba's economy is ranked worse in Canada at 1.1 per cent. Manitoba lost—1,300 net jobs last month was lost under this NDP government. But the Premier doesn't want to talk about that. He wants to talk about dividing Manitobans into unions and non-unions.

Why is the Premier forcing unionization onto 80 per cent of local businesses that support non-unionized workforce? Does the Premier actually think that 'non-unionized' workplaces are less safe? They pay less? They treat their employees less? Or is this really about funneling money to his NDP union-boss supporters?

Mr. Kinew: Oh, the member opposite wants to talk about the economy. Well, guess what? We added 5,300 jobs in Manitoba last month, and it's important to keep that within a national context. Some of our neighbouring provinces are going through some really tough times. That is a shame. We want team Canada to succeed from coast to coast to coast.

But here in Manitoba, you've been working hard. You've been putting your neighbours to work. You've been making smart investments in the future and you have a government on your side that's friends with business, but also friends with the rank and file union member.

You just saw there the PCs don't ever want to change. They've got their same old targets they want to go after. This time it's somebody with a hard hat and steel-toe boots. Well, for the members opposite, who never learned how to swing a hammer growing up, guess what? Leave it alone.

We're in charge. The economy's growing. You can sit on your hands. *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

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

Mr. Khan: It's very convenient that the number the Premier quotes isn't painting the full picture. So let me do that for you here today.

Unemployment is up 6.2 per cent under this NDP government: 4,300 jobs were lost in August in manufacturing alone; 7,200 part-time jobs were lost in September. Over 5,200 jobs were lost in August; 3,900 were only added back. That's a net loss of 1,300 jobs, not an increase.

Maybe the Premier needs to go back and learn how to do math, or maybe it's just his NDP math that sees a \$4-billion deficit as a good thing for this province.

The simple—the question is simple: 80 per cent of Manitobans work for non-unionized workforce. Why is the Premier picking winners and losers when it comes to unions and non-union workers?

Mr. Kinew: Well, I love talking about the economy because it's about talking about putting food on the table for you and your family. It's about being able to pay your hydro bills with our hydro rate freeze.

* (14:00)

It's about being able to gas up and have the gas prices be as low as they are today, thanks in part due to our cutting of the gas tax.

And these numbers—it's great news that we added 5,300 jobs in Manitoba last month, because we were one of only three provinces in all of Canada to actually add jobs. Because of Donald Trump, things are tough in many provinces around the country. It's good news when Manitoba can keep our head above water.

Let's contrast that with the member opposite's opinion about Donald Trump. What did he say to Donald Trump again? Oh, he said thank you. Direct quote: I would say thank you, end quote, when talking about the tariffs.

More good news instead of the party of doom and gloom: women led the gains in employment last night, and we know youth unemployment is a challenge. We're talking about our kids, the future. Well, we're starting to see improving numbers there as well.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Early Learning and Child-Care Spaces Update on 2023 Announcement

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Honourable Speaker, in 2023, our PC government laid the groundwork for 42 projects all across Manitoba in early childhood spaces—school-based, school division programs.

When—can I ask this Minister of Education—when is she going to be opening those over 3,200 spaces, Honourable Speaker?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): Thank you to the member opposite for the opportunity to talk about child care here in Manitoba.

You know, our Premier (Mr. Kinew) just spoke about gains that we've made in employment here in Manitoba when it comes to employing women, and I would like to talk about the wage grid enhancements that our government made that is seeing women—new-comer women, BIPOC women—seeing their wages lifted. Finally, after years of being ignored by the PC government, we are seeing women in this province finally being paid fairly for their important work in delivering an early childhood education.

That's only one of the things that we're doing to improve the access to child care here in Manitoba. I can't wait to update the House further in my next answer.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Ewasko: Honourable Speaker, I tabled that news release about the 42 projects, and still no answer coming from this Education Minister. Matter of fact, she stands up and just touts the good work that this PC government did on child care, not only wages, but spaces—[*interjection*]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: And we're just waiting, Honourable Speaker.

So I'll ask her again: How many of the 2,662 infant and preschool spaces, plus 555 school-age spaces, has the minister, the MLA for Rossmere, opened?

MLA Schmidt: The truth of the matter is, Honourable Speaker, that our government has opened thousands of spaces across this province, and as is the case, the members opposite like to stand up in this House day after day and say, NDP government, what about the great work you are doing and how come you're not doing it faster?

So, like we are doing in Justice and like we are doing on the economy and like we are doing in health care, we are going to continue to deliver results for Manitobans. If Manitobans could trust the member opposite on child care he would still be on this side of the House. He was a failed minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning.

Thank goodness the members—I'm sorry, the good people of Manitoba have voted in a new government, a government that values early childhood education, a government that values the role that early childhood educators play in our economy.

And again, I can't wait to talk more about—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Ewasko: So once again, Honourable Speaker, we see personal attacks coming from this Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning. It's unfortunate, but this minister, instead of standing up and actually saying something that she's actually doing, which she has not moved anything forward in the last six months to a year and a half—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: What I can tell you, Honourable Speaker, is that she has cut over 3,200 child-care spaces.

So we're asking, from this side of the House, on behalf of Manitobans: When are you going to move forward on the 3,200-plus child-care spaces of the 42 projects?

The Speaker: And once again—order, please.

I would remind members to direct their questions through the Chair, not directly at members opposite.

MLA Schmidt: The truth of the matter is, is that the NDP government is not just building the bricks and mortar that it takes to open child-care spaces here in Manitoba, we are also building up people and we are building our economy, unlike the members opposite.

Let's talk about their record, Honourable Speaker. They froze operational funding seven years in a row. They refused to work collaboratively with the federal government. The member opposite talks about cuts; I'd like to know about the cheques that he was cutting to his friends, and I table for the House an article written by the CBC about Marni Larkin.

The manager for the Manitoba PC Party 2023 election campaign took part in a meeting about a daycare project that resulted in a \$2.8-million payday for a company she—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Inwood Manor Seniors Lodge Closure of Washrooms

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): Honourable Speaker, residents at Inwood Seniors Lodge have had to deal with an unacceptable situation. The common washrooms in their building are being locked. At times, all washrooms have been closed at the same time, leaving seniors without access to basic facilities in their own home.

Honourable Speaker, is that any way to treat Manitoban seniors? Can the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness explain why Manitoba Housing thinks it's acceptable to deny seniors access to washrooms in a building designed for their care and comfort?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I want to thank that member for that question and I know that our department has reached out to that member and our staff are working closely with those members and safety and security is our No. 1 priority.

And that member can come across the way and we can have a discussion. And we certainly want to make sure that members in that building feel safe and secure in their building. That's why our staff is working directly with them.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Interlake-Gimli, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Johnson: Honourable Speaker, the residents of Inwood Lodge deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Instead, they've been told that if the bathrooms aren't kept clean enough, they'll be locked out again.

I table a photo of a sign on the washroom door in Housing, Addictions and Homelessness's letterhead. These are seniors who built our communities and our province. These deserve—they deserve to live with dignity, not under threats or restrictions.

Can the minister tell this House when she will take responsibility, ensure the bathrooms at Inwood Lodge remain open and accessible to residents at all times?

Ms. Smith: Again, I would be happy to sit down with that member. Safety and security is our No. 1 priority. We are working directly with those residents. And under that member's watch, when he was at that Cabinet table, they were cutting Manitoba Housing staff, they were cutting security, they were selling off housing, they weren't worried about tenants at all.

On this side of the House, we are ensuring that tenants are taken care of, that there are supports in place and that we are taking off the—the boards off of housing and we are making investments, unlike members opposite who turned a blind eye and didn't care.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Interlake-Gimli, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Johnson: Honourable Speaker, Inwood Lodge was taken over in 2023 by that government. This issue goes beyond cleanliness: it's about compassion, accountability and proper management of Manitoba's housing facilities.

Locking washrooms in a seniors' residence is abusive. Manitoba Housing has a duty to provide safe and sanitary living conditions for every residence.

Will the minister commit today to immediately direct Manitoba Housing to keep the bathrooms at Inwood Lodge open, maintained and accessible at all times?

Ms. Smith: And again, our staff is working directly with residents and I'd be happy to meet with that member. That member wants to talk about compassion; those members across the way had no compassion when they were dealing with Lions Place, when those seniors were begging those members to help them.

* (14:10)

When they sold off that Lions Place to Mainstreet Equity, when they sold off 185 Smith—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Ms. Smith: —they had no care or compassion. They put people in encampments. They had no care or compassion.

So they want to talk about care and compassion now while they sit there on their seats, while they make six figures and have no care or compassion for any member, while they block Bill 12 that would protect—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Government's Path to Net Zero Plan Impact on Jobs and the Economy

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Last week, the government announced their new so-called net-zero plan for Manitoba.

Now, the federal government unveiled their new plan in the spring. The Conference Board of Canada found the new federal net-zero plan will kill over 700,000 Canadian jobs.

My question, Honourable Speaker: How many jobs will this NDP plan kill?

Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): It's nice to finally get an environmental question from members opposite after their, I guess, three weeks of napping. So that's something.

I'd like to talk about what we're doing. And I'll get to the net-zero plan, because it is the most ambitious plan that we've ever had in Manitoba.

But let's start with what we've done over the last number of years: we've protected more of nature, including the Seal River Watershed; we saved the Lemay Forest; we are generating wind power for the first time since 2007; we are standing up and having geothermal for the first time ever, with a great program; we started an EV rebate program; we have EV infrastructure going in. The list goes on and on and on.

Members opposite, they got no record at all.

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

Mr. Narth: Honourable Speaker, that was no answer.

But the same study found the largest economic impact of the so-called net zero would be the result of redirecting capital from productive capacity to investments that reduce emissions.

Let me put that in English: They want to take money from those sectors in our economy that produce critical resources, jobs and wealth for Manitobans so they—the government—can invest that money in ideas that kill resource production, jobs and wealth, and also don't actually help the environment.

Now, I recognize there's not a lot of common sense over there, but surely, even to them, doesn't this seem backwards?

Why do they want to kill—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Moyes: I'd just like to remind the House, Honourable Speaker, that we just created 5,300 new jobs this past month.

You know, it's the same old thing. The Tories love to constantly divide Manitobans. They constantly want to divide sectors against other sectors. That's not the case.

The environment can go hand in hand with the environment. That's exactly what we're doing; that's what the Chamber has been calling for; that's what all Manitobans have been calling for; and that's what our Path to Net Zero is going to do.

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

Mr. Narth: Honourable Speaker, the minister fails to mention that that's a net loss of 1,300 jobs here in Manitoba.

But let's talk about net zero, Honourable Speaker. Net zero is the number of new markets they've opened up for our farmers. Net zero is how many new jobs they plan to create. Net zero is the sum of total common sense over there, because their plan is going to not create jobs, but it's going to kill jobs.

Why is this Premier (Mr. Kinew) wasting his time on pie-in-the-sky policies that only benefit billionaires rather than—*[interjection]*—supporting hard-working Manitobans?

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Moyes: I really don't know why the members opposite hate the environment so much. They hate nature. They don't want to do anything but sit on their dole and collect a paycheque. They don't want to do the work that it takes to get to net zero. We're going to do that work.

Let's go through the record of the Conservatives from the last administration. They cut \$360,000 to local environmental groups including the Green Action Centre, Manitoba Eco-Network and the Climate Change Connection. They downsized monitoring investigations and environmental testing from 1,300 in 2016 to 331 when we got elected, and created a 20 per cent vacancy rate.

They slashed the department funding by 25 per cent. It is shameful. Their environmental—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Resources for Foster Parents Reduction Concerns

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): There is long-term consequences for children and families when resources for specialized care are significantly reduced. We are hearing from First Nation communities like Peguis the system is failing, and we're hearing from MACY that there needs to be independent investigation.

If Families can no longer look after these kids due to the government cuts, what is the minister's plan when these children have nowhere to turn?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): Again, we can see that members opposite really don't have a clue about how jurisdiction and asserting jurisdiction works here in Manitoba.

I know that the system is complicated, but let me just state this: Peguis, who's got jurisdiction, has all of the tools at their disposal to—if they want to have an additional layer of scrutiny on their services, they have the law to be able to do so. That is the whole purpose of jurisdiction.

When First Nations assert jurisdiction, they can amend their laws; they can change their laws; they can put in measures to make sure that there are safeguards to respond to community concerns. Peguis has—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Byram: Many foster parents and kinship caregivers are facing challenges every single day. And I've

learned that just last week foster parents in Thompson received phone calls that their resources are being cut in just a few short months.

Come January of 2026, foster parents who care for some of the most vulnerable children will be left paying out of pocket.

What is the Minister of Families doing now—doing now—to better support the concerns that are coming from families, the homes and the communities?

MLA Fontaine: The member opposite knows that actually one of the first things that we've done recently have—we—we've increased by 10 per cent the amounts to basic maintenance, something that hasn't been done in 12 years and certainly not seven and a half under their watch.

The other piece that I want to—excuse me, pardon me—that I want to remind folks is that a significant amount of resources and supports have been provided by Jordan's Principle. And we know that for the last while, Canada has stepped away from those dollars and have put more criteria in being able to access those Jordan Principle's dollars.

We are encouraging Canada to get back to the table to pay folks and to live up to the—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Ms. Byram: Funding cuts are coming to these families in a few short months. In January, they are going to be cut of these resources.

When foster parents asked for supports, what did this minister do? She slashed the programming without notice. But no surprise; we all remember when the minister of addictions took time at a community event to attack one of her own constituents for daring to speak positively about the impact that foster parents have on children's lives and development.

What does this failed Minister of Families and her government continue to impose roadblocks—why do they continue to do that on those that are trying to help vulnerable children?

MLA Fontaine: The members opposite get in the Chamber day in and day out and put erroneous facts on the record. It's simply not true what the member is talking about.

We put forward a 10 per cent increase to basic 'maintenant' rates across the board, the first time that

it's ever been done in 12 years. It was never done under their watch.

Again, Canada has to get back to the table to ensure that they're providing those necessary supports and resources to families across Manitoba. It is the spirit and intent of Jordan's Principle to ensure that families have the resources. That's why we've encouraged Canada to continue to fund and get back to the table and pay the folks that they owe money to.

* (14:20)

Miigwech.

The Speaker: I'd just like to point out that the member, in her response, suggested that what the other member was talking about is simply not true. That would be very akin to saying that someone is lying, so I would ask the member to withdraw that, please.

I'd ask the honourable Minister of Families to withdraw that, please.

MLA Fontaine: Withdrawn.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Family and Intimate Partner Violence Lack of Shelter Space

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): In 2023, there were 2,988 reported cases of intimate partner violence in northern Manitoba and 3,212 reported cases in urban centres of our province. Family violence rates are even higher in some areas of Manitoba.

Many individuals and families must use a shelter as a safe place to stay; however, more people are being turned away due to lack of space.

Where does this government advise that these individuals go for shelter?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): I say miigwech to the member for Tyndall Park for an important question asked in this Chamber.

I—you know, for years under the failed PCs, they had no attention or care for women and children that were fleeing gender-based violence or IPV. We have an infrastructure here in Manitoba that—folks that are on the front lines day in and day out, doing the best that they can with the resources that they have, and—including a vast network of supports that all work together. So when there is a woman that reaches out to one of our shelters, that shelter often does work with that woman or the family as a—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Funding for Shelter Organizations

MLA Lamoureux: It has been shared with this government that the high demand for shelters and transitional housing here in Manitoba remains insufficient for survivors' needs. We have some incredible organizations and individuals working hard for families who have experienced family violence or some form of intimate partner violence. However, women's shelters continue to be severely underfunded.

How is this government working with these organizations to improve the availability of shelters and safe spaces?

MLA Fontaine: Again—once again, miigwech to the member opposite.

As the member opposite knows, our government has invested \$20 million into the Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag provincial strategy. That strategy is about the empowerment and liberation but—of Indigenous women and women across the province.

But it's also about supporting those organizations, including transitional housing, to ensure that we have the infrastructure that shelters need and that folks on the front lines need. We know that women will often stay longer than anticipated in shelters because there's not that transitional housing.

We're working with Fisher River Cree Nation; we've supported some of their dollars. We just invested \$2.2 million into Genesis House to ensure that their transitional housing—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Canada Housing Benefit—Provincial Investments

MLA Lamoureux: In March 2024, the federal and provincial governments announced the joint investment to the Canada Housing Benefit to provide housing supports for survivors of gender-based violence. I'm grateful the Province matched what the federal government agreed to invest over five years.

Since forming government, can the minister outline where these funds have specifically gone and how—exactly and tangibly, how have they improved outcomes for survivors here in Manitoba?

MLA Fontaine: I also want to put on the record here, in respect of Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag: we just announced, just about a week and a half ago, two weeks ago, the establishment of the Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag Lodge. That's something that's been the vision and advocacy of community, including MMIWG2S family members, for 'almore' 22 years. And we were able to announce that.

That Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag Lodge will be able to work with all of our front-line shelters and transitional housing that, if there is a woman that's in crisis and in immediate need, there will be eight beds that are available at the lodge. Those are short-term, 24- to 48-hour beds that will be available. It's our government's commitment to building—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Unemployment Rate and Job Creation Stats Canada Numbers for Manitoba

Mrs. Rachelle Schott (Kildonan-River East): Honourable Speaker, under our government, our economy is strong and our small businesses are thriving. We just announced our new economic development plan to become a have province, and the business world is taking notice and taking Manitoba seriously.

But the proof is in the pudding. According to Stats Canada, the most recent numbers show that our unemployment rate is low, our businesses are hiring and we are experiencing job growth like never before.

Could the Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation please tell the House a bit more about the good news from Stats Canada?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): I thank my colleague for that great question. Over the last two years, we've stopped the PCs' runaway train of inflation. And I'm proud to announce to the House that the data shows that we've created here in Manitoba the highest rate of job growth in the country. That's right.

Between August and September, at a time when Stats Canada says more provinces are losing jobs, we created 5,300 jobs. That's 5,300 more Manitobans who can put food on their table and provide for their families every day.

Honourable Speaker, job growth was stagnant and inflation was rampant under the failed PC government. PCs thank Trump. We are Trump-proofing our economy. We support small businesses and now—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Buffer Zone for Game-Hunting Areas Public Consultation Concerns

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): This Minister of Natural Resources seems to be making it up as he goes along. When he rushed through new regulations, he did it without consulting anyone.

Why is this minister picking and choosing losers while skipping every step of public consultation?

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): Honourable Speaker, the only losers are sitting on that side of the Chamber, let's be clear on that point. I do want to address something before I get into a conflict of the member's question.

A couple weeks ago, he stood up on a grievance and stood in this Chamber and criticized conservation officers for the great work that they do. They are at the border. They're doing great work there, and that member did nothing but criticize the great work that they do.

When they stood up, when our sovereignty was being challenged, when our integrity was being challenged, they were the—one of the first people at the table saying, we want to—what can we do? We want to do our part. And that member did nothing but criticize an organization that's done nothing but stand up for Manitobans each and every day.

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

Mr. Wowchuk: It's obvious the minister has to make excuses for a forgetful moment. He did it so fast and so sloppy, he had to go back because he brought in hunting regulations in the wrong area, and he did it without consulting.

To quote David Chartrand, president of the Red River Métis: Today Manitoba has not consulted with the MMF regarding the buffer zones being implemented or the conflicts arising from these new blockades and public statement by First Nations.

How can this minister adjust not—refusing to consult?

Mr. Bushie: Honourable Speaker, I'll take no lessons from the member opposite on consultation, no lessons on collaboration because they did nothing but not collaborate: no consultation whatsoever across any aspect of hunting in—here in Manitoba.

In fact, the member stood here just the other day and he talked about surveying 400 people; 400 Manitobans. It's clear they had nobody to talk to, nobody was willing to listen to them. Honourable

Speaker, we surveyed more moose than they've surveyed Manitobans.

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

Mr. Wowchuk: Unfortunately, we're seeing a dwindling population on the west side of the province as a result of this government's inaction. He won't consult with the MMF, he won't consult with non-Indigenous stakeholders, he won't listen to Manitoba hunters. So much for one Manitoba. Honourable Speaker, I guess the only way to get this minister's attention is to block a highway or erect a sign.

Will the minister confirm today for all Manitobans that these community-imposed hunting bans have no legal effect—or, legal force or effect?

Mr. Bushie: Honourable Speaker, that member stumbled through that question because he knows he does not have a leg to stand on when it comes time to consultation.

* (14:30)

So as we go out and we talk to stakeholders—Indigenous rights holders, non-Indigenous stakeholders, MMF, MWF, First Nations communities—that's something that member opposite never did. I know he could look around to his Cabinet colleagues, maybe tap them on their shoulders and ask them why they never did anything on this file, because we know very well that he wasn't at that Cabinet table because they know he was—not the place for him to be.

The Speaker: The time for question period has expired.

Speaker's Ruling

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

Order, please.

Following the land acknowledgement on October 2, 2025, the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Khan) rose on a matter of privilege alleging that comments made by the honourable First Minister during oral questions on October 1, 2025 were defamatory and impeded his ability to ask questions. The member concluded his remarks by moving:

THAT the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) be compelled to retract his remarks, apologize and the matter be referred to a Standing Committee of the Legislative Affairs for further consideration.

The honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) spoke to the matter before I took it under advisement.

As the House leader—as the House knows, for a matter of privilege to be ruled a prima facie case, the member must demonstrate that the issue has been raised at the earliest opportunity, while also providing sufficient evidence that the privileges of the House have been breached.

On the condition of timeliness, the member raised the matter at the beginning of the sitting day following the incident in question, so I would rule that he has met the test of timeliness with his submission.

Regarding the second condition of whether a prima facie case was demonstrated, the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Khan) argued that, in his comments, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) undermined standards of decorum in this House. Specifically, the member suggested that the Premier defamed him and undermined his character through the comments made in question period on October 1, 2025, inferring that the First Minister's comments impeded his ability to fulfill his duties as a member of this Assembly.

In raising this matter, the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition noted that members are entitled to the privilege of freedom of speech in this space. The importance of that fact cannot be understated in the context of this ruling.

I will expand on that point by referencing a passage from page 92 of the third edition of House of Commons Procedure and Practice:

Freedom of speech 'permitch'—permits members to speak freely in the Chamber during a sitting or in a committee meeting during meetings, while enjoying complete immunity from prosecution or civil liability for any comment they might make. This freedom is essential for the effective working of the House.

In ruling on a question of privilege in 1984, House of Commons Speaker Bosley confirmed that:

"The privilege of a Member of Parliament when speaking in the House or in a committee is absolute, and that it would be very difficult to find that any statement made under the cloak of parliamentary privilege constituted a violation of that privilege."

I will also note that when moving his motion at the end of his submission, the Leader of the Official Opposition failed to name a seconder. A seconder is required for most motions moved in this House and I would remind all members to bear this in mind in the future.

Given the underlying principle of freedom of speech granted by our rights as elected members under parliamentary privilege, I do not believe the Premier's comments form the basis of a breach of privilege, and I would therefore rule that the prima facie case of privilege was not established in this case.

Having said that, I will again remind members that, as a group, we should be doing better in governing our behaviour in this place.

Echoing those sentiments, in a quote from 1987 referenced on pages 97 and 98 of the third edition of House of Commons Procedure and Practice, Speaker Parent emphasized the need for members to use great care in exercising their right to speak freely in the House when he said:

". . . paramount to our political and parliamentary systems is the principle of freedom of speech, a member's right to stand in this House unhindered to speak [their] mind. However when debate in the House centres on sensitive issues, as it often does, I would expect that members would always bear in mind the possible effects of their statements and hence be prudent in their tone and choice of words."

I urge all members to remember these sentiments when speaking in this place, and I thank you all for your attention to this ruling.

PETITIONS

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition):
I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Portage regional health facility is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Honourable Speaker, this petition was signed by Tara Roberts, Nicole Spence and Lisa Sedowski [*phonetic*] and many, many other Manitobans.

* (14:40)

The Speaker: No further petitions. Grievances—oh.

New Neepawa Health Centre

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): I wish to present the following petition.

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC government as part of the clinical and

preventative services plan, construction for the new Neepawa Health Centre is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of a CT scanner.

(2) The new hospital is being built east of Neepawa, on the north side of yellow quill—or Yellowhead Highway, PTH 16. It will be nearly double the size of the existing hospital and will better serve patients from this broader, western Manitoba geographical area.

(3) CT scanners are standard equipment that combine X-ray images from several angles to create detailed, three-dimensional models of structures inside the body. They perform critical diagnosis procedures that support the diagnosis and treatment of a wide range of injuries and diseases, and the new equipment will be able to complete these important scans faster and with a sharper and clearer images.

(4) The average wait time for Manitobans to receive a CT scan is currently seven weeks, and there are over 14,000 patients on the wait list to receive the diagnostic imaging procedure.

(5) The new CT scanner will reduce these wait times as it would decrease the need for patients to travel long distances, sometimes involving overnight stays, to access the care they need.

(6) The new scanner will reduce pressure on emergency response services, who would no longer have to transport these patients, opening up appointments in other communities and allowing more people to get the care they need sooner.

(7) A CT scanner in Neepawa Health Centre will enable further treatment and diagnosis to take place in community, reducing wait times for patients in surrounding areas and reducing the burden of travel to other facilities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and placement of a CT scanner machine in the Neepawa Health Centre in Neepawa, Manitoba.

This is signed by Kellie Popier, Patti Woodcock, Cecils [*phonetic*] Hohm and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

Background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Portage regional health-care facility is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from the added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

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

(3) Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on the No. 1 Highway in the Southern Health/Santé Sud Health Authority. Currently there is one MRI machine in the regional health authority.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition is signed by Tonya Smith, Heather Stanley, Norma Marshall and many, many other fine Manitobans.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Portage regional health facility is under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

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

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

* (14:50)

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

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

(6) Located in close proximity to the new Portage regional health facility is the Southport airport. This aerodrome has a runway length that is more than

adequate to support medical air ambulance services. This would provide the opportunity to transport patients by air from more remote communities to access MRI imaging services.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This is signed by Kelly Starr, Garry Hewiws [*phonetic*], Peter Munch [*phonetic*] and many, many other Manitobans.

Elm Creek School Gymnasium

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) All Manitoba students deserve access to appropriate physical education facilities, not only as parts of their education, but as part of living an active and healthy life.

(2) The current gymnasium at the Elm Creek School is insufficient for the needs of the student population. Physical education classes are overcrowded, and there is insufficient space for whole school assemblies and events.

(3) The current gym structure is aging and showing the impact of years of usage. Parents have significant safety concerns of the physical space and the aging electrical systems.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

(4) Uneven and heaving floors pose a safety risk for students participating in physical education classes or sports.

(5) The existing ventilation system was designed to meet old standards for a smaller student population and poses serious risks for students.

(6) The current facility is the only option available to students and, should it become inoperable, students at Elm Creek School would be deprived of physical education spaces.

(7) The government has a responsibility to make funds available to replace this aging infrastructure and provide appropriate activity and recreation activities to students in Elm Creek.

We urge the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the government of Manitoba to immediately work with the Prairie Rose School Division to begin the process of placing the gymnasium facilities—replacing the gymnasium facilities at the Elm Creek school, in consultation with parents and the community.

This is signed by Audrey Klassen, Brittney Boeme, Natalie Borst and many, many more Manitobans.

Provincial Trunk Highway 45

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): I wish to present the following petition.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, these are the reasons for the—or, for the petition:

(1) Upgrading Provincial Trunk Highway 45 will accelerate economic development as well as it will enhance connectivity, facilitate efficient transportation and promote economic growth in the region.

(2) Economic development will be further enhanced as improved road infrastructure attracts business, encourages investment and creates job opportunities.

(3) Roads meeting the Roads and Transportation Association of Canada, RTAC, standards improve both safety and efficiency, as they can handle heavier loads, reducing the number of trips required for goods transportation.

(4) Safer roads further benefit both commuters and commercial vehicles, minimizing accidents and damage.

(5) Upgrading to RTAC standards ensures resilience to challenges caused by climate change, such as thawing and flooding, which negatively impact road conditions.

(6) Efficient transportation networks contribute to Manitoba's economic competitiveness, as upgraded roads support interprovincial and international goods movement, benefiting both trade and commerce.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to take the necessary steps to upgrade

Provincial Trunk Highway 45 from Russell to Provincial Trunk Highway 10 to meet RTAC standards.

This petition is signed by Wade Osudar, Mary Ann Chuchmuch and E. Chuchmuch, and many, many other Manitobans.

Provincial Road 210

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Provincial Road 210, PR 210, is a 117.3-kilometre—which is 72.8-mile—highway, in the Eastman region of Manitoba that connects the towns and communities of Woodridge, Marchand, La Broquerie, Ste. Anne, Landmark, Linden, Ile des Chênes and St. Adolphe.

(2) A significant portion of Provincial Road 210 also runs through the constituency of La Vérendrye.

(3) Provincial Road 210 is a significant commuting route for Eastman families and is also notably used by those in agriculture, tourism, trade and commerce industries.

(4) The condition of Provincial Road 210 from Woodridge to Highway 12 is in an unacceptable state of disrepair.

* (15:00)

(5) The planned pavement upgrade was promised more than 20 years ago when it was constructed with a flat surface suitable for pavement but yet to be completed.

(6) The condition of Provincial Road 210 from Woodridge to Highway 12 is in such bad shape that firefighters, police and paramedic services are severely delayed when responding to emergencies.

(7) The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure as well as the Premier have a duty to respond to infrastructure needs identified by rural communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to prioritize the reconstruction of Provincial Road 210.

(2) To urge the provincial government to include the stretch of Provincial Road 210 from Woodridge to Highway 12 in its reconstruction plans.

This petition has been signed by Reed Sutherland, Bill Rivers, Marcel Lemire and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Portage regional health facility is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition is signed by Joan Hewson, David A. Moran, Patricia Karlson and many, many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

This petition has been signed by Spencer Watson, Jacob Pelletier, Rory Pink and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods): I wish to present this following petition to the legislature assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Portage regional health facility is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from an added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

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

* (15:10)

(3) Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on No. 1 Highway in the Southern Health region—health authority. Currently there is only one MRI machine in the RHA.

(4) An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will reduce transportation costs for patients as well as reduce the burden on stretcher service and ambulance use. It will bring care

closer to home and reduce wait times for MRI scans across the province.

(5) Located around Portage la Prairie are the Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay and Long Plain First Nations reserves. Indigenous peoples in Canada disproportionately face barriers in access to services and medical care. An MRI machine located in Portage regional health facility will bring care closer to their home. No. 6—oh, to their home communities and provide greater access to diagnostic testing.

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

They have signed—Les Ferris, Murray Van Den Bussche, Barb Drummond and many, many more Manitobans.

Medical Assistance in Dying

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

Phoenix School

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

Phoenix School, a kindergarten to grade 5 school located in Headingley, has experienced consistent enrolment growth over the last several years. Enrolment is expected to reach 275 students in the next two years.

Because the school is now over capacity, the school division has had to install portable classrooms on site as of fall 2024.

For several consecutive years, the top capital priority of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division

has been the renovation and expansion of Phoenix School.

In 2022, the Phoenix School expansion and renovation project was approved to proceed to the design phase. The project included, among other amenities, a new gymnasium, two new classrooms, a multi-purpose room and room for 74 child-care spaces.

In June 2024, the school division received notice from the provincial government that the project has been deferred. There is no guarantee if, or when, the project will move forward.

There are currently hundreds of children on a wait-list for child care in Headingley. The daycare operator in Phoenix School has been told that they will continue to have space within the school for the 2024-2025 school year only, that further expansion of child-care space within the school is not possible and that space may be reduced moving forward due to the shortage of classrooms. If new space is not constructed as planned, many families may be left without child care.

It is critical that the expansion and renovation of Phoenix School proceed as planned in order to support the needs of students, teachers and families in the growing community of Headingley.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to proceed with the planned renovation and expansion of Phoenix School without further delay.

And this petition is signed by Kenna McMeekin, Jasmin Spence, Jessica Siwicki and many, many other Manitobans.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

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

The background of this petition is follows:

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the PC provincial government as part of the clinical and provincial service plan, construction of a new Portage regional health facility is well under way. The facility is surrounded—communities that would greatly benefit an added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically additional to an MRI machine.

(2) The MRI machine is a non-invasive medical imaging technique that is used to—magnetic fields and

computer-generated radio waves to create detailed images of organs and tissues in the human body. It is used for disease detection, diagnosis and 'treating' monitoring—treatment monitoring.

(3) The Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on No. 1 Highway in Southern Health authority. Currently, there is only one MRI machine in that RHA.

(4) An MRI machine located in the Portage la Prairie health facility will reduce transportation costs for patients as well as reduction the burden of stretcher services and ambulance use. It will bring care closer to home and reduce wait times for MRI scans across this province.

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

* (15:20)

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This has been signed by Scott Sambrook, Garry Serruys, Darryll Breemersch and many other Manitobans.

Green Valley School Expansion

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Honourable Deputy Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) The residents of La Vérendrye and other areas around Manitoba are extremely frustrated and concerned by the provincial government's decision to cancel the school expansion project for Green Valley School in Grunthal.

(2) In 2021, the PC provincial government committed funding to expand Green Valley School for a new gymnasium and classrooms.

(3) The school is so crowded that three mobile classrooms were added to alleviate overcrowding in classrooms.

(4) In order for construction to begin, the school removed all three portable classrooms, leaving Green Valley in a further critical state of overcrowding.

(5) As a result of overcrowding, parents are choosing to home-school their children due to safety concerns and the challenges associated with overcrowding.

(6) The current Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning have said they are committed to investing in education.

(7) The concerns of residents of La Vérendrye and the surrounding area are being ignored by the provincial government.

(8) The lack of space in the school is affecting the quality of education and extracurricular activities for students.

(9) The minister and Premier have a duty to respond to the educational needs of children and youth identified by rural communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to immediately bring back the three portable classrooms to help alleviate stress and overcrowding classrooms.

(2) To urge the provincial government to reinstate the expansion project for Green Valley School.

This petition has been signed by Lena Falk, Dean Belair, Vanesa Klassen and many, many other Manitobans.

Provincial Trunk Highways 12 and 210

MLA Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): I wish to present the following petition.

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

The intersection of Provincial Trunk Highways 12 and 210 is known as a dangerous intersection, resulting in a safety review published in the fall of 2023.

In the summer of 2024, the Province presented four options for public consultation, and area residents were promised a presentation of a final option by the fall of 2024.

Delays in the renovation of this intersection have put Manitobans at risk, as the safety review identified that changes are needed.

The provincial government failed to meet its own timeline of fall of 2024, and, as such, area residents are concerned that the project has not been designated as a priority.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately implement work on the renovation of the intersection of Provincial Trunk Highways 12 and 210, to keep area residents and travellers safe.

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

New Neepawa Health Centre

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Neepawa Health Centre is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of a CT scanner.

(2) The new hospital is being built east of Neepawa, on the north side of Yellowhead Highway, PTH 16. It will nearly—it will be nearly double the size of the existing hospital and will better serve patients from this broader, western Manitoba geographic area.

(3) CT scanners are standard equipment that combine X-ray images from several angles to create detailed, three-dimensional models of structures inside the body. They perform critical diagnostic procedures that support the diagnosis and treatment of a wide range of injuries and diseases, and the new equipment

will be able to complete these important scans faster and with sharper and clearer images.

(4) The average wait-time for Manitobans to receive a CT scan is currently seven weeks, and there are over 14,000 patients on the wait-list to receive the diagnostic imaging procedure.

(5) The new CT scanner will reduce these wait-times as it would decrease the need for patients to travel long distances, sometimes involving overnight stays, to access the care they need.

(6) The new scanner will reduce pressure on emergency response services, who would no longer have to transport these patients, opening up appointments in other communities and allowing more people to get the care they need sooner.

(7) A CT scanner in the Neepawa Health Centre will enable further treatment and diagnosis to take place in community, reducing wait times for patients in surrounding areas and reducing the burden of travel to other facilities.

* (15:30)

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and placement of a CT scanner machine in the Neepawa Health Centre in Neepawa, Manitoba.

This petition has been signed by Jill Bannerman, Rick Kozak, Alicia Toniak and many, many more Manitobans.

Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protects its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increase bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring the repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

This has been signed by Candace Chicouene, Judy Hogg, Terrence Hogg and many, many Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly, and the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all of the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allows dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

This petition is signed by Teri [*phonetic*] Nabess, Adele McMurray, Alana Miller and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for

meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all of the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

* (15:40)

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

Honourable Speaker, this petition was signed by Duane Seens, Pat Dunn, Karen Crozier and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Location of Safe Injection Sites

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) The Province of Manitoba has filed paperwork with the federal government proposing the establishment of a drug injection site for illegal drugs at 200 Disraeli Fwy. without sufficient public consultation.

(2) The decision to locate the facility at 200 Disraeli was made despite that the site is located in the immediate vicinity of a daycare centre, high school and multiple community gathering sites, including churches and cultural institutions.

(3) Residents, business owners and community organizations have raised concerns that the location is incompatible with nearby institutions serving thousands of youth and the families, and believe it will erode public safety and confidence in the area.

(4) Existing community consultations specifically ignored concerns about public safety and were criticized by community members for being artificial and scripted.

(5) The provincial government has failed to introduce legislation and regulations to control where drug injection sites can be located.

(6) Other provinces are closing injection-drug injection sites and adopting a recovery model, following the expertise of groups such as the Canadian Centre of Recovery Excellence.

(7) This decision ignore the experts—ignoring the experts will leave people suspended in addiction and will not give Manitobans their lives back or their loved ones back.

(8) The provincial government has failed to fund and operate any treatment or additional rapid access to addictions medication clinics to break this cycle.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to cancel all injection sites in the Point Douglas community, including the proposed location at 200 Disraeli Fwy.

(2) To urge the provincial government to legislate that no further sites will be proposed without community support.

This petition has been signed by Izzy Elgin [*phonetic*], Dennis Esroy, Karen Fores and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further petitions. Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(*Continued*)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): Can you please call second reading debate of Bill 49, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (2).

The Deputy Speaker: It has been called that we will be doing second reading of Bill 49, the Manitoba Public Insurance corporations act—amended—amendment (2).

SECOND READINGS

Bill 49—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (2)

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): I move, seconded by the Minister responsible for Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, that Bill 49, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (2), be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Wiebe: Thank you to my colleagues for the warm welcome this afternoon.

The Speaker in the Chair

Honourable Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to introduce for second reading Bill 49, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (2).

Manitobans enjoy some of the lowest auto insurance rates in Canada through our public insurance system. I am pleased to be here today to present a bill for your consideration which further protects Manitoba's current registered owner insurance model and ensures affordable and stable auto insurance rates while retaining independent oversight by the Public Utilities Board.

Any person who holds a driver's licence in Manitoba is placed on the driver safety rating scale. The scale, as you know, Honourable Speaker, runs from negative 20 to positive 19, with a positive 20 that will be now added in the upcoming year. Every newly licenced Manitoban starts out at the—at level zero unless they have driving experience from a reciprocal jurisdiction, in which they may start as high as plus 10.

For every year of safe driving, a driver moves one level up the scale. At fault claims or convictions will see them move down, between two and 15 levels, depending on the severity of that incident. A person who has a positive driver safety rating receives a discount on their licence renewal, and a person whose rating is in the negative will pay an additional surcharge.

MPI also uses the driver safety rating to determine the price a person must pay to insure most types of vehicles. A person with a positive DSR rating will be given a discount on the insurance for any vehicle which is registered to them, and the discount increases

the higher up on the scale they go. A person in the negative gets no discount.

Because the discounts are based on driving record of the registered owner of the vehicle, we call this the registered owner model. If an individual's lost their licence due to medical condition, they might rely on a friend or family member to drive them to appointments, to run errands and so on, using their own vehicle. Normally, if the policy were based on the owner's DSR, they'd lose any discount they've previously had. So to account for those rare circumstances, MPI now allows the owner to assign a driver to their policy.

This means the discount is calculated based on the DSR of the person who's driving. The registered owner model has worked well in Manitoba, and we're now working to improve it further. MPI has added a new level on the scale every year since 2022 and has provided increasingly larger discounts for the people at the top of the scale, who now receive discounts at 48 per cent of the highest level.

MPI's most recent rating application calls for a new plus-20 level, as I mentioned earlier, with a 53 per cent vehicle premium discount to take effect next April, saving Manitobans money.

Honourable Speaker, the registered owner model is a key part of our public insurance system, and we're now committed to making our public insurance model even stronger. MPI concluded public consultations around these driver models on how people's driving records should impact the cost of insurance in 2019 and also again in 2024. And both times, though, they indicated that nearly twice as many Manitobans favoured the registered owner model compared to alternative models that were considered.

* (15:50)

Alternative models may include a primary driver model, where a person's vehicle premium discounts are determined based on the driver's record of the person who's declared to be that primary driver, rather than the registered owner.

Applying for insurance would require making a declaration, nominating the person who typically drives the vehicle. Insurance companies will then enforce that declaration as part of their process for handling claims, which could result in a denial of coverage if your friend, for instance, has had an accident while you—driving your car. Even if they're properly licenced, they have permission from you to be able to drive the

vehicle and they're doing nothing illegal, they still may not have the coverage that they would expect.

Requiring these people to be listed in a policy would result in a significant increase to premiums in households that include younger people or new Canadians who have not yet established that driving record of good, solid driving. The existing public model is the best for maintaining that accessibility, affordability and simplicity in our public insurance system, particular for families who are struggling with affordability these days.

However, the MPI seem—act currently says that discounts or additional amounts payable as part of a vehicle insurance are based on the driver safety rating system. That is it, Honourable Speaker. The act today is silent on who's driver safety rating should be considered when calculating the amount.

So the bill that we're bringing here forward today will specifically require that any discount from a plan premium must be based on the driver safety rating of a vehicle registered owner, rather than—sorry—preserving the minor exception, which I mentioned earlier, about assigning that driver to a policy.

And then, of course, the PUB would retain sole jurisdiction over the rates themselves and the discounts that are associated with each level of the DSR scale.

This change will protect MPI's insurance model and will allow MPI to continue meeting customer expectations of affordability and value, while upholding its core mission and values, ensuring that it continues to be robust, independent oversight by the MPI—by PUB—sorry—of the MPI's rates that are set each year.

Since coming into office, Honourable Speaker, you know that our government has been focused on getting MPI back on track after years of mismanagement by the previous government. We ended the strike; we placed a new leadership and a new board and we closed the book on Project Nova.

Bill 49 is now just the next step in this process. By enshrining the registered owner model in legislation we're protecting affordability for families now and for years to come.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Questions

The Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any opposition or independent member in

the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic or designate, subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties, subsequent questions asked by each independent member, remaining questions be asked by any opposition member, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): Thank you for the opportunity to put some questions to the minister on this Bill 49.

My first question to the minister, Honourable Speaker, is why is the government legislating around a PUB order and a Court of Appeal ruling that's upholding it?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): Well, again, as the member opposite knows well, the PUB ordered the—ordered MPI to begin the process of looking at changing from the registered owner model to the primary driver model. However, as part of that process, they asked for MPI to go to the public, and they did so in 2019 and 2024.

Overwhelmingly, Manitobans said that affordability was their most important factor when considering which model to choose. MPI has shared those results with us, and we're bringing this legislation forward, respecting the will of Manitobans.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Honourable Speaker, my question on this bill to the minister is, how does undermining the PUB's independence serve the public interest?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, Honourable Speaker, the member opposite will know that we are respecting the will of the PUB. And, in fact, MPI, I know, is busy getting ready to present at the PUB, working with them to resolve a number of issues identified by the PUB of the mismanagement of the previous government.

We're working with PUB to make sure that we're respecting their work with us while also prioritizing the affordability that Manitobans say is most important these days.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you, Honourable Speaker, for the opportunity to ask the minister some questions on Bill 49.

My question was: Has the minister consulted any consumer groups or intervenors before reversing the PUB's direction?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, of course, we do this work in bringing legislation forward in conjunction with and consultation with MPI. And we know that MPI works very well with the intervenors every year at the PUB and, of course, we work with those groups as well. We listen to the concerns that they have.

Our focus remains on affordability. And members opposite, when they had the reins of power, when they were in control of MPI, they lost complete sight of that. We saw that in the massive boondoggle that was Project Nova. We're getting it back on track. We're working with MPI and PUB to make sure that that happens.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I'm happy to stand here today and have the opportunity to ask the Minister of Justice questions in relation to Bill 49.

What protections remain to ensure MPI's rates are fair if the PUB's authority is constrained by statute?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, again, Honourable Speaker, we work very closely with the PUB to ensure that Manitobans are getting a fair deal. We know that PUB was very critical of the previous government, of members opposite, for not focusing on affordability.

What we're doing here today is bringing forward legislation that, in fact, protects Manitobans from future governments that might want to push us toward that privatized model which members opposite seem to want to consider.

We know that the registered owner model, which is consistent with a public insurance model, is the way to get the most affordability for Manitobans, and that's what we're focused on.

Mr. King: Honourable Speaker, we know that the Public Utilities Board was put there to protect the consumer, so my question to the minister is: Does this move set a precedent for government interference in future PUB decisions?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, again, Honourable Speaker, members opposite maybe aren't listening or don't understand how this works. Of course the PUB has made recommendations to MPI. They've taken the steps required to ensure that they're understanding what consumers in Manitoba are asking for. In this case, overwhelmingly, Manitobans have said they want affordable insurance rates and they want that through the registered owner model.

This is what MPI was founded on. This has now been in place since the founding, since day one of

MPI. Manitobans are just asking for some clarity, and that's what this government is providing.

Mr. Balcaen: First, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) took a run at defence lawyers and had to apologize to them here in this Chamber. Then, two weeks ago, making disparaging remarks in questioning judges within our judicial system. And the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) stood by his every word. Now the NDP are doing an end run around the words of the Court of Appeal.

So my question is: How can Manitobans have any trust in this government and particularly the Attorney General of Manitoba?

Mr. Wiebe: Can't believe how off-track this member is with that question.

But I guess it just does betray the real concerns that they have, and that is not on affordability, not on saving Manitobans money, but potentially on privatizing MPI. That was their goal. That's what they were trying to do is privatize our Crowns. And we know that by moving to this privatized insurance model for MPI, this would be just another step for them to take.

Now, by enshrining this in legislation, we're going to stop them from doing that ever in the future if they were ever to get government again, which I know Manitobans are hoping that they don't.

Mr. Narth: We keep hearing from this minister, affordability for Manitobans, but which Manitobans?

* (16:00)

So my question, Honourable Speaker, is: Will Manitobans continue to see good drivers subsidizing bad drivers under their system?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, of course, Honourable Speaker, that's not what's happening here. We do have a driver safety rating, and we know that each Manitoban, each driver, is assigned a—on points, a position on that scale. And based on that, at the registration of their—or, at the renewal of their licence, they're going to pay either a penalty or be rewarded with a discount.

That's how our system works. We're not changing the DSR; it still remains. Good drivers are rewarded, bad drivers have a financial incentive to get better and all Manitobans save money through the affordability offered by public insurance at MPI.

Ms. Byram: My question now is: Is the government prioritizing corporate convenience over fairness to ratepayers?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, it's a good reminder to talk about the simplicity offered by this particular model, the lack of red tape. Of course, members opposite, they want more red tape, they want more bureaucracy for drivers to have to go through if they want to insure their vehicle. So I appreciate that the member opposite has reminded us of that.

What she misses, though, is that this is an overall affordability advantage for Manitobans. Public insurance is an advantage for Manitobans and it's one that members opposite threatened. We're going to put this in legislation and we're going to make sure that we get this locked in and Manitobans see those affordability advantages every day.

Mr. King: The minister has been continually asked what the cost savings will be for the consumer here, but I just—I'm ask—going to ask if MPI has provided cost 'refusability' data comparing the owner and primary-driver models.

Has there been any data released on this?

Mr. Wiebe: Yes, as we talked about in the bill briefing with the member opposite, we know that other private insurance models, of course, use the register—or, the registered owner—sorry, the primary-driver model. And in that case, we know that, especially for young people with no driving record and newcomers, that their rates are quite a bit higher. I think any one of members opposite can give one of their friends in Alberta a call to find out just how expensive it can be for a family when a new driver enters.

We are protecting the value that Manitobans have always experienced with MPI, and we're doing it through this important legislation.

Mr. Balcaen: My question to the minister is: Has he provided any actuarial analysis showing the registered owner model is fairer or more cost-effective than the primary-driver model, as he claims?

Mr. Wiebe: Yes. That's what MPI does, right? They are—there's a whole bunch of actuary—actuarial work that's done to make sure that this is a model that is sustainable and fair, and in fact, in this case, saves Manitobans money.

And that's been our focus as a government, and so as MPI has said, this is what Manitobans are asking for, this is what the system has always been in Manitoba and now we're going to have this legislation to lock it in and show Manitobans our priority in real terms.

That's our focus. Members opposite, I guess—privatization or higher rates. Which one are they asking for today?

Mr. Narth: I don't really know the purpose of this question period when the minister isn't answering any questions.

But my question now, Honourable Speaker, is: Will the government commit to a public review of MPI's DSR methodology within the next five years?

Mr. Wiebe: Again, members opposite are so focused on trying to jack up the rates for the MPI customer here in Manitoba.

We are taking a completely different approach. We're making sure that we stabilize MPI, that we get them on a solid footing and then we give Manitoba Public Insurance the legislative authority to continue to offer that MPI, that public insurance advantage that Manitobans so value.

Members opposite are so focused on jacking up rates or privatizing MPI. They need to come clean. Which is it that they're most focused on today?

Ms. Byram: Maybe the minister can answer this question: Does the government have data that shows that registered owners have better driving safety records than the primary driver?

Mr. Wiebe: Again, I think members opposite are confused. Every driver is assigned a DSR rating, and they play—they pay a premium based on that DSR rating. That DSR rating is not going away. In fact, we're giving an additional step to give more value to Manitobans; that's coming next April.

What we're talking about here is making sure that we're not adding additional bureaucracy and red tape. We're simplifying this for Manitoba Public Insurance customers, and we're locking in this advantage that Manitobans have always seen in their public insurance corporation.

We're going to lock that in and we're going to make sure Manitobans know our focus is the same as theirs.

Mr. King: We know that there's only three provinces left in this country that go with this model, and that's BC, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. So I want to know how this government justifies maintaining a model that private insurers and other provinces have abandoned decades ago.

Mr. Wiebe: Well, there it is, Honourable Speaker. I think it's the privatization that he's most interested in,

because, of course, he says other provinces have private insurance models. They've sold off their Crown corporations or they privatized those services.

Manitobans have been clear. They see that MPI is an affordability advantage that's unique to Manitoba, and we're going to continue to build MPI rather than tear it down, rather than add this kind of uncertainty that members opposite did when they were in charge.

We're going to clean up MPI; we're going to lock it in and make sure that it remains affordable for years and years to come.

Mr. Narth: My question now for the minister is: Why is Cabinet entrenching the owner-only discount model in legislation rather than allowing the PUB to assess the evidence publicly?

Mr. Wiebe: Honourable Speaker, it's not being done at the Cabinet table; it's being done here in this Legislature.

And member opposite can feel free to vote against affordability for Manitobans. He can feel free to vote for the privatization of MPI.

You know, I'm not sure what his position is. He's going to have to figure that out on his own, but he's going to get a chance, an up-and-down opportunity to either vote for affordability or vote against it. That's what this bill is about. It's not being done behind closed doors. It's right here in the Legislature today.

Mr. Balcaen: Honourable Speaker, the PUB is set in place to serve the public interest and to monitor government. So why does this government continue to attack the PUB and bring end-run legislation around their authority?

Mr. Wiebe: Honourable Speaker, of course the PUB retains the authority over the rates that are set at MPI. We work with the PUB, and when the PUB came to us and said Project Nova was the biggest boondoggle they had ever seen in their history, we started to clean up the mess left by members opposite.

The public insurance model that exists in Manitoba allows us to share the risk among all Manitobans but also share the rewards. We're giving those rewards straight back to Manitoba families by locking in the affordability advantage here in the province of Manitoba.

The Speaker: The time for the questions has expired.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is open for debate.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): Thanks—thank you for the opportunity to stand here today and put some words on the record in regards to Bill 49, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, and it's also a pleasure to be able to have this as my first debate as critic for MPI.

* (16:10)

So I want to take some time and make some good points for our people here in Manitoba that maybe we should consider going into this bill and will give my colleagues also an opportunity to say a few words. But this bill, Honourable Speaker, it undermines independent oversight and it weakens Manitoba Public Insurance and risks the long-term financial stability of an institution that Manitobans depend on every day.

Honourable Speaker, Manitoba Public Insurance is not just another department. It is a billion-dollar insurance company that serves nearly every driver in this province, and it must be governed by sound actuarial principles and must be guided by evidence and regulated with transparency. This bill fails on all three accounts.

The government claims, Honourable Speaker, that this legislation is about affordability, yet when pressed and asked questions, minister can't produce a single dollar figure to show how it would save Manitobans money—not one. The government says it's about keeping rates stable, but there is no actuarial evidence, no data, no analysis showing that this model will achieve that. At best, the minister admitted the change would be break even.

So, Honourable Speaker, if this bill is not about saving Manitobans money, what is it about? It's about control. It is about taking decisions away from the Public Utilities Board, the independent regulator that protects ratepayers, and handing those powers to Cabinet.

Manitoba Public Insurance is a Crown corporation, but it's also an insurer. It exists to provide affordable, fair and stable auto insurance, but it must operate under the same professional and actuarial standards that define an insurance industry. The foundation of insurance is risk-based pricing. That means your premiums are determined by your individual level of risk. Safe drivers pay less; riskier drivers pay more. It's a simple and fair principle, I think, Honourable Speaker.

In 2022, after years of consultation, the Public Utilities Board ordered MPI to adopt a primary-driver model. That model used across Canada sets rates

based on the person who actually drives the vehicle most often.

Now, the Public Utilities Board found the current owner-based model was outdated, unfair and forced good drivers to subsidize bad ones. Well, Manitoba Public Insurance appealed that order, claiming that the Public Utilities Board had overstepped its authority. Manitoba Court of Appeal dismissed the case. Justice Freda Steel ruled that the Public Utilities Board had full jurisdiction over Manitoba Public Insurance's risk methodology, writing that the challenge has, and I quote, has no reasonable prospect of success, unquote.

Honourable Speaker, the Public Utilities Board was right and the courts confirmed it. Manitoba Public Insurance even said publicly that it would work collaboratively with the Public Utilities Board to develop a model that provided the greatest value for Manitobans. But now we're seeing, through Bill 49, the government is doing something extraordinary. Instead of respecting that independent process, they're legislating around it; they're writing into law what should be determined by evidence and expertise.

Honourable Speaker, this is not progress; this is regression legislation. It's not progressive whatsoever. This bill is not about affordability, and it's certainly not about fairness. It's about removing oversight.

Honourable Speaker, Bill 49 enshrines the outdated registered owner model into law. It says that any discount or premium must be based on the driver safety rating of the vehicle's registered owner, not the person who actually drives the vehicle. The effect of this is pretty simple: permanently removes the Public Utilities Board's authority to order MPI to modernize its risk model.

So, Honourable Speaker, in doing so, the government has legislated around both the regulator and the courts. Minister is now writing insurance methodology directly into statute. This is exactly the kind of political interference that the Public Utilities Board was designed to prevent. If a government can simply legislate away an independent ruling whenever it finds oversight inconvenient, then oversight becomes meaningless. Excuse me.

The Public Utilities Board was established to ensure that Crown corporations like Manitoba Public Insurance operate in the public interest to protect ratepayers, not politicians. Undermining that independence is not about protecting Manitobans, Honourable Speaker; it is about protecting political convenience.

Now, this sets a very troubling precedent, Honourable Speaker. If this government can rewrite the rules for Manitoba Public Insurance after losing a case in the Court of Appeal, what stops it from doing the same to Manitoba Hydro or any other Crown corporation?

The message it sends is that independent regulators only matter when they agree with the government of the day. That is not how stable, responsible government works, Honourable Speaker. It replaces long-term stewardship with short-term political expediency.

This—the model this government is locking into law is out of date and out of step with every insurer in North America. Only Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia still use the registered owner system. Honourable Speaker, in every other province, rates are based on the person who actually drives the vehicle, not the name on the registration form. That aligns with industry best practices and actuarial science. Under the current system, safe drivers can end up subsidizing the riskier ones simply because of who happens to own the vehicle.

Now, the Public Interest Law Centre representing the Consumers' Association of Canada and the Manitoba Seniors Equity Action Coalition has been clear. They said, and I quote: Our safest drivers are paying more than their risk and Bill 49 makes that permanent. Unquote.

Honourable Speaker, that is the definition of unfairness and now the government wants to write it into law. The minister has claimed that Bill 49 will help keep rates affordable, yet when asked to produce those numbers, he could not provide it: no dollar figures, no savings, no actuarial evidence whatsoever. The truth is, even by the government's own admission, this bill is not going to make insurance cheaper. At best, it is break even.

So why do it? Why do it, is my question. Because the government does not want the Public Utilities Board telling MPI to adopt the model with experts and evidence support. They'd rather legislate control than have to justify their choices through an open and transparent process. This is not about affordability, it's about authority.

And, Honourable Speaker, when the minister was asked about what consultation had been done with consumers, with seniors or even Manitoba Public Insurance's own staff, we heard nothing. It was silence. No one outside the Cabinet was engaged before this bill was introduced. That's not consultation. That

is unilateral policy making at the expense of accountability.

* (16:20)

There actually has been some public consultation done on the matter in 2017 and 2019 by the Public Utilities Board, which came to the conclusion that moving to the primary-driver model was the most sustainable and fair option for the customers of Manitoba Public Insurance.

Now, Honourable Speaker, I want to offer an analogy that many Manitobans might understand here. So just imagine if a condominium board that decides to cut fees by underfunding its reserve fund. They tell the residents they're saving money. It looks good on paper. For a few years, everyone feels great about the affordable condo fees. But then the roof starts to leak, the elevators need replacing, the parking lot begins to crumble; and when those costs finally come due, the residents are hit with a massive special assessment.

So, Honourable Speaker, that's exactly what Bill 49 sets our Manitobans up for. By legislating an outdated risk model, the government is choosing short-term political optics over long-term stability. They're underfunding the reserve fund of MPI's actuarial balance sheet. They're keeping rates artificially flat today at the expense of major corrections tomorrow.

So we need to look in the—to the future viability and financial management of a corporation. So when the actuarial reality can no longer be ignored, costs will come due in the form of a sharp, sudden rate hike that Manitobans can't afford. Again, Honourable Speaker, that's not responsible governance; that is fiscal short-term sightedness.

Manitoba Public Insurance depends on sound actuarial management. Rates must be set based on real-world risk data. When that link between rates and risk breaks, creates financial imbalances, surpluses or deficits appear. In good years, it means smaller rebates; in bad years, it means large losses.

This bill will only make that worse. By locking MPI into one model, the government is removing the flexibility needed to adjust rates as driving patterns, technology and claims data evolve. That inflexibility, to me, is dangerous. Just as the condo board cannot freeze its reserve contributions forever, an insurance company cannot freeze its risk model forever. The numbers will eventually demand correction, and when that day comes, Honourable Speaker, Manitobans will pay through port-through higher premiums.

So, Honourable Speaker, that's why the PUB exists: to ensure gradual, evidence-based adjustments that keep MPI stable. The Public Utilities Board is not there to make political decisions. It is there to make sure that actuarial science guides policy not politics.

Now, Honourable Speaker, the Public Utilities Board has one of the most important jobs right here in this province: protecting consumers from unfair or politically motivated rate setting. The Public Utilities Board is there to protect the consumer. It is an independent body with the authority to demand evidence, to hear expert witnesses and to publish transparent rulings. It ensures that public utilities operate with fairness, stability and, most importantly, accountability.

This government's decision to legislate around the Public Utilities Board's authority is an attack on that principle. Once you start saying that regulators can be overruled by legislation whenever it suits the government, you undermine every safeguard we have built right here in this province, Honourable Speaker, for public trust.

Manitobans count on the Public Utilities Board to protect them from what—exactly this kind of arbitrary political decision. Yet here we are, watching the government do what it has so often condemned in other governments: interfere directly with an independent Crown corporation to achieve a short-term narrative of affordability that it can't even prove.

Honourable Speaker, this bill also hurts ordinary Manitobans. Safer drivers will pay more simply because a riskier driver in a household can hide behind a registered owner. It's unfair, it is inaccurate and it undermines the very principles of risk-based insurance.

So, Honourable Speaker, if—I got four vehicles registered to my name at home, and two of them are two of my younger boys'. Now, if they weren't responsible drivers, that would be concerning to me because they're not paying me for the registration, so why would they care whether they have a good driver's safety rating or not? This is an example of how it's not fair.

Now, the Public Utilities Board recognized these problems and it ordered MPI to plan for a transition to the primary-driver model because it is fair and more accurate, Honourable Speaker; and the court upheld that ruling. Now this government is reversing it, not because the evidence has changed, but because the politics did.

The NDP claim this bill will protect stability and affordability, but when asked in this Chamber to

define what that means in real dollars, this minister cannot answer it; there were no actuarial studies, no projections, probably no savings.

The truth is quite simple, Honourable Speaker: the government cannot prove that this will make rates more affordable. That's because it will not. At best, it is break even; at worst, creates long-term instability that will lead to higher rates later.

Either way, Honourable Speaker, it fails the test of transparency. Manitobans deserve better than empty promises without evidence. The voices opposing this bill are not partisan. They include consumer advocates, seniors organizations and even MPI itself who understand the risks of walking into a flawed system.

Honourable Speaker, the Consumers' Association of Canada, Manitoba Seniors Equity Action Coalition, Coalition of Manitoba Motorcycle Groups all said the same thing: the current model is unfair and outdated. They support reform, not regression.

Even MPI itself, following the 2022 court decision, committed to working collaboratively—collaboratively with the Public Utilities Board; government has now broken that commitment on MPI's behalf, Honourable Speaker. It's not collaboration, it's interference.

Now the NDP government wants to be able to say it kept insurance 'inffordable,' but affordability without evidence is just simply an illusion. Holding down rates today while ignoring underlying risks is like holding down a spring, Honourable Speaker: the longer you push on it, the more pressure builds—and when that pressure finally releases, it snaps back harder and faster than ever before.

That's what this bill does. It defers costs instead of addressing them, and when the financial reckoning comes, Manitobans—not the politicians—will be the ones paying the price. Honourable Speaker, Bill 49 is not about affordability; it is about authority. It's not about protecting Manitobans, it's about protecting this government from accountability.

* (16:30)

By legislating around the Public Utilities Board, locking MPI into a model that every expert has called outdated, the NDP are gambling with the long-term financial health of the Manitoba Public Insurance. They're doing what that short-sighted condo board does: saving a few dollars today while setting residents up for a huge bill tomorrow. In the short term, they can claim stability, but in the long term, Manitobans will face volatility.

Honourable Speaker, Manitoba Public Insurance must be allowed to operate based on evidence, guided by actuarial science and subject to independent oversight. That's how we protect ratepayers, ensure their fairness and maintain stability. This bill does none of those things. For those reasons, it's tough to support this particular bill. It undermines independence. It ignores evidence and leaves Manitobans paying political convenience for many years down the road.

So I just want to point out some of the harmful consequences that maybe I haven't pointed out early on, Honourable Speaker, in my previous words, but again, it erodes the actual fairness and forces cross-subsidization; it should align the price with risk. And discounts must be based on the registered owner whether or not they drive; safe drivers who own a vehicle but drive little are not at all forced to subsidize the riskier drivers.

The consequence is that our safest drivers are paying more than what their risk is to the system. So, under Bill 49, a teenager, a learner or a spouse with no driving infractions could see costs if the vehicle is registered under someone with a less favourable record, even if that person never drives that vehicle.

Honourable Speaker, we've got a driver education system in this province that has been failing our customers and failing our young people that want to learn how to drive and become safe drivers. We can't even get instructors. We can't get the proper instructor that—to teach our young drivers to be safe on the roads. That's something that this NDP government has also failed at, is ensuring that our young drivers, our new Canadian drivers, are getting that education to become safe on our roadways.

In this province, we used to have the privilege of getting our driver's licence when we're 16 years old. Now, some of our children are 17 and a half, almost 18, before they get their licence because they don't have that opportunity to get a proper driver training in this province; the opportunity just is not there. Needs to be fixed.

So this—again, this bill, it undermines incentives for good driving. The driver knows their personal safety record doesn't directly affect the vehicle discount unless they're registered as the owner. So they've got less incentive to be a safe driver out there, Honourable Speaker. I mean, we need those incentives. We need that encouragement to become a good driver and be rewarded them—themselves, in order to keep them safe on our roads. I mean, think rewards and

encouragement—it would take pride in how you would want to become a good driver on our roads.

So the alignment between behaviour and costs here is weakened. In contrast, a primary-driver model ties the cost to the driver, thus encouraging safer driving.

So I think this is—these are things that need to be considered, and they were being considered by the Public Utilities Board when the directive was given to MPI to use that model—excuse me. Honourable Speaker, it encourages gaming and misregistration, so to me, that means people are going to abuse the system. Risky driver might register the vehicle in the name of a safer person to capture their discount. It becomes more tempting when the law mandates that the discount must follow the new—follow the owner, sorry. And although Bill 49 allows a regulatory exception, the registered owner lacks a licence, that exception is narrow and it may not catch many real-world cases of misregistration.

Again, it means it can be abused by people, and when a system is abused, to me, again, in the future all we're going to see is a risk of our rates rising. It contradicts, again—and I can't point this out enough, Honourable Speaker—that it contradicts the PUB's regulatory authority and its vision.

Again, the Public Utilities Board is put here to protect the consumer from higher rates on hydro, higher rates on—and on all our utilities and Crown corporations, and here we are; we're totally undermining that directive. The PUB's role is to ensure insurance premiums are just, reasonable, actuarially sound.

Bill 49 takes away that ability, demand that MPI shift toward a better model. And by statute, the government is essentially telling the PUB you cannot require a data-driven, risk-based premium structure that departs from registered-owner risk.

That in itself, Honourable Speaker, is an inversion of accountability to this government. It disadvantages lower-income and multi-driver households. In families of shared households, one registered owner will carry the vehicle discounts even if others drive frequently. It just doesn't—it's inequitable.

For new drivers or immigrants, which I mentioned earlier, with sparse driving history, requiring them to register the vehicle under someone else can deny them the visibility for good behaviour, build up that reputation of a good driver. We all want to be good drivers to keep Manitobans safe, so everyone should get that opportunity by being rewarded, Honourable Speaker.

Now, another thing here is it reduces the transparency in-of-and consumer recourse. The regulatory exception in regulations may be subject to 'opeg' rulemaking. Without legislative safeguards, minister or MPI discretion could discour-distort who qualifies. Consumers lose ability to hold MPI accountable through a clear, transitional mandate. Instead of being pushed forward, the shift is locked out.

So, Honourable Speaker, many, many concerns with this Bill 49 that's being put forward by the government, that was a directive by the Public Utilities Board, but yet undermined by the NDP government to put it into law. But we carry on with a model that doesn't seem fair. It's—doesn't address the risks, and isn't looking out for the financial viability, maybe, of one of our Crown corporations.

So with that, Honourable Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to put a number of words on the record here this afternoon in regards to Bill 49. I am going to take a seat here and let my colleagues step up and share their thoughts and views on a bill that we really have some concerns with.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I've jumped up here to put a few words on the record, as suggested by my colleague from Lakeside, and it gives me great pleasure to talk a little bit about Bill 49, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act.

So, Honourable Speaker, Manitobans deserve affordable insurance, reliable insurance and fair insurance. And they deserve a government that manages MPI responsibly, transparently and based on evidence. Unfortunately, this bill fails to deliver on any of those counts.

* (16:40)

The government says Bill 49 is about keeping rates affordable. When asked for proof, the minister himself could not provide one single number to prove that—not one. He was asked about it and talked around it and skirted it but could not provide any data on this.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

During question on this bill today, 15 minutes of questions came about data and about consultation and about the numbers, and not one answer—no answers. Again, skirted around this, much the same as we're seeing the skirting around the PUB.

Now it's put in place to protect Manitobans and to look at all of these different areas, but this government

shoos it aside and says they don't need to do that; they'll just legislate in court rulings that have come from the Court of Appeal, and they'll just sweep those aside and say it doesn't matter what they say; they've learned it from their leader.

The judiciary isn't important to them, and listening to rules that are put into place are not important to them. But rules are important, and that's why we have areas such as PUB to look after all of this data.

No dollar figure was ever provided, no actuarial report, no public analysis. Even the minister, very minister that brings this bill forward, says at best this is break even.

So why put this forward? That's our question. Why circumvent the rules? It's a question for everybody on the opposite side of this Chamber, honourable Speaker. Are rules not important? Are rules just meant to be broken by that side? That's the question.

So it's not about saving Manitobans money. What is it really about? Really, it's about control and having their ideology and their control in place, rather than, you know, looking at the authority that the PUB places.

This bill takes authority away from the Public Utilities Board, the independent regulator that exists to protect Manitobans. It gives that power to Cabinet and turns it over from the scrutiny of the Public Utilities Board and places it on the Cabinet table. That is not why the PUB was introduced.

Where does it go from here? MPI? Hydro? Any of the other areas? Are they just going to, you know, with a nod and a wink, get rid of the rulings that are placed by the courts of this fine province of ours? Are they going to just wave off the direction of the Public Utilities Board every time it comes forward? Because that is not the expectations of Manitobans. The expectations of Manitobans is to have that fair system in place, a system that is put to protect Manitobans on issues such as this.

Honourable Speaker, the PUB plays a vital role in our province. It's there to ensure fairness, transparency and accountability when setting rates for Crown corporations like MPI and Hydro. So having those in place protects Manitobans. The PUB mandate is to protect consumers, not politicians, by ensuring that rates reflect actual costs and not political agendas.

Honourable Speaker, we've seen this time and time and time again with this government, that ideology trumps what Manitobans want. It trumps the

law and it trumps all of the thoughts and processes that go into a proper governance model.

And that's not fair to Manitobans. That's using a system to skirt around what has been ordered by the courts and what has been suggested by the PUB. And when government interferes with that independence, the entire purpose of having impartial regulators disappears. It vanishes. There's no need for it.

So what this government is saying is, we'll make the rules; we don't need the PUB, and we'll just carry on doing whatever it is that we decide.

And that's, again, not fair to Manitobans, that's not why Manitobans elected us here, and I'm surprised members from this caucus on the NDP side haven't stood up and said, lookit, Manitobans put us here to make sure that we were responsible, to make sure that we were protecting the people that elected us, that put us in this very Chamber. But no, they sit in silence, and that silence condones this action, and that's shameful, honourable Speaker.

Manitobans have trusted the PUB for decades to keep rate setting honest and evidence-based. And, again, when asked for the evidence, there's only three provinces left in all of Canada—ourselves, British Columbia, Saskatchewan—that follow this model.

All the other have gone to the evidence-based system and taken that evidence and said, lookit, we're going to honour our safe drivers; we're going to honour those that really look out for individuals, that look out for the children that are on the streets, the seniors, you know, vulnerable road users, and we're going to give them a better rate. And for those of you who defy the laws or have multiple accidents and stuff, you know what? We'll just let somebody else register the vehicle for you and save you that money too. So it really goes against good governance.

This government now wants to legislate around the oversight of the PUB and the evidence-based gatherings because it doesn't like a PUB decision that was upheld by the Court of Appeal. And so the PUB makes a ruling, and the government or MPI appealed it, which certainly can be done. And that's our legal system, and that's fair and just in our legal system. We want to make sure that people abide by our legal system.

But when the legal system makes its final ruling and there's no other appeal and says, you must do this, then you must follow that. You don't just make legislation to go around that and say, you know what, we're not listening to the Manitoba Court of Appeal; we're

not listening to what the judges have said in this province. And we've seen that a few times in this Chamber by this Premier (Mr. Kinew) and, you know, backed up by his Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), about not listening when these rulings are put into place.

So, little bit of history. We can recall what happened during this. So in 2022, after extensive consultations with real Manitobans, with people that are going to be impacted by the laws that are put into place, the PUB ordered Manitoba Public Insurance to move towards a primary-driver model. That's a model used across North America, honourable Speaker.

It's fair, it's modern and it aligns insurance premiums with actual driving behaviour. And that's what we talked about earlier, is aligning those driving behaviours and providing the benefits to the people that have a good driving record, that care about the roads that they drive on; they care about the other users, the vulnerable road users, or anybody else that's out on the roadways.

* (16:50)

The PUB concluded that the current registered owner system was outdated and unfair, forcing safe drivers to subsidize the riskier ones. And I've talked about that a few times. But that's exactly what it is. The safe drivers, the ones with experience, the ones that have gleaned a very good record over the years—they should get the benefit.

They shouldn't be subsidizing other people that are not good drivers, that are causing the accidents, that are causing the costs, the damage and everything else that goes with being an improper driver—somebody who's out there not obeying the laws, getting tickets, having accidents that are preventable. Those sort of things, the individuals that are doing that, that are have—sorry, that have a good record are the ones that deserve the credit and the praise and, for that, the financial break when it comes to their insurance.

MPI didn't like that direction and they appealed it to the Manitoba Court of Appeal, arguing that the PUB didn't have jurisdiction. But guess what, honourable Speaker, the courts rejected that appeal; they rejected that claim and the justice was very clear when she stated that the PUB does not have the authority to direct MPI—sorry, does have the authority to direct MPI on risk methodology.

So her ruling said the challenge had no reasonable prospect of success. Well, knowing that it had no reasonable prospect of success, you would think that

this government would understand that and would start working towards what was directed by the PUB—and ultimately agreed to by the Court of Appeal.

And that's why we have laws and systems in our society, is to make sure that government doesn't run amok and that they're held to account and that there's systems in place to do that. But instead, this government has decided to take the end run around this and make sure that the Court of Appeal's rulings are legislated differently by this government so that they don't have to follow them.

And so what did MPI do after losing that claim? They accepted the ruling. They said publicly that they would work collaboratively with the PUB to develop a model that provides the greatest values for Manitobans.

But this government, through Bill 49, is absolutely undoing all of that. They're making sure that those discussions, those rulings are completely washed away, filed in the garbage bin and making sure that their ideology remains strong. They're the ones that are saying: doesn't matter what the court says, it doesn't matter what the PUB says, we're going to legislate around it so that our ideology moves forward and we can do whatever we want. And that is not what the courts have ruled in this, but that's the direction that this government has chosen to take.

This bill permanently locks MPI into the outdated owner-based model; the same model that is not followed by the majority of places not only in Canada, but across North America.

And why? Because it's not fair. It's not fair to the safe road users, and it takes the safe road users and lumps them in the same category with unsafe drivers or drivers without the full driver merit system; and that's—again, it goes against the rulings that the PUB brought forward and, again, that the Court of Appeal brought forward.

Pardon me—it legislates away the PUB's authority to ever order any change again; and again, that's not what the PUB was put into place for: it's an oversight, it's to keep government in check and these corporations that are part of the Manitoba government in check.

The government keeps saying this bill protects affordability, but affordability shouldn't be placed on the backs of those that are the good drivers. Affordability shouldn't be shared with everybody else. It should be placed with those individuals that have taken the time, that follow the road rules and have been safe drivers for years and years. It takes 10

or 15 years to get up into the high numbers when—your driver-safety ratings. And those are the ones that we should be crediting, not the unsafe drivers or not the other people that have been involved in multiple accidents or speeding or impaired driving or any of the other areas that impact our road users.

Honourable Speaker, that claim doesn't stand up to the scrutiny. The minister has been asked repeatedly to provide the data, and he couldn't or perhaps he wouldn't.

Perhaps the data is counter to this. The data maybe shows that the PUB was right and the courts were right, but the ideology is playing the trump card on this and making sure that this data is suppressed and doesn't come to light to Manitobans that are concerned about this, that want to make sure that there's an independence.

There's no evidence that this bill will make insurance cheaper for anyone, none. In fact, based on what we've seen, the financial outcome is neutral at best—at best.

At worst, it sets MPI up for future financial instability because it removes the flexibility to adapt to actuarial realities. And those studies and those actuarials should drive what the costs are and allow MPI to move with the same actuarials, but this is blocking that.

MPI is not just another government department. It's an insurer, and it insures all Manitobans. There is no other options for drivers in Manitoba than to go through MPI, and so it's their responsibility to make sure that the best systems are in place to guarantee that people are protected. The more accurate the risk assessment, the fairer the premium should be, and that's why most insurers across Canada and across North America base their rates on the primary driver of a vehicle, not just the registered owner.

It's quite simple for a registered owner with a very good driver-safety record to insure their vehicle or multiple vehicles and allow others to drive them, and that actually is not beneficial to the system that we work within. It's not beneficial to the safe drivers that are out there that should be impacted and are not, positively, by this bill.

Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, as I've said earlier, are the last three provinces still using this model. And so, if all of the other provinces and many of the other states and areas across North America have seen the light, why is our government so resistant to seeing the light? They live in the dark,

the dark ages, the dark times, the dark existence. So it doesn't surprise me that we see this from this government.

What the NDP are doing here, honourable Speaker, is locking MPI into a single model bylaw. Instead of taking the suggestions that were brought forward by the PUB, instead of taking those suggestions that were ruled upon by the Court of Appeal here in the province, they've decided to legislate around it.

And that's not how modern insurance companies should operate. They should operate in providing

insurance at the best value to the customers for individuals that have worked on their impeccable driving record, that have spent years and years increasing their driver-safety rating and making sure—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

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

The time being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

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