



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

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Speaker*



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

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALTOMARE, Nello, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, 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	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, 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

Thursday, December 5, 2024

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

**The Speaker:** Afternoon, everyone.

Please be seated.

## Speaker's Statement

**The Speaker:** Before we begin any business this afternoon, I have a statement for the House.

It has come to my attention that a number of concerning incidents occurred during private members' business this morning, both after the Deputy Speaker took the Chair and after the House recessed at noon.

I want to make this abundantly clear. The behaviour shown by members from both sides this morning was totally unacceptable. We need to treat each other with more respect than what has been shown each other here today.

We are all elected by the people of this province to represent them here in this Chamber. Our constituents expect and deserve us to be role models, to set a standard of behaviour for all Manitobans to follow.

And I want to be very clear: this did not happen this morning.

I hope that during the winter break, we will all take time to reflect on our behaviours and contributions in this House. The standard set in 2024 was quite simply not good enough. Manitobans deserve better.

I hope members take these words to heart, regardless of our individual views. We all want—at least, we all should want—what's best for our constituents. So I'll ask all members to remember during the proceedings this afternoon to be respectful and to be that way when we return again in March.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 5—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Impaired Driving Measures)

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, that Bill 5, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Impaired Driving Measures), be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Wiebe:** Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce Bill 5, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Impaired Driving Measures), to the Legislature.

The bill amends The Highway Traffic Act to impose new and stronger licensing consequences for drivers convicted of impaired operation-related offences and refusal offences causing bodily harm and death.

The amendments will increase the length of the automatic driver's licence suspension following a second conviction within 10 years for these offences. The suspension will be increased from 10 years to a lifetime suspension.

The amendments will also require that all drivers convicted of this type of offence will be prohibited from driving with any alcohol in their blood. For the first conviction, the length of prohibition would be seven years. For a second conviction, it would be, again, a lifetime prohibition.

A driver who breaches their alcohol prohibition will be subject to licence suspension, financial administrative penalties, and their vehicle will be impounded. These sanctions escalate with subsequent breaches.

I'm pleased to introduce this bill to the House for its consideration.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

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

Committee reports?

Tabling of reports?

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equity):** Tomorrow, December 6, is The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, which falls within the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, and this year's theme is: Come together, act now.

It's been 38 years since Canada witnessed the horrific acts that took place that day. Fourteen women were killed in an act of misogyny that saw an armed man enter the hallway the—of École polytechnique, entering an engineering classroom, separating the women from the men and then proceed to shoot and kill the women. When he was done shooting in the classrooms and the hallways, 14 women would be murdered.

Every year, Canadians remember, and we never forget, and we never get over it. Tomorrow on December 6, we will gather and remember all the women who continue to die by acts of gender-based violence. When we reflect on this somber occasion, we acknowledge the global events we have witnessed this past year that has resulted in some truly horrific acts of misogyny and gender-based violence around the world.

In the Middle East, women and girls have experienced unspeakable acts of sexual violence due to armed conflicts. In Afghanistan, a gender apartheid is taking place, silencing women and girls, restricting independent movement and denying educational—education, all punishable by violence and death.

And in France, we are witnessing one of the most horrific sexual assault trials ever to be prosecuted: 51 men have been charged with raping Gisèle Pelicot. These men, who are carpenters, firefighters, journalists, nurses, husbands, fathers, grandfathers, all took part in raping an unconscious woman.

Today, I dedicate my ministerial statement to Ghislaine [*phonetic*] Pelicot for her incredible bravery and her words. And quote: It's not for us to have shame; it's for the rapists. End quote.

And here in Manitoba, our local story of searching for our relatives in a landfill continues to make global news. This was the first time in Canadian history where a political party manipulated the homicides of Indigenous women as an election commitment, and where the members opposite continued to remain silent and doubled down in their continued support of their action to stand firm against Indigenous women murdered by a serial killer.

Of course, this is by no means an exhaustive list of global events, but I fear too many have become numb to these acts of violence. UN Women released a new global report which states, and I quote: The home is the deadliest place for a woman.

In Manitoba, we have tragically and unfortunately continued to witness this reality with multiple homicides

taking place within the home committed by male partners or former partners. These tragic cases have changed families and communities forever.

The UN office of the high commission for human rights is charged with monitoring how countries, including Canada, are implementing and adhering to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, also called CEDAW.

In response to Canada's latest report on how it's adhering to CEDAW, the UN has stated it would like to see Canada involve more men in addressing patriarchy and how men's role in ending violence against women is critical.

Women and gender-diverse folks will continue to come together to raise awareness about violence against women. We will continue to act to develop strategies, programs and legislation to protect those who have been harmed. We will build shelters. We will meet in community centres and homes and talk with our sisters and relatives on how we can support one another. We will march, attend rallies and attend global conferences to raise our voices.

We have been doing this for decades and we will continue to do so. I lift up all my relatives who do this important and hard, difficult work.

\* (13:40)

On November 29, my male and non-binary colleagues came together to produce a video on how men play a crucial role in addressing abuse and misogyny. I didn't even know that they were doing it, but it meant so much.

This is exactly what we need and I sincerely say miigwech to my colleagues for standing beside women on this important issue. My colleagues have used their platforms and voices, thus setting an example of how to come together and act against gender-based violence.

I look forward to more men connecting and talking with one another about how they can end male violence. They can create grassroots movements and get the work done. Come together, organize and act now.

Miigwech.

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** December 6 is a significant day in Canada known as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women. This date marks the tragic anniversary of the 1989 École polytechnique massacre in Montreal

where 14 young women were murdered simply because of their gender.

The massacre carried out a gunman who 'explicitly'—explicitly targeted women, serves as a painful reminder of the ongoing issue of violence against women in Canada and around our world.

Femicide is the intentional killing of individuals based on gender-related motivations. It is driven by discrimination against women, girls and by gender stereotypes and harmful social views. It is the most extreme and brutal manifestation of violence against women and girls.

Women and girls are most likely to be killed by those closest to them. In 2023, approximately 51,100 women and girls worldwide were killed by their intimate partners or other family members. It is crucial to recognize that femicide is a universal issue; a global crisis that impacts women and girls in every country and territory.

In Canada, Manitoba has the highest provincial rate of femicide. For those families who have been affected by the horrendous actions of femicide, please know that you are not alone. We see you and we are here to support you in any way that we can.

As a woman, a mother, a daughter, a sister, an aunt, this issue is deeply personal to my heart. Women and girls are not powerless. We are not voiceless. We are strong, powerful and resilient. Discrimination based on race, 'ethnicity', religion, sexuality or gender has no place in this world. We all deserve the opportunity to live without fear of harm and without fear of violence.

Today and tomorrow, as we mourn the 14 young women from Montreal, we mourn the loss of all women and girls who have been the victim of femicide.

To the families, friends, and communities throughout Manitoba and Canada who have been affected by femicide, we stand with you in mourning and in the ongoing struggle to make our society more equal for everyone.

On December 6, Canadians come together to remember those lost and to honour the victims, while also reflecting on the need for continued action to address violence against women. It's an opportunity for individuals, communities, organizations, to raise awareness, advocate for change and push for solutions that promote equality, safety and justice for all women.

**MLA Fontaine:** Honourable Speaker, is there leave for a moment of silence?

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

*A moment of silence was observed.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Holiday Open House at the Assembly

**MLA Billie Cross (Seine River):** 'Twas the day of December 5, it was quiet like a mouse, / All the MLAs were preparing for the Holiday Open House; / The House of the people will open its doors wide, / Inviting all sorts of visitors inside.

Decorations were hung on the staircase with care, / In hopes that Manitobans would soon be there; / The caucus staff were nestled into their beds, / While visions of visitors danced in their heads; / And for us MLAs and ministers alike, / We strode through the hallways, filled with delight.

The preparations were lively, and oh so full of spirit, / So all of our friends would remember their visit; / There were beautiful lights and joyous school choirs, / Plenty of things for guests to admire; / Food was a-cooking, the smell filled in the air, / Wherever you went, there were treats to be shared.

But soon on the lawn there arose such a clatter, / As the crowds gathered in, what was the matter? / The staff all ran down, they flew like a flash, / Fearing the worst, they made a mad dash; / But soon they arrived at the lobby below, / And saw with their eyes why the crowd gathered so.

For at the front doors, what presence did appear, / But a black SUV and our most popular Premier (Mr. Kinew); / He had a huge smile and a twinkle in his eye, / Good holiday spirit, he did exemplify; / He walked through the crowd, shaking hands the whole way, / And everyone waited for what he would say.

Now Cable, now Fontaine, now Moyes and Sala, / On Nello, on Naylor, on deputy Asagwara; / On Ron, and on Bushie, on Compton, and Smith, / On Moroz, Marcelino, on Wiebe and on Schmidt; / There's much to still do, but today we can rest, / To all Manitobans, we must show our best; / From the top of the Chamber, to the end of the hall, / now dash away, dash away, dash away, all.

The MLAs knew, even with all the fun, / That soon there would be more work to be done; / But we heard the Premier exclaim, as he drove out of sight, / Happy open house to all, and to all a good night.

### Kyle Toews

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Today I'd like to acknowledge Kyle Toews. In October Kyle—during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, I had the privilege of being invited by Kyle to participate alongside him in Take Your MLA to Work Day.

It is a day in which we celebrate the contributions that Manitobans with disabilities make to the workforce, encourage more inclusive hiring of Manitobans and recognize businesses who are utilizing diverse hiring practices, Honourable Speaker.

I had the opportunity to meet and visit with Kyle at his workplace and see first-hand the power of community-based employment. The visit included a tour and a visit with his employer, Rudie Friesen of Home Hardware in Beausejour, where Kyle works. He gave me the opportunity to job-shadow him in the duties he performs on a regular basis, or spent the time telling me what to do all afternoon.

So thank you, Kyle.

Home Hardware is one of many jobs that Kyle has within the community of Beausejour.

And for that, Kyle, I want to personally thank you for everything that you do for our community of Beausejour and surrounding area, and I know that the community cherishes that as well.

Kyle introduced me to Larry Kern, who often assists Kyle at Home Hardware—or, again, I'm not sure if Kyle's telling Larry what to do or Larry's telling Kyle what to do, but I think it's a two-way street there.

Joining us for the day was Robyn Furnish, the program director of supportive employment options in Beausejour. The Manitoba supportive employment network is a professional network of individuals and organizations invested in employment and full community inclusion for people who live with a disability.

I am thankful to have had the opportunity to share this great experience with such a wonderful group and am grateful that the Lac du Bonnet constituency supports inclusive employment.

Please join me in welcoming today, in the gallery, Kyle Toews, Robyn Furnish and Randie *[phonetic]*—or, Rudie Friesen to the gallery, Honourable Speaker.

### Mark Bruce

**MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson):** Honourable Speaker, whether you believe it or not, I was the kind

of kid that you could always find in the principal's office, always knocking down the door demanding support for the project, pep rally or conference of the day.

\* (13:50)

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that it takes one great principal for a student like me to feel empowered enough to keep coming back. That's why today I'm humbled to honour the lifelong career of my high school principal, Mark Bruce. Mark has dedicated 37 years of his life to public education with unwavering commitment. He served in the River East Transcona School Division for almost 23 of those years.

Mark served as the vice-principal at Murdoch MacKay Collegiate and later became principal at Robert Andrews Middle School, Arthur Day and Collège Miles Macdonell Collegiate—where we crossed paths—before he joined senior administration to work alongside RETSD colleagues who represent him in the gallery today.

During his time with the River East Transcona School Division, Mark was very proud to support innovative programming that engaged kids and helped them be successful. He remained steadfast in his commitment for all children to feel safe and included.

Upon retirement, Mark shares a message for teachers to never forget their why, to understand that their purpose is to improve children's prospects and to help them prepare for participation in democratic spaces, like this one. This message is what drove Mark to lead with integrity and authenticity. As a result, his work has positively impacted lives, including my own.

Now Mark is looking forward to spending time with family, supporting them in their needs and enjoying more time at the cottage.

Mr. Mark Bruce joins us virtually today, and I invite my colleagues to join me today in thanking him for his dedication to public education and congratulate him on his well-earned retirement.

### End of Fall Session Reflection

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** 'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through this Chamber, / Everyone was stirring, be they clerk, page or member; / The session was done, a new one just started / As a newbie, I've learned this ain't for the faint-hearted.

From the top of this dome, the Golden Boy watches, / As bells ring all the time, members come to vote, they call; / Bills have nestled on the Order Paper

for debate, / Hoping not to be BITSA'd because the government introduced them late.

The Premier (Mr. Kinew) may be visited by three Christmas ghosts, / Maybe writers, I suspect. He'll have a new book to toast; / Our leader hails from Lac du Bonnet in the east, / Asking about you-know-who, the Speaker advised that he cease.

I would again ask this—ask the minister, Let's shorten the wait, / For people to get tests before it's too late; / I've—we—the community has done all the work, so it should be a simple task / Is an MRI for Portage really too much to ask?

History sometimes repeats in this place if you please, / The member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway) still begging for a bridge named Louise; / The member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv) has been tossed out in the snow, / Though based on his questions, he's the only real New Democrat I know.

This government has passed the whip all around, / Now it's Seine River whose job it is to hound; / Now Burrows, now Lagimodière, now Radisson, now Waverley, / On Riel, on Rossmere, on Thompson, on Kildonan-River East.

A government line to toe, these members stand fast, / Next Cabinet shuffle, they'll all hope to be cast; / But we know Ag will stay—

**The Speaker:** Time has expired.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** Yes. I seek leave for the member to complete his statement.

**The Speaker:** Does the member have leave to finish his statement?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. *[interjection]*

Order.

### **Filipino Canadian National Congress**

**Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows):** Mabuhay. *[Live.]*

Filipino Canadian National Congress has played a vital role in supporting kababayans *[compatriots]* in Burrows and beyond. FCNC is a non-profit organization that represents Filipino Canadians through its network of organizations and businesses across Canada.

With a mission to represent the Filipino community before the people and Government of Canada,

FCNC has been a strong leader in advocating for the needs of Filipino Canadians and the preservation of their cultural values and heritage.

I had the honour of attending FCNC Annual Leadership Convention at the Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre in September. Under the theme Strengthening Communities from Coast to Coast to Coast, this event brought leaders together and promoted connections between businesses and organizations.

The event was made possible by great leaders like Genalyn Tan, Mary Jane Napolitano, whose tireless efforts have made lasting impacts for the Filipino community in Burrows.

The FCNC is dedicated to providing a high standard of leadership in developing, promoting and empowering Filipino diaspora in Canada. Through their efforts and hard work, FCNC is building a stronger, united Filipino Canadian community.

I invite my colleagues to join me in thanking FCNC, whose names I would like entered into Hansard, for their outstanding contributions to Burrows and their commitment to the preservation of Filipino culture, heritage and unity.

Salamat po. *[Thank you.]*

*Joshua Agasi, Pastor John Bartolome, Rodolfo Cantiveros, Arlene Evangelista, Jarel Evangelista, Mary Jane Napolitano, Miguela Natividad, Kenneth Salazar, Genalyn Tan*

### **Introduction of Guests**

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

Before any further business, I have some guests in the gallery. Unfortunately, I think our timing was off a little. We had seated in the public gallery from Miles Macdonell Collegiate 28 grade 9 students under the direction of Stephanie Fredricson. This group was located in the constituency of the honourable member for Elmwood.

We have seated in the public gallery Tony Linner, Donna Linner from Saskatoon, and they are the in-laws and guests of the honourable MLA for Southdale.

And I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today Glenalyn *[phonetic]* Tan, Arlene Evangelista, Mary Jane Napolito *[phonetic]*, Rodolfo Cantiveros, Kenneth Salazar, Pastor John Bartolome, Miguela Natividad, Jarel Evangelista and Joshua Agasi, who are guests of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Brar).

And we welcome you all here today.

### Speaker's Statement

**The Speaker:** Now I have one more piece of business and statement to make.

I want to take a moment to recognize and celebrate our outgoing Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms.

Cam Steel joined the Assembly in 2021 as part of the enhancements to Chamber Branch and increased hours of our Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms position.

Cam's diligence, dedication and hard work led to many improvements to the work of the Chamber Branch, including enhancing the page training program and constituency office security visits, as well as providing first aid training to Assembly staff.

Cam is admired and respected by all Assembly staff, and while we will all miss him greatly we understand that at this point in his life retiring from the position he has enjoyed for over three years is the right decision for him.

On behalf of myself, the Clerk, the Sergeant-at-Arms and all Assembly staff, Cam, I want to sincerely thank you for your service to this Assembly. I know how seriously you took your role here, and your dedication was always appreciated. You leave us with a distinguished legacy of service to the citizens of Manitoba.

While we wish you all the best as you embark on the next chapter in your life, we do look forward to hearing from you often.

\* (14:00)

I'd add that joining us today in the Speaker's Gallery are Cam's wife Carol Steel and their friends, Angie McBride and Carla Brennan. Cam and Carol's sons Ryan and Adam, unfortunately, are unable to be here today, but I'm sure they're very proud of their father. If they aren't, they should be.

I would ask all honourable members to join me in thanking our Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, Cam Steel.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Cost of Living in Manitoba Request for Plan to Address

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I'd like to say congratulations, Cam, and we are going to miss you. And all the best in what your next journey is going to be all about.

On behalf of our PC team, Honourable Speaker, we want to take this opportunity to which—wish each

and every one of MLAs across the way, the members, the staff—all the staff in this great building of ours here in Manitoba Legislative Assembly—a very happy Hanukkah, merry Christmas, happy holidays and absolutely all the best in 2025.

And talking about moving into 2025, we know that towards that final stretch of this year going into next year, right now we have a record number of Manitobans that are lining up for food banks and Christmas hampers. Poverty's on the rise.

So we ask this Premier, on the tax holiday that's about to end, 200,000 Manitobans that utilize public transit are left asking, when does their tax vacation start?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Merry Christmas to one and to all. This is the most wonderful time of year. I wish happy holidays to everybody across the province. And I know that people in every corner of this great land are so, so generous. So as we gather, may we do so safely, may we do so with a kind heart and may we keep those less fortunate in mind.

Of course, our government is working hard when it comes to the universal school food program, when it comes to a raft of steps to make your life more affordable, to be there to help everyone in our society reach their full potential.

I want to lend my voice, of course, to the chorus of those thanking Mr. Cam Steel. Thank you for your service to our country, to our province and, of course, to this Legislative Assembly. And on behalf of our team and the people of Manitoba, I wish you all the best in what's next.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, the Premier warns Manitobans to expect a recession under his watch.

We know that food prices have gone up now under his watch, hydro's gone up, baby formula's gone up. Even this Premier's Happy Meal costs have gone up more under his watch.

The Premier needs to do more than just watch, Honourable Speaker; he needs to act. He claims he has a plan that he has been working on personally since prior to the election in 2023.

So, to the Premier: When is he going to introduce the plan that helps Manitobans, all Manitobans, as much as the Premier likes to help himself?



**Mr. Kinew:** The plan began on January 1 of this year when we cut the provincial gas tax to zero. This January 1, upcoming, 2025, the plan continues with us freezing Manitoba Hydro rates for you, your family and the businesses that you own.

But of course, there are so many faith traditions which we celebrate with family at this time of year, which call on us to reflect on grace and compassion and to live up to this phrase that has been handed to us by the survivors of so-called Indian residential schools: that every child matters.

And so while we are stepping up to save you and your family money, I also want you to know that because of the confidence you have placed in us to lead this provincial government, there is now a universal school food program that guarantees that any child in Manitoba who shows up to pursue a better life through education will also get a healthy, nutritious meal.

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

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** And I think the Premier can definitely give a big shout-out to Justin Trudeau and thank him for that food and nutrition program.

Honourable Speaker, the Premier offers rhetoric, division and spin. What the Premier needs to start offering are solutions. Raising the gas tax on January 1 is not a solution. Raising property taxes by \$150 million? Not a solution. Raising personal taxes is also not a solution.

His ministers are hiding critical issues from him, and his ministers are hiding critical issues from Manitobans. Manitobans deserve much better, Honourable Speaker. Manitoba's—Manitobans deserve a plan.

What is the Premier's affordability plan? Because a drive down Main Street, Pembina and Leila, revealing—is revealing Manitobans are still waiting for that plan, Honourable Speaker.

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, our economic plan is certainly much better than the members' opposite. Them, they were hiding critical minerals in the ground. Instead, we're bringing new resource development projects online.

We'll see massive investments in renewable energy in the new year, when the Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program helps to usher in a new phase of economic empowerment for Indigenous nations. We are going to work with leaders from those communities to

ensure that there are jobs in parts of the province where, for too long, there has been too little opportunity.

But we also know that the best economic plan is a strong education plan. And that's why we are so humbled to be able to work for you, the people of Manitoba, to ensure that every single child who shows up for school is going to get a healthy, nutritious and delicious meal, so that they can learn the math, that they can learn the reading, so that they can learn the social skills to build the province of the future that we all want to see for Manitoba.

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

### Department of Families Workplace Review Report

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Yesterday, the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) dodged accountability yet once again. She was asked about a report into her toxic leadership; a report into staff in her department feeling—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —intimidated and afraid—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —and she followed the Premier and dodged accountability.

Her staff even tried to spin it that, no, the report was about our government.

Honourable Speaker, we all know that there's—*[interjection]*

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

Minister of Families, come to order, please.

**Mr. Ewasko:** I'll repeat that, Honourable Speaker. We all know that there's not a Manitoba—Manitoban alive who believes that this partisan minister would sit on a report critical of us. So, she can either table that document today or admit that she's suppressing the report that is critical of her.

Simple question to the Premier: How does he support a minister whose own department is afraid of her retaliation, Honourable Speaker?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** You know, it's such a wonderful time of year when we get to see the joyous looks on the kids' faces as they open their presents.

It's even mildly amusing when we get to watch the member opposite cover himself in red yarn as he tries to connect the various dots of the conspiracy theories that he comes in here to try and spin.

But the reality is this: We have an excellent Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine). The report that is being made reference to happened entirely under the time of the members opposite.

But if the member opposite wants to talk about toxic leadership, why don't we talk about leadership candidate Wally Daudrich. He says that when it comes to health care that we should go back to these nurses and say—and quote: We're sorry for what we did and make it right. End quote.

Does the member opposite agree with this leadership candidate that the PCs need to apologize to health workers in our province?

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** So, Honourable Speaker, once again, people in the gallery and the hundreds of Manitobans that are watching this afternoon are witnessing the toxic dysfunctional ways of working with individuals that this NDP Premier, leader of the Kinew government, is doing on a day-to-day basis.

We know that Manitobans can't trust the NDP government because they consistently and deliberately mislead Manitobans. Greg Selinger went door to door to door, promising that he wouldn't raise taxes, but yet, the PST went up.

The Premier praised—promised grocery prices would go down. That was 372 days ago. And he said, and he quotes: If we don't see those savings materialize, then that's what—we're going to follow up on those further steps. End quote. I table the article. Prices are high. Just like the minister, the Premier was caught writing fiction.

\* (14:10)

Why is this Premier content with ministers who mislead and misinform Manitobans for absolute partisan reasons, Honourable Speaker?

**Mr. Kinew:** You know, our team was so humbled to be elected by you, the people of Manitoba, and on the way into office, here's a quick follow-up on how that trajectory has been.

We promised to cut the provincial gas tax. Guess what? We did. We promised to staff up health care in Manitoba. Guess what? We are. And we said we would

take action on grocery prices. Well, you said it, we are.

Of course, this was all concealed within the Throne Speech that they blocked unnecessarily on a great day for Manitobans to get together.

You know, I hope over the holidays they reflect on the tactics that completely lack any sort of strategy. Every day they come in here to delay and delay and delay without making any substantive objections. In fact, the only substance they ever bring here to the House is to our government. They say, these amazing investments in health care, these amazing investments in the economy, why can't you do more of that sooner?

Well, good news. We will—

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

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** It continues to get worse, and we see the dysfunction and toxic behaviours on a day-to-day basis in this Chamber, Honourable Speaker.

The Premier jumped to the defence of the minister yesterday. He called her, and I quote, a role model. You know, Honourable Speaker, Manitoba girls have amazing role models right here in this great province of ours, and the MLA for St. Johns is definitely not one of them.

The Minister of Families does not foster these—  
[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —and, in fact, Honourable Speaker, workers within her department fear reprisal for speaking up about the toxic culture in her department. And we're witnessing this again from the other side, from her department, and the Premier calls her a role model.

To the Premier through you, honourable Chairperson, does this praise say more about the Premier or the MLA for St. Johns?

**Mr. Kinew:** It's not up to the member opposite to decide who young women in Manitoba look up to. It's up to young women in Manitoba.

And here's the thing: I've spoken to many young people in this province, young women, young gender-diverse folks, young men, who look at the member for St. Johns and say she is an example of power, somebody who overcame obstacles in her life to assert a positive direction in the collective best interests of all people here in Manitoba.

So before we break for the holidays, let us all say thank you to the Minister of Families for her important work.

And when it comes to the members opposite, you have not atoned for attacking the families of the victims of a serial killer. You have not atoned for your cuts to health care. One leadership candidate is saying—

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

### **Department of Families Workplace Review Report**

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** Yesterday the minister's staff confirmed to media that the report on her toxic leadership exists. They tried to present it as a report on the previous government. Manitobans know that this minister is so partisan that if it had a—if she had a report critical of Heather Stefanson and Rochelle Squires, she'd be Xeroxing copies herself this very minute.

Staff admitted the report exists, so why won't the minister table it today?

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families):** Once again the member and the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Ewasko) are getting up in the House and putting just erroneous, infactual facts on the record here.

I have spent a significant amount of time actually repairing the damage of the Families public service that members opposite did over seven and a half years. Our Families team didn't see seen—they weren't seen, they didn't feel valued. Nobody acknowledged their accomplishments and their hard work.

From the moment that I became the Families Minister, literally two days later, I was visiting our—

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

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Byram:** Manitobans have never witnessed a government so intent on division, hate and partisanship as this NDP government. And this Minister of Families is leading that charge to lower standards personally.

This minister showcases toxic leadership traits each and every day, right here in this House, as do the members hollering across the House right now. We saw it yesterday when the member from St. Johns hollered and demanded at her colleague not to walk out. As this minister is so fond of saying: When someone shows you who they are, believe them.

If the minister is confident the report isn't about her, why is she suppressing it?

**MLA Fontaine:** Let me be perfectly clear so that everybody understands this. This report is about the horrible leadership of Heather Stefanson, Cathy Cox and Rochelle Squires in their roles that they played.

Let me just say this, that I have done a lot of work to repair the damage that members opposite did in their failed government. I have met with folks; I've gone to their offices. I've shaken the hands of hundreds of Families staff. I've hosted two town halls that has seen—that's seen 1,500 people come on those town halls, collectively. I have hosted meetings with whole units to hear directly from our Families teams on what they need to ensure that they're doing their work—

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

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

**Ms. Byram:** We're talking about the review of toxic leadership.

I table contracts showing the government paid almost \$17,000 to hear what anyone on this side of the aisle could have told them for free. The Premier (Mr. Kinew) says the minister is a role model. Then it is no wonder there are issues with intimidation and fears of reprisal. That's exactly what she demonstrates.

Yesterday, I asked the minister about culture of fear, anxiety and staff on leave for PTSD. And what was this minister's response—and I quote from Hansard: Who did it? I did.

Why does this minister think she can hide evidence of her failures?

**MLA Fontaine:** As I said yesterday, Families—the Department of Families has some of the toughest files. We work with families who face the loss of their children; we work with families who have their children apprehended; we work with families that are struggling to get the supports that they needed under the failed government of the PC former failed government.

We are here to support our Families team, and I say it every single time that I see them—how much I value them, how much I see them and how much I honour them for the work that they do day in and day out to come and do that work professionally and in a good way on behalf of all Manitobans.

And just—so to my team: Thank you so much. Miigwech.

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

### **Education Requirements for Teachers Request to Reverse Policy Changes**

**Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods):** The NDP acting Education Minister has put a litany of false and erroneous statements on the record, trying to justify this government's decision to delete teacher training standards in the province of Manitoba.

A group of academics has published a 45-page report debunking every single one of this minister's claims. I tabled it this morning.

The minister claimed that this brings us in line with other provinces—debunked. She claimed that this is based on research—debunked.

So will the Premier (Mr. Kinew) get up and reverse this decision today, or will he fire this debunked acting Education Minister?

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Acting Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** The academics that the member opposite is screaming about—I have met with earlier this week. I thank them for their advocacy, and I want them to know that our government is a listening government. We're here to work with them, and we're here to continue that discussion.

I can assure the House that there is nothing more important to our government than kids and the outcomes that we deliver for kids through our educational system. We are taking action to improve educational outcomes here in our province after seven and a half years of a government, a failed government, under the failed leadership of the member of Lac du Bonnet, the former minister of Education.

\* (14:20)

On this side of the House we are increasing the one-to-one time that students have with their teachers—

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

**Mr. Jackson:** Between the minister failing to put any words on the record this morning in debate, combined with the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) saying that academics don't actually teach in classrooms, I can assure the acting minister that those professionals did not leave here feeling respected or heard by this government.

So will the minister get up and apologize to those academics and then reverse her failed, debunked academic policy for teacher training standards today?

**MLA Schmidt:** As 2024 is drawing to a close, I reflect on what a historic year 2024 was. Under the

leadership of our Minister of Education, our government has introduced a historic, universal school nutrition program. And when you want to talk about educational outcomes, the best way to improve outcomes here in our province is to make sure that every single student in this province is fed.

Under the leadership of our Education Minister, the member for Transcona (MLA Altomare), we have made history and, in fact, Honourable Speaker, the Education Minister has inspired a nation. The federal government, on the heels of our government's \$30-million nutrition announcement, came up with their own nutrition—

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

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

**Mr. Jackson:** This NDP caucus has misled Manitobans on the facts regarding this case, and I tabled the research from academics and professionals this morning in debate. I also tabled a cross-jurisdictional scan from all provinces that claims—that shows, in fact, that we will have the lowest required standards in the country.

So why is this acting Education Minister failing Manitoba students? We know the best way to ensure that students do well is to have high-quality trained teachers in the classroom.

Will she reverse her failed, debunked policy today or will the Premier get up and reverse it on behalf of his failed, debunked government?

**MLA Schmidt:** Honourable Speaker, Manitobans know hypocrisy when they hear it and they know leadership when they see it.

It's quite ironic that the member opposite and his team want to stand up and now pretend that they care about education. Perhaps they should've put that in their election platform. But they did not. Their education platform in the election was to attack vulnerable children, trans and two-spirit children in this province. Their platform was to try to win election on the backs of Indigenous women, murder victims.

I will take no lessons from any member on that side of the House.

### **Health Care in Southwestern Manitoba Emergency Room Hours of Operation**

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** We've highlighted the NDP's failures on rural health care multiple times in this House, yet the situation continues to get worse. Let's talk about Prairie Mountain Health.

This summer, hospitals in the region were plagued with closures. Now, let's look at the emergency department schedule for December, which I'll table today. Of the 30 total hospitals operating in PMH, only seven ERs are reliably open 24-7. In December, ERs across PMH are closed for a total of 89 days. The Roblin ED is closed for nine full days in a row. And Carberry? Reduced hours every single day it's open, which is only half of December.

What immediate action is this minister taking to address these escalating ER closures in western Manitoba?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** Honourable Speaker, nobody across Manitoba believes a single word that comes out of that member's house when it comes to health care. They've zero credibility on health care.

Yesterday, the member stood up and talked about the very same hospital in rural Manitoba that they cut from 24-hour care to 12-hour care. That member stood up and talked about a hospital in rural Manitoba that they cut in 2018, in 2019, in 2021 and in 2022. That is her record on that side of the House.

Honourable Speaker, we're investing in rural health care, working with the front lines and doing what the former failed PC government refused to do.

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

**Mrs. Cook:** Now, let's look at the IERHA. Again, I'll table that December schedule.

Arborg and Teulon: closed every single day in December. Eriksdale: open only seven days this month and only at reduced hours. Pinawa: open just four days this month also at reduced hours. Across the 12 hospitals in the IERHA, only one ER is reliably open. December closures in the Interlake total a staggering 119 days, Honourable Speaker.

How can this minister justify the dismal state of emergency health care in the Interlake, and what steps are they taking to ensure rural Manitobans can access care when they need it?

**MLA Asagwara:** Honourable Speaker, Manitobans have a memory much longer than that member opposite, thank goodness.

That member opposite and the failed PC administration closed over five, six, seven emergency rooms in rural Manitoba. Honourable Speaker, under the failed PC administration, guess how open the Carberry

emergency room was? It was never open, because they closed it. They permanently closed it.

On this side of the House, we reopened the Carberry ER. Honourable Speaker, we are doing the work the previous PC government refused to do. That is improving capacity, working with the front lines, bringing more health-care workers to our hospitals across—

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

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

**Mrs. Cook:** Honourable Speaker, the minister is completely ignoring the plight of rural Manitobans who have to go online to look up these ER schedules before they go and visit their local hospital.

I'll table this—the December schedule for Southern Health as well, so we can see the full scope of the NDP's failures on rural health care.

Across rural Manitoba's 59 hospitals, only 11 ERs offer reliable 24-7 service, 24 hospitals are operating with reduced or unpredictable hours and another 24 hospitals are not offering any emergency services at all. In December alone, rural hospitals across the province will be closed for a total of 242 days. This is not care closer to home; this is Manitobans finding a closed sign on the door of the local hospital.

What immediate action is this minister taking today for rural Manitoba?

**MLA Asagwara:** Honourable Speaker, you don't have to take my word for it. Take the words of the mayor of Arborg. Take the words of doctors in rural Manitoba—[*interjection*]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Asagwara:** —who said that for—in 2023, under the failed former Heather Stefanson administration, ERs in rural Manitoba were closed for 80,000 hours. They did that, Honourable Speaker. That member and every single member opposite turned their backs on rural Manitobans years ago. They did that for seven and a half years.

We're doing the work of making sure there are doctors and nurses and health-care aides in rural Manitoba. We're doing the work of making sure there's more care, not less.

That member opposite has to stand up and say the one thing they refuse to do: I'm sorry.

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

### **Supervised Consumption Site Location Concerns—Point Douglas**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** Yesterday, I asked the Housing Minister to speak with her constituents. Residents and parents of Point Douglas are concerned, and the minister is clearly not listening.

The Winnipeg School Division says they had a seat at the table, yet there's no space for parents who are concerned about the government opening up a public drug injection site across from the high school.

Why is the minister refusing to listen to her parents?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** We are continuing to work and collaborate and consult. We are working on a safety plan for the community.

And again, we're not going to take the approach that the former government took. We are working on treatment and recovery. We're working from four pillars.

So that's prevention; we are feeding kids in school to make sure that they graduate and they have a path to success. We are working from a harm-reduction model so that we can make sure that people live so that they can get to recovery. And then we are also working on enforcement, so we are working with the police, we have met with the superintendent of the school division, and we will continue to work on securing the area.

\* (14:30)

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Morden-Winkler, on a supplementary question.

**Mrs. Hiebert:** The minister has picked supporters and ignored residents that have concerns. The minister still has time to reverse her decision. She has time to adopt a recovery-focused model.

Why is this minister okay with public drug-injection site across from a school when we should be focused on recovery?

**Ms. Smith:** Again, our supervised consumption site will include a path to recovery. We need to support folks through a harm-reduction model to get them to recovery.

So let me tell you a couple—so, the minister—former minister of Mental Health Sarah Guillemard spoke about supervised 'conjumpsomption' sites. She says: I think they're—if they're used in conjunction

with strong core services, there can be a place for that. But who silenced them? Heather Stefanson.

You know—and then there is another quote the next year. A former Manitoba police chief said: You know, I'm the—I'm one that will look at some of the signs for this and I'll continue explore this and see what the best options for our community are.

And who said that? The member from Brandon West.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

The honourable member for Morden-Winkler, on a final supplementary question.

**Mrs. Hiebert:** David Chartrand's words to media yesterday were, and I quote: It's definitely not thought out. I table the remarks.

Who are Manitobans supposed to believe? The minister who says area residents are excited or the president of the Red River Métis government, whose offices are right across the street from the proposed location of the public injection site, who says, I quote: There's no plan and there's no strategy.

When will this minister consult with the community of Point Douglas?

**Ms. Smith:** Well, let's look at what Heather Stefanson said: I look at places like California that had these types of sites in place for decades. And when she was called out on this from the media, from places like—the US experts, this was false because there was no safe, supervised consumption sites in California.

And then looks—let's talk about Brian Pallister—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Smith:** —actually was given a report from experts that said that there should be supervised consumption sites in Manitoba—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

The official opposition bench will come to order.

**Ms. Smith:** What did Heather—or, what did Brian Pallister do with that VIRGO report? He threw it on the floor.

Does that side of the benches agree with experts? This side of the benches do. We—

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

### **Private Nursing Agencies Government Plan to Reduce**

**Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park):** Honourable Speaker, for seven and a half brutally long years, the PCs spent hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars propping up private health-care agency: 40 million in 2021, 60 million in 2022, 76 million in 2023, all while firing nurses, closing emergency rooms and cutting beds. With little to no oversight, it was the Wild West of private agencies. And the PCs were shovelling out millions hand over fist.

But it's time that these agencies play by our rules. Our government's priority is delivering care to patients, not profits to private agencies. Yesterday, the Minister of Health announced an RFP that will help bring these costs under control.

Can the minister please tell the House how this is another step in rebuilding our public health-care system?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I'd like to thank my colleague for that very important and excellent question.

The previous government's health-care cuts created a cottage-like industry for for-profit private agencies. These agencies benefited from the frustration nurses felt working under the failed PCs. This model resulted in burnout and mandatory overtime. It hurt patients and exhausted nurses.

But we are making the public health-care system a place where people want to work, again, by better managing agencies and making the public system more attractive for nurses, giving them a better deal, the expansion of the Travel Nurse Team and more job opportunities.

We are rebuilding the public health-care system, and we're doing that in a respectful, evidence-based and fiscally responsible way.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

### **Justice System Repeat Offenders**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** I suspect no one is more familiar with the angling regulations than this Minister of Justice, and perhaps the Premier (Mr. Kinew), in his next Cabinet shuffle will put him to Natural Resources. After all, he is the resident expert on catch and release. Under his watch, Manitobans are more likely to serve a jail time as a result of a health order than a court order.

He's 429 days into his 100-day bail reform mandate and I think it's safe to say that he's failed Manitobans.

Can the minister finally admit that his Premier was wrong and that Manitobans cannot fix issues with the Criminal Code on their own?

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Well, of course, Honourable Speaker, we got to work right away on our five-point bail plan, which was supported by the National Police Federation, again, in partnership with law enforcement.

And what did the National Police Federation say about that? Quote: We call on the federal government, as well as the provincial and territorial governments, to follow Manitoba's lead on public safety and root causes of crime with concrete solutions.

We weren't done there, though, Honourable Speaker. We continued on with our expanded electronic monitoring program, beginning in the city of Winnipeg, now rolled out to the rest of the province of Manitoba.

Why did we have to reinstate and restart that program? Well, of course, because it was cut under members opposite, under the Stefanson government. That's shameful, Honourable Speaker. We're going to work with law enforcement. We're going to get—

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

The honourable member for Brandon West, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Balcaen:** Honourable Speaker, I wonder if this Minister of Justice has received his specialist pin from the master angler program for his record number of catch and releases this season.

Monitoring is the only solution this minister has. He fails to understand that it does not matter how much you are monitoring if there is no consequences at the other end. Every week there are stories of violent offenders who were out on bail reoffending, often just to be released time and time again. If you pinky swear you won't offend a third time, the minister would probably be okay with letting the criminal out once again.

Can this minister—is he content to oversee a system that is so clearly—

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, again, because of the important work that we've already started here in the province of Manitoba, we have credibility when we go to the federal government to continue to push them on their bail action. When we travelled to Yellowknife with

other premiers across the country we were all united when we said that the federal government continues to need to do their part. And we're going to do our part here in Manitoba.

What does that look like in the city of Winnipeg? Well, it looks like 12 additional officers hit the street in November, 12 more officers coming in the spring and 12 officers specifically for bail and bail supervision. This is the kind of action that sheds credibility on the work that we're doing that we can then use for leverage across this country.

The member opposite can goof around all he wants. This is a serious matter. We're taking it seriously.

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

The honourable member for Brandon West, on a final supplementary question.

**Mr. Balcaen:** This minister is really not much different than the Zoltan machine at a carnival. You ask a question, the light comes on for second, and then a pre-written answer from staff somewhere behind the scenes magically appears. If you're lucky, the answer might even be slightly relevant to what you've asked.

Manitobans do not feel safe under this minister. They fear violent crime, property crime and repeat criminals.

Why is this minister content to watch, instead of act?

**Mr. Wiebe:** Again, Honourable Speaker, the member's goofing around. I guess that's why he didn't speak out when he was involved in Brandon as the chief of police; when there's a net loss of 55 officers here in the city of Winnipeg he was completely silent.

But maybe I'll just share this with honourable—with the honourable member. Quote: I know there are individuals in the Legislature who are a little confused about whose jurisdiction that is but the bail reform is actually something that is decided constitutionally by the federal government. End quote.

Who said that? That was this member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler).

\* (14:40)

### Portage la Prairie MRI Services

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** Honourable Speaker, there are hard-working Manitoba's in—Manitobans who are right here in Portage la Prairie who are committed to their community. They show up by helping each other out, signing petitions, attending

town halls to help each other. And they—all they ask is for the minister to listen when they ask for diagnostic medicine in their community. They have even donated \$5 million to pay for an MRI in Portage la Prairie.

So I ask this minister to speak directly to the over 4,000 citizens who have signed the MRI petition: Who do they—who—why do their voices not matter?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Well, our minister is building a new hospital in Portage la Prairie and has been there to meet with people in the community, and they will continue to do so.

At this time of year, however, though, I believe that it's an important responsibility to speak to you, the people of Manitoba, and to encourage you to rejoice and to engage in the generosity that defines us as the people of Manitoba.

The story at the heart of Christmas is one that calls on us to respect the most humble of children in our society. So as we move forward to the year 2025, let's work to ensure that no children are born with preventable illnesses in our community, that every child has a pathway to success, that every kid who is hungry gets food. It's when we work together like that to ensure the next generation has a chance to succeed that we will find our salvation as a species, as a society and as a province.

So I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone out there a merry Christmas, a happy holidays and all the best in 2025—especially you, Nello.

**The Speaker:** The time for question period has expired.

### Speaker's Ruling

**The Speaker:** And I have a ruling for the House. *[interjection]*

Order.

At the conclusion of petitions on November—sorry.

At the conclusion of petitions on November 22, 2024, the honourable Opposition House Leader rose on a matter of privilege alleging that during the honourable Government House Leader's (MLA Fontaine) member's statement earlier in the same sitting day, she put words on the record that were part of her ministerial responsibilities, and suggested that those comments be redacted from the Hansard transcript.

The member was reminded by the Deputy Speaker that he had neglected to conclude his matter with a motion, and allowed him the opportunity to move that



this be put on an all-members committee and reported back to the House.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration (MLA Marcelino) spoke to the matter before the deputy took it under advisement.

As the House knows, for a matter of privilege to be ruled as a *prima facie* case, the member must demonstrate the—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 made no indication in his submission whether he met the required test. As the incident he described happened earlier that same sitting day, I am willing to say that the member met the test of timeliness with his submission. In future, I would expect this to be addressed by the member when bringing the matter to the presiding officer's attention.

Regarding the second condition of whether a *prima facie* case was demonstrated, many Manitoba Speakers have ruled previously that a matter concerning the methods by which the House proceeds in the conduct of business is a matter of order, not privilege. Joseph Maingot states on page 13 in the second edition of *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* that allegations—*[interjection]*

Order, please. When the Speaker is speaking, he expects to be heard in silence. That means members won't be talking.

Allegations of a breach of privilege by a member in the House that amount to complaints about procedures and practices in the House are by their very nature matters of order.

He also states on page 223 of the same edition: A breach of standing order or failure to follow an established practice would invoke a point of order rather than a question of privilege. It is clear to me that a *prima facie* case of privilege was not established in this matter.

There are several other issues I would like to address.

First, for the information of all members, we do not redact comments from Hansard. Hansard produces the verbatim transcript of House proceedings which reflects the history of what is said in this place. We do not edit history.

Second, the Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Johnson) failed to articulate in his submission if

and how his privileges as a member of this Assembly had been breached. Furthermore, the issue he raised was one that the Deputy Speaker addressed at the time it took place, and, upon reading the Hansard transcript of that intervention, had been resolved in a procedurally correct manner.

In raising this issue the way he did, the member came dangerously close to reflecting on the Chair, something that I have very recently cautioned all members against doing.

Third, I would like to take this opportunity to clarify our rules and practices governing ministers making member's statements. Our rule—our subrule 28(2) states: "A Minister of the Crown may not use the time allotted for Members' Statements to comment on government policy or ministerial or department action."

Members might not be aware of this, but this rule has been in effect since 1966 when—1996—I'm sorry—when this item of routine proceedings was created. Members' statements as we know them today were based on an item of business called non-political statements, which were exclusively for members to raise awareness of constituency-based issues or celebrating constituents. Ministers were only permitted to make non-political statements by leave of the House, and their comments had to be solely related to constituency matters.

I think it is worth sharing that, over the last 18 years, there have been multiple instances of Speakers cautioning honourable ministers from both sides of the House who were in breach of this rule, including caucus colleagues of the Official Opposition House Leader.

This is a matter that, as Speaker, I am very aware of and will continue to rule on as past Speakers have done before me. I would encourage all ministers to heed the words of Speaker Hickey, who concluded his 2001 ruling on a similar matter with the following: I would suggest to honourable ministers that if they are rising to speak on members' statements, that the comments should be pertaining to the minister's constituency and should not be used to comment on the government policy or ministerial or department action.

Lastly, the Official Opposition House Leader initially failed to conclude his submission with a motion, which could have required the presiding officer to immediately rule this matter of privilege out of order and dismiss it. The Deputy Speaker was under no obligation to remind the member to do this, and this

warning to all members not to expect such generosity in future.

\* (14:50)

On a related note of parliamentary privilege is perhaps one of the most important principles under which this institution functions. A breach of privilege is a grave matter. In the last 30 years in this place there have been hundreds of matters of privilege raids by all sides of the House, and only two of them were found to be prima facie. Many of those matters raised could be described as frivolous and arguably disrespectful to this House. To be clear on this issue, no side is blameless. I urge all members to take greater care and consideration in the future when researching and raising such matters, and to not raise matters of a frivolous nature under the banner of privilege.

I thank you all for your attention to this ruling.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** With all due respect, I would like to challenge your ruling.

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

#### Voice Vote

**The Speaker:** All members in the House who support the ruling of the Chair, please say aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** I believe the Ayes have it.

#### Recorded Vote

**Mr. Johnson:** Like a recorded vote, please, Honourable Speaker.

**The Speaker:** A recorded vote has been called. Please call in the members.

\* (15:50)

Order, please.

The one hour for the ringing of the bells has expired. I am therefore requesting that the division bells be shut off and the House proceed to the vote.

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

#### Division

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

#### Ayes

*Asagwara, Blashko, Brar, Bushie, Cable, Chen, Compton, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Fontaine, Kennedy, Kinew, Kostyshyn, Loiselle, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Naylor, Oxenham, Pankratz, Redhead, Sala, Sandhu, Schmidt, Schott, Simard, Smith, Wiebe.*

#### Nays

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

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Ayes 30, Nays 20.

**The Speaker:** The motion is accordingly passed. The ruling is sustained.

\* \* \*

**The Speaker:** Now, a couple of things before we move on.

#### Speaker's Statement

**The Speaker:** The House is expected to adjourn later today for our winter break. As always, this is a friendly reminder to please remove the contents of your desk before you leave the Chamber.

Not only do we have Youth Parliament in here later this month, there will also be essential work done on the audio systems that require Assembly staff to access members' desks.

I'd also encourage everyone to please recycle as much material as possible. The big blue bins here inside the Chamber are designated for recycling copies of Hansard only, as these can be reused by Hansard and the Legislative Library. Any other material you would like to recycle may be placed in the larger recycling containers in both of the message rooms located just outside the Chamber.

Thank you.

\* \* \*

**The Speaker:** Now, there's a leave request.

I have a leave request for the House. Due to an administrative error on—one of the bills currently on notice was given the wrong title. Both Bill 212, currently listed under introduction of bills, and Bill 10, currently on the notice paper, are titled as The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act. The second of these two bills to be filed, Bill 10, should have been listed as The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (2), but it was not.

To correct this administrative error, is there leave for the House for the title on Bill 10 to be changed to Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (2)?

Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

### House Business

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** On House business.

**The Speaker:** The honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

**MLA Fontaine:** I would like to announce the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet in camera on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 10 a.m. to consider the appointment process for the Manitoba Ombudsman.

**The Speaker:** It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet in camera on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 10 a.m. to consider the appointment process for the Manitoba Ombudsman.

Now we will go to petitions.

### PETITIONS

#### Breast Screening

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Due to evolving scientific evidence, the Canadian Cancer Society, CSCS, is now urging all provinces and territories to lower the starting age of breast screening to age 40.

(2) Based off 2023 treatment standards, it is estimated that screening women annually for breast cancer starting at age 40 will save the Canadian health-care system over \$460 million annually.

\* (16:00)

(3) After non-melanoma skin cancers, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Canadian women. One in eight Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime, and one in 36 will die from it. This is 30,500 diagnoses and over 5,500 deaths every year, and 84 diagnoses and 15 deaths every day.

(4) Early detection of breast cancer will lead to a better outcome in patients. This is better odds for survival and less severe cases. Women in their 40s who have access to mammograms have a 44 per cent lower mortality rate from breast cancer than those who do not receive screening.

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered the breast cancer screening age, or announced their intention to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already commenced the work of expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists into the public health-care system.

(6) Manitoba is currently behind the rest of the country and has no formal plan to increase its screening capacity or lower the breast cancer screening age.

(7) Lowering the breast cancer screening to age 40 in Manitoba will reduce long-term costs to the health-care system because cancers that are caught earlier are typically less complicated to treat.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately put forward a plan to increase breast cancer screening capacity and lower the breast cancer screening age to 40.

This has been signed by Douglas Adams, Barb *[phonetic]* Adams, Bill Street and many Manitobans.

#### Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*MLA Robert Loiselle, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

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

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

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition is signed by Melanie Laviolette, Kurt Gretsinger, Fallon Stanley and many, many more fine Manitobans, deputy Acting Speaker.

### **Teaching Certification**

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

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

(1) Ensuring that teachers have a robust background in the subjects they teach is essential for maintaining high quality education and fostering

well-rounded learning experiences for all Manitoba students.

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teacher certification.

(3) These amendments eliminated all subject-area requirements for teacher certification, including major and minor teachable subjects and subject-specific requirements for early/middle years streams.

(4) Specifically, the amendments removed: senior years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; early/middle years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; and early/middle years credit requirements for specific subjects, including: math; physical or biological science; English or French; and history and/or geography.

(5) Key stakeholders, such as parents, post-secondary educators outside the faculties of education and business partners were not consulted about the changes.

(6) The removal of subject-specific requirements undermines the educational quality in Manitoba schools by permitting teachers to enter the classroom without sufficient training in core academic areas, thereby compromising the education that Manitoba students receive.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

\* (16:10)

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors in early/middle years requirements which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas.

(2) To urge the provincial government to address teacher shortages through alternative measures that uphold rigorous subject-area standards, which are critical for providing quality education to all Manitoba students.

This petition has been signed by Melanie O'Gorman, Stefan Dodds, Philippe Cyrenne and many, many more fine Manitobans.

### Louise Bridge

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

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

(1) Over 25,000 vehicles per day cross the Louise Bridge, which has served as a vital link for vehicular traffic between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown for the last 113 years.

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

(3) As far back as 2008, the City of Winnipeg, or City, has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(10) The new City administration has delayed the decision on the Louise Bridge for a minimum of one year, and possibly up to 10 years, unless the

Province steps in on behalf of the northeast Winnipeg residents and completes the overdue link.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

\* (16:20)

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

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this petition was signed by Jessiah Clark, Angela Malo, Shelayne Bloomer and many, many other fine Manitobans.

### MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

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

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 service 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 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 it's on No. 1 Highway in the Southern Health/Santé Sud Health Authority. Currently there is only one MRI machine in the RHA. *[interjection]*

Number 4—correct—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 Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay and Long Plain First Nations. 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 time 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 Cecile Boras, Richard Egan, Christopher Kitchen and many more Manitobans.

Thank you so much.

#### **Provincial Trunk Highway 34**

**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) Provincial Trunk Highway 34, PTH 34, is a two-lane provincial primary highway that runs from the US border where it meets with ND 20 to PTH 16 at the town of Gladstone.

(2) PTH 34 runs north-south in the south-central region of the province. It is the main highway for the towns of Crystal City, Pilot Mound and Holland,

serving as a main corridor for semi-trailers, farm equipment, daily drivers and local school bus routes.

(3) A new bridge is currently being constructed over the Assiniboine River at PTH 34, north of Holland, in the RM of Victoria. The bridge serves as an important north-south link over the Assiniboine River between the Trans-Canada Highway and PTH 2.

(4) The deterioration of PTH 3–34 has raised major concerns due to its narrow shoulders and numerous deep potholes that pose serious safety risks considering farmers often need to use the highway to transport heavy equipment.

(5) Construction of a new bridge in accordance current design codes and the RTAC standard, located on PTH 34 crossing the Assiniboine River, will support trade and commerce and improve public safety in the area, and also accommodate flood events on the Assiniboine River.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to address the conditions of Provincial Trunk Highway 34, making the necessary upgrades to RTAC standard and to resurface the road once the new bridge has been completed.

This has been signed by Leona Loewen, Bev Makinson, Don Makinson and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

#### **Phoenix School**

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

\* (16:30)

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 Chelsea Kilfoyle, Aderonke Taiwu, Eugene Hernandez and many, many other Manitobans.

*The Speaker in the Chair*

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

### Breast Screening

**Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland):** Yes, that was good for the nerves.

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

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

(1) Due to evolving scientific evidence, the Canadian Cancer Society is now urging all provinces and territories to lower the starting age for breast screening to 40.

(2) Based off 2023 treatment standards, it is estimated that screening women annually for breast cancer starting at age 40 will save the Canadian health-care system \$460 million annually.

(3) After non-melanoma skin cancers, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Canadian women. One in eight Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime, and one in 36 will die from it. This is 30,500 diagnoses and 5,500 deaths every year and 84 diagnoses and 15 deaths every day.

(4) Early detection of breast cancer will lead to better outcomes in patients, with better odds of survival and less severe cases. Women in their 40s who have access to mammograms have a 44 per cent lower mortality rate from breast cancer than those who don't receive screening.

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered the breast cancer screening age, or announced their intentions to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already commenced the work of expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists into their public health-care system.

(6) Manitoba is currently behind the rest of the country and has no formal plan to increase its screening capacity or lower the breast cancer screening age.

(7) Lowering the breast cancer screening age to 40 in Manitoba will reduce long-term costs to the health-care system because cancers that are caught earlier are typically less complicated to treat.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately put forward a plan to increase breast cancer screening capacity and lower the breast cancer screening age to 40.

This petition has been signed by Beverly Clarkson, Wanda Rlozean *[phonetic]*, BJ Checkley and many, many Manitobans.

### Morden Waste Water Project

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

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

(1) Between 2021 and 2020—sorry, 2011 and 2021, Morden's population grew by an impressive 27 per cent,

outpacing the national average by 16 per cent, according to Statistics Canada.

(2) While growth is welcome and encouraged, Morden has long faced a critical need for infrastructure upgrades to meet current demands and support future development.

(3) Morden's waste water system has operated beyond capacity for years, prompting the Province in 2019 to halt property subdivisions due to insufficient water-waste water storage.

(4) As of 2024, after exploring all options, the City announced in July that the estimated cost for critical infrastructure upgrades has risen from \$70 million to \$88 million to possibly \$108 million.

(5) These revised estimates have—leave Morden with a significant funding shortage—shortfall of 13 to 33 million dollars.

(6) Despite efforts to address the gap, including plans to raise utility fees for residents and businesses, such increases that have been delayed since 2017 due to the lack of an approval-approved capital project, taxation is not enough.

(7) The lack of waste water capacity has severely impacted economic activity and growth in Morden and surrounding communities. Without much-needed waste water infrastructure investments, growth and economic development will be hindered in all of southern Manitoba.

\* (16:40)

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate action and recognize the critical need of this waste water project for economic growth and environmental sustainability by committing to advocating and working with the federal government to close the gap with additional funding for Morden's waste water treatment system.

(2) To urge the provincial government to ensure all levels of government and regulatory bodies will expedite necessary funding and approvals necessary to advance the Morden waste water project with no further delays to ensure no hindrance to growth and economic development for Morden and southern Manitoba.

This petition has been signed by Brenda D. Klassen, Sheldon Friesen and Ken Klassen and many other great Manitobans.

Thank you.

### Teaching Certification

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

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

(1) Ensuring that teachers have a robust background in the subjects they teach is essential for maintaining high-quality education and fostering well-rounded learning experiences for all Manitoba students.

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teaching certification.

(3) These amendments eliminated all subject-area requirements for teacher certification, including major and minor teachable subjects and subject-specific requirements for early/middle years streams.

(4) Specifically, the amendments removed: senior years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; early/middle years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; and early/middle years credit requirements for specific subjects, including: math; physical or biological science; English or French; and history and/or geography.

(5) Key stakeholders, such as parents, post-secondary educators outside the faculties of education and business partners were not consulted about the changes.

(6) The removal of subject-specific requirements undermines the educational quality in Manitoba schools by permitting teachers to enter the classroom without sufficient training in core academic areas, thereby compromising the education that Manitoba students receive.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early/middle years requirements which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas.



(2) To urge the provincial government to address teacher shortages through alternative measures that uphold rigorous subject-area standards, which are critical for providing quality education to all Manitoba students.

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

**The Speaker:** Before recognizing the next speaker, I would ask people to take their conversations to the loge or out of the Chamber so that I can actually hear the speaker speaking.

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

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

(1) Ensuring that teachers have a robust background in the subjects they teach is essential for maintaining high-quality education and fostering well-rounded learning experiences for all Manitoba students.

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teacher certification.

(3) These amendments eliminated all subject-area requirements for teacher certification, including major and minor teachable subjects and subject-specific requirements for early and middle years streams.

(4) Specifically, the amendments removed: senior years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; early and middle years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; and early and middle years credit requirements for specific subjects, including: math; physical or biological science; English or French; and history and/or geography.

(5) Key stakeholders, such as parents, post-secondary educators outside the faculties of education and business partners were not consulted about the changes.

(6) The removal of subject-specific requirements undermines the educational quality in Manitoba schools by permitting teachers to enter the classroom without sufficient training in core academic areas, thereby compromising the education that Manitoba students receive.

\* (16:50)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early and middle years requirements which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to address teacher shortages through alternative measures that uphold rigorous subject-area standards, which are critical for providing quality education to all Manitoba students.

This petition has been signed by Piper Scholz, Toni Rizzuto, Stef McArton and many other fine Manitobans.

### Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

(2) Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with a high-efficiency furnace, the carbon tax is costing the average family over \$200 annually, even more for those with older furnaces.

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

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

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

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

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this petition is signed by Nitán Arora, Carolina Favioli *[phonetic]* and Lu Saito and many, many Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**The Speaker:** No other members wishing to read a petition?

The honourable member for La Vérendrye.

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Oh, it's supposed to be Lagassé.

**The Speaker:** Correction. The honourable member for Dawson Trail.

### Breast Screening

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

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

(1) Due to evolving scientific evidence, the Canadian Cancer Society, CCS, is now urging all provinces and territories to lower the starting age for breast screening to 40.

(2) Based off 2023 treatment standards, it is estimated that screening women annually for breast cancer starting at age 40 will save the Canadian health-care system \$460 million annually.

(3) After non-melanoma skin cancers, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Canadian women. One in eight Canadian women will be

diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime, and one in 36 will die from it. This is 30,500 diagnoses and 5,500 deaths every year, and 84 diagnoses and 15 deaths every day.

(4) Early detection of breast cancer will lead to better outcomes in patients, with better odds of survival and less severe cases. Women in their 40s who have access to mammograms have a 44 per cent lower mortality rate from breast cancer than those who don't receive screening.

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered the breast cancer screening age, or announced their intentions to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already commenced the work of expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists into their public health-care system.

(6) Manitoba is currently behind the rest of the country and has no formal plan to increase its screening capacity or lower the breast cancer screening age.

(7) Lowering the breast cancer screening age to 40 in Manitoba will reduce long-term costs to the health-care system because cancers that are caught earlier are typically less complicated to treat.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately put forward a plan to increase breast cancer screening capacity and lower the breast cancer screening age to 40.

This petition has been signed by Annette Beatty *[phonetic]*, Rick—oh, sorry—Rick Brar—*[phonetic]*—sorry, Connie Culinghawk *[phonetic]* and many other Manitobans.

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The—just before we rise, I want to remind members once again if you have not already done so, please remove the contents from your desks before you leave the Chamber.

The hour being 5 o'clock, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 5, 2025, or to the call of the Speaker.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 5, 2024

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