

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

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Tom Lindsey  
Speaker*

**Vol. LXXVIII No. 49 - 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 24, 2024**

ISSN 0542-5492

**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
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

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

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

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated.

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** On a matter of privilege.

## MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Brandon West, on a matter of privilege.

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** I rise this afternoon on a matter of privilege.

As we all know, matters of privilege are incredibly important in this Chamber, and I do not rise lightly. The ability for a member to freely participate in this Chamber is non-negotiable. If we cannot do our jobs unobstructed, then the Manitobans that sent us to this very Chamber are not represented in the law-making of our province.

Bosc and Gagnon write at length about the privileges of a member in House of Commons Procedure and Practice, third edition. These writings have informed much of what I say today.

A matter of privilege must meet two criteria, the first of which is that it must be clear that a breach of

privilege has occurred and it must be prima facie—it must be a prima facie breach; the second is that I must be raising this matter at the first opportunity. Both of these conditions have been met, and, Honourable Speaker, I ask that you consider what I am presenting to you carefully.

Reading the news yesterday evening, I was shocked to see an article quoting this Premier (Mr. Kinew) discussing the contents of a bill with media and answering questions. This was shocking because I know this Premier is aware of the rules and is aware of the fact that this House has the right to know legislation first.

This is a long-standing tradition of our legislative system and incredibly well documented by rulings from previous Speakers.

In April of 2013, Speaker Scheer reaffirmed this long-standing practice, and I quote: It is a well-established practice that the contents of a bill are kept confidential until introduced in Parliament, thus making their premature disclosure a serious matter. I table a copy of the article for your consideration, Honourable Speaker, and I'm sure the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) will rise in a couple of minutes and try and explain away the latest in the NDP's hit parade of instances of contempt of this notice.

Bill 34 has been on the Order Paper for some time, but the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) has yet to find the time to actually introduce this legislation in anything more than name. So we, members of this House, are unable to do the job that Manitobans have sent us here to do.

I find myself once again borrowing from previous rulings of Speaker Regan, federally. On June 8, 2017, he summarized the scenario we find ourselves in quite succinctly, and I quote: The right of the House to first access to legislation is one of our oldest conventions. It does and must, however, co-exist with the need of government to consult widely with the public and stakeholders alike on issues and policies in the preparation of legislation.

I have to agree with him, Honourable Speaker. There's a balance of responsibilities, and good legislation should be consulted with Manitobans to ensure it is—it adequately reflects the needs of our province. But there is a line that has been repeatedly crossed.

My colleague from Agassiz rose in this House previously about labour legislation—pardon me—that has still not been introduced in this House.

The Canadian Labour Congress gave a briefing to media alongside this Premier (Mr. Kinew) and his minister, and now the NDP's biggest booster, the Manitoba Federation of Labour, is paying to flood the airwaves with ads talking about specific provisions of bills that have not even been introduced in this House even as of today.

This is a pattern, Honourable Speaker. This area is so firmly, firmly entrenched that there is much precedent to draw from.

And some Speakers have not minced their words, like Speaker Milliken in March of twenty—or, 2001, and I quote: Once a bill has been placed on notice, whether it has been presented in a different form to a different session of Parliament has no bearing and the bill is considered a new matter. The convention of the confidentiality of bills on notice is necessary, not only so that members themselves may be well informed, but also because of the pre-eminent rule which this House plays and must play in the legislative affairs of this nation.

Thus, the issue of denying members information that they need to do their work has been the key consideration for the Chair in reviewing this particular question of privilege. To deny to members information concerning business that is about to come before the House, while at the same time providing such information to media that will likely be questioning members about that business, is a situation that the Chair cannot condone. Unquote.

These words are intentional and they are all true. It is a situation that he felt the Chair cannot condone. Those are strong words chosen for a reason.

This quote is similar to Speaker Frasier's December 1986 ruling, quote: I think it is appropriate for the Chair to remind all honourable members that these kinds of incidents can cause grave concern among honourable members, and I believe it is a good reason why extra-special care should be taken, especially by ministers, to ensure that matters that ought properly be brought to the House do not in any way get out in the public domain and cause concern to honourable members and often to ministers as well. End quote.

\* (13:40)

I have been asked repeatedly by media to comment on this legislation, to respond to comments made

by members of this government and now this Premier. Unfortunately, I cannot give informed opinions until I am able to read legislation. That is why the rules that we have are in place, Honourable Speaker. It protects the public and the rights of society by enshrining—or, sorry—ensuring that a government with an agenda can't just hide from accountability. This is the exact scenario that Speaker Milliken was addressing.

This is most concerning, Honourable Speaker, because this government could so readily fix this. They could stand in their place and introduce these bills, give the general public the same access to potential legislation that they are giving their union bosses, give opposition members the same access that they are giving the chosen media outlets. I suspect that the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) will rise and put the blame on me again and my colleagues because she justifies the actions of her leader under any circumstances.

Gordon Sinclair Jr. has written extensively on this behavioural quirk. I say that what we on this side of the aisle have been saying all along: if the government would just stop breaking the rules we could stop addressing these matters and get back to debating important legislation.

To quote from a ruling of Speaker Regan from May 7, 2018, quote: Underscoring the importance of the House's right of first access to bills, the member contended that it is unacceptable that members have to play catch-up on public debate on government legislation. And this legislation is occurring between a well-briefed media and the minister of Justice. Unquote.

He concludes, quote: When new ways, through technology or otherwise, are found to share information, it remains incumbent upon those who are responsible for legislative information to respect the primacy of Parliament by respecting the right of the House to first access. Members should never have to even so much as wonder if they were not the first to receive this legislative information.

Well, Honourable Speaker, I know I'm wondering why I am not the first to receive this legislative information. I'm wondering why the rules don't seem to apply to this Premier and his team, or at least don't seem to apply at all.

We are all here representing tens of thousands of Manitobans. We are supposed to have the shared goal of making life better for them, of being leaders in our communities. But, instead, we have a government that

is tactically withholding information in an attempt to score cheap political wins. And then they are doing it again and again and again and again.

I am blessed to have an opportunity to learn about leadership from some incredibly personal and professional mentors over my many years in law enforcement, and what I learned has stuck with me, and I think it's made me who I am today. You lead by example and you never expect any less from yourself, as you would expect from those who work for you.

In this case, this Premier (Mr. Kinew) is demonstrating improper behaviour and it is clearly circulating among his ministers. This is a pattern of behaviour that must stop.

In March of 2018, Speaker Regan touched on this issue in response to a matter of privilege pertaining to media being given access to briefing materials that Parliament was not. In giving his ruling, he notes, and I quote: Given this reality, there is a rightful expectation that those responsible for the information should do their utmost to ensure members' access to it. Not respecting this expectation does a disservice to all. It is particularly disconcerting when the government gives priority to the media over the members of Parliament.

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I think the member is repeating himself quite often on his points, and he's also straying off into making a political speech, which isn't part of a matter of privilege. So I'd ask the member to wrap it up pretty quickly and get to his point.

**Mr. Balcaen:** Well, thank you for your guidance on that, Honourable Speaker.

This is a very important matter of privilege, and I am just very shortly—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Balcaen:** —wrapping this up, but I want to put these important words on the record for your consideration. *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) has the floor.

**Mr. Balcaen:** In March of 2018, Speaker Regan touched on this issue in response to a matter of privilege pertaining to media being given access to briefing material that Parliament was not.

In giving his ruling, he notes, and I quote: Given this reality, there is a rightful expectation that those

responsible for the information should do their utmost to ensure members' access to it. Not respecting this expectation does a disservice to us all, Honourable Speaker. It is particularly disconcerting when the government gives priority to the media over the members of Parliament.

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

Once again, the member is repeating himself and repeating himself. If he would wrap this up right away, it would be greatly appreciated. If he has something new to add, fine, but if he's just going to keep repeating what he's already said, he needs to wrap it up.

**Mr. Balcaen:** Well, thank you for your counsel again, Honourable Speaker, and I am coming to conclusion very shortly.

Though the situations are different—namely that while this Premier will talk to media before a bill is introduced—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I've asked the member to quit repeating himself. He should now quit repeating himself, listen to what I've said and get to the conclusion of his matter of privilege quickly.

**Mr. Balcaen:** Yes, well, I was just finishing off this quote, Honourable Speaker. Regan's words are pertinent because, clearly, this Premier is giving everyone priority but this House.

These past Speakers have reaffirmed what I know, which, as a new member, is evidently much more than what members opposite are providing. It is a fact that this government needs to table bills in this House before speaking of them in public and in detail.

Considering this pattern of behaviour, I move, seconded by the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), that the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) be held in contempt of this House and that the matter be referred to an all-party committee for consideration.

**The Speaker:** Before recognizing any other members to speak, I would like to remind the House that remarks at this time by honourable members are to be limited strictly to relevant comments about whether the alleged matter of privilege has been raised at the earliest opportunity and whether a prima facie case has been established.

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** Well, day two of Brandon—the member for Brandon

West (Mr. Balcaen) wasting all of our time here in the Chamber with erroneous, far-stretching and, quite honestly, boring matters of privilege.

Honourable Speaker, let me—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Fontaine:** —just say this: I'm glad that the member for Brandon West is attempting once again to read the paper. I would encourage him, for a second day in a row, to read the paper properly.

I would disabuse what the member is attempting to put on the record here in respect of a matter of privilege. His privileges as a member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly are not unobstructed. There is no prima facie case, and I would question whether or not this is the earliest opportunity for him to rise, yet again, on a matter of privilege. He has presented nothing new, Honourable Speaker.

What I do want to—and I want to say this, Honourable Speaker: my—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

A matter of privilege is a very important matter. People need to be able to hear what's being said. So I would expect everyone else, and I mean everyone else, to sit quietly.

\* (13:50)

**MLA Fontaine:** I'm going to keep my comments very short here, Honourable Speaker, because we do have guests in the gallery that, every day for the last couple of days, they've come here, and we all have to listen to the member for Brandon West.

I do want to say this, though: you know, the member for Brandon West is again bringing up erroneous and fictitious matters of privilege, and he wonders why he's, you know, asking about breaking the rules of the House. Again, I think the member for Brandon West and I have established that he's new here; he's been only elected for a couple of minutes.

So let me just remind the member, or share with the member and remind members opposite there, how in 2020, when they were in their failed government, members opposite got up in the House, they introduced bill after bill after bill after bill. And yet what they did not do—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I've just cautioned members about sitting quietly while a member's talking about a matter of privilege. If I have to stand up again, I'll start naming members. Is that clear? I hope it is.

**MLA Fontaine:** Let me just finish this.

In 2020, members opposite, when they were in their failed government, got up every single day to introduce bills, and what they didn't do was actually physically give the bills out. And so it is the audacity to get up here today, for a second day in a row, for the member to say, again, some matter of privilege that simply does not exist, when they are—he could look at his members and ask them why they did that in 2020.

Finally, Honourable Speaker, if the member would cease to continue to get up and allow us to get on with the work of the House, he will see that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) is actually, in fact, going to be introducing that bill today.

Miigwech.

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** On the same matter of privilege, it has been raised several times that legislation has been shared externally prior to it being introduced inside of the Manitoba Legislature.

It is important that no matter who is in government, who is planning to introduce legislation, it is done in good faith and out of good practice, that MLAs be able to see the content of legislation prior to it being introduced here in the House. This is a privilege that we as MLAs have, Honourable Speaker.

It is a grey area for members to be able to go out and talk about the legislation publicly before it has been formally introduced inside of the House. It impedes the ability of legislators to do their job when biases are being formed in public and the verdict has already been formed in the court of public opinion.

Discussions should not reveal any details of upcoming legislation to ensure that the authority of the Legislature is not infringed upon. This is why it is common practice for press conferences or media briefings after legislation has been introduced to occur.

Honourable Speaker, this is not the first time this issue has arisen, and I would encourage the Speaker to take this under advisement and report back to the House.

**The Speaker:** A matter of privilege is a serious concern. I'm going to take the matter under advisement to consult the authorities and will return to the House with a ruling.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Before we proceed to routine proceedings, there's quite a few guests in the gallery that I would like to take the opportunity to introduce.

First, we have seated in the public gallery, from Morning Glory School, 25 students under the direction of Walter Wiebe and William Tetzlaw. And they're guests of the honourable member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen).

I would like to draw the attention—I would further draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us today The Mining Association of Manitoba board of directors: Stacy Kennedy, MAMI president; Richard Trudeau, vice-president; Joey Champagne, secretary-treasurer; Robert Bauch, member; Rob Carter, member; committee co-chairs Jeff Fountain, environment; Pam Marsden, Indigenous relations; Landice Yestrau, environment, who are guests of the honourable member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses).

Welcome.

Also in the public gallery, we have with us today Ms. Reid's grade 1 and 2 class from Emerson elementary school who are the guests of the honourable member for Kildonan-River East.

And on behalf of all members, welcome.

And I would also like to draw attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from the Canadian Propane Association, Robert Loenhardt, Chris Crawford, who are guests of the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (MLA Bereza).

Welcome.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

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

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Mr. Simard), that Bill 34, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Wiebe:** I am pleased to rise in the House today to introduce first reading of Bill 34, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act.

This bill will amend The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Act to repeal the prohibition on residential cultivation of cannabis, otherwise known as homegrown.

The repeal would align Manitoba with most provinces by allowing adults aged 19 and older to grow up to four cannabis plants per residence. That's permitted under the federal Cannabis Act. The proposed legislative amendments also create the authority for safety and security requirements to be established in regulation.

Our government understands that consumer interest in cannabis may vary. This bill provides Manitobans flexibility to grow cannabis at home should they choose to in a safe and secure manner.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Committee reports?

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

The motion is carried.

So, committee reports?

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** I am pleased to table the Annual Report of the Manitoba Watershed District Program for 2022-23.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Ministerial reports?

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Community Smudging Event

**Mrs. Rachele Schott (Kildonan-River East):** Honourable Speaker, recently I attended a community smudge event hosted by Emerson and Maple Leaf schools in the River East Transcona School Division. I was grateful to witness the two schools working together to learn about smudging alongside the divisional elder.

A couple days after the event, I received a handwritten letter from Vaughn in Ms. Reid's grade 1 and 2 class who join us today in the gallery. I would like to read from her letter and will table copies at the end of my statement. Vaughn wrote: Thanks for taking care of our community. I wish that I will be one of you. You are so cool. I love you. From Vaughn.

When I got this letter, I was so touched. Sometimes the days can get long and we can easily forget

the light and happiness that exists in our communities. Even the smallest interactions can have a lasting impact. Showing up for our constituents does make a difference. I'm so grateful to Vaughn, her class and her teacher, Ms. Reid, for this letter.

When I was in school, the MLA for Rossmere, Harry Schellenberg, showed up at our school function for me and left a lasting impact on my life. I hope we can all remember that this is why we show up here, why showing up in our community matters. We're setting an example for the next generation of leaders.

So, thank you Vaughn for taking the time to send me this letter. And thank you, Ms. Reid and your class. You're making more of a difference than you'll ever know.

#### **Green Pastures—Sustainable Tourism Award**

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Thank you, Honourable Speaker, for the opportunity to recognize an outstanding tourism attraction and farm in La Vérendrye.

Guy and Leah Bouchard, a farming family from the Gardenton area, have won Travel Manitoba's Sustainable Tourism award.

\* (14:00)

Their farm, Green Pastures, was one of four Manitoba businesses nominated in the Sustainable Tourism category.

The Sustainable Tourism award is presented to an organization, tourism business, facility, event or attraction that demonstrates a commitment to economic, social and environmental sustainability and works to mitigate any harmful impact in these areas.

Green Pastures is a second-generation 160-acre family farm on the banks of the Roseau River where they raise turkeys, sheep and plant crops. They are proud and intentional about being committed to sustainability and being good stewards for our environment.

In 2023, the Bouchards decided to create a farming experience to keep the family busy during their off-season. They started Farm, Fibre, Food & Friends last fall, where visitors are invited to slow down, connect, create and enjoy a simpler life. The experience is ecofriendly, waste-free and uses local ingredients and supplies produced on their farm.

Although their farm experience is unique, what isn't unique is the passion for animals, land and the environment. These characteristics are similar to many other farmers across my constituency and our province.

I am proud to see the Bouchards' passion and pride for agriculture, and look forward to seeing how their tourism product will continue to showcase the lifestyle so many Manitobans are passionate about.

#### **Academy Road and Corydon Avenue BIZ**

**MLA Mike Moroz (River Heights):** Honourable Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the incredible work being done by the two business zones in my constituency: the Academy Road BIZ and the Corydon Ave. BIZ, the latter of which I share with my colleagues from Fort Rouge and Fort Garry.

A Business Improvement Zone, or BIZ, is an association of business owners who join together to promote the economic and social well-being of a district through a range of volunteer-led marketing, beautification, safety and advocacy initiatives.

Governed by a board and funded through a member-based property tax levy, these incredibly hard-working individuals play a huge role in stimulating the local economy and in making our communities more vibrant and livable.

In River Heights, Honourable Speaker, some of the BIZ activities are legendary, including the hugely successful Academy Road Street Fair and Corydon Ave.'s much-anticipated summer concert series.

While it's long been clear the small business is the backbone of the economy, I've been greatly impressed by their dedication to the overall social well-being of the community through their engagement in programming such as seasonal decorating, graffiti removal, crime prevention, improving safety and accessibility and the development of art installations and green spaces.

These energetic community ambassadors, along with their small support staff, help strengthen existing local businesses, attract new ones to the area and create the kind of community that allow us to live, work and play right in our own neighbourhoods.

Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased that Tom Scott from the Corydon Ave. BIZ is in the gallery with us today, representing the many other board members unable to make it in the middle of a work day. I ask all members join me in thanking them for their hard work and their dedication to improving life in our communities.



### Fraserwood Hall

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** I rise today to recognize an Interlake institution that has been in-existent for over 100 years.

The Fraserwood Hall was founded in 1921, then known as The Ukrainian National Peoples' Home of Taras Shevchenko. Originally, this was a place for immigrants to gather and read the newspaper and books, including the poetry of Taras Shevchenko.

From the original building's opening, through many additions, it remained in use for 80 years. Time, as it does, was catching up on the old hall, so in 1993, planning and fundraising began for a new Fraserwood Hall.

Ten years and, we'll say, millions of perogies later, ground was broken on the new Fraserwood Hall, with construction finishing the following year. A new page was turned in the staple of the Interlake.

The new Fraserwood Hall has continued to be the central gathering place for the community for 20 years now. Serving, not only the town of Fraserwood, but people also come from all over the Interlake to take part in events held at the hall.

The Fraserwood Hall keeps a very busy schedule, from weekly bingos, dinners, socials, old-time dances, weddings and all-you-can-eat perogy nights. I just attended an outstanding all-you-can-eat perogy event that last weekend; \$20 for a kielbasa, a beverage and, yes, all-you-can-eat perogies.

The Fraserwood Hall is a favourite spot on the community's dance card, with regular old-time dances.

Please join me in thanking the hard-working volunteers, board and members of the Fraserwood Hall for keeping this vital community institution vibrant and successful well into its second century.

And happy 20th anniversary on your new hall.

### Ma-Buhay! Musical Production

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Mabuhay. Magandang tanghali po. [*Live. Good afternoon.*]

I rise this afternoon to share with the House some details about Ma-Buhay!, a new musical that will be showcased from June 27 'til July 14 at Rainbow Stage.

The musical is about three young singers who compete to win Star on the Rise, which is a reality TV singing competition that has come to Canada straight from the Philippines.

Through many dance numbers and pop songs, the musical will take us from backstage to onstage, as well as from the past to the present, incorporating Winnipeg to the Philippines with some amazing talent and characters to help us cheer on our favourite contestant.

This hilarious musical will have dramatic expressions of Filipino culture, with the main takeaway being the importance of challenging the grass-is-greener assumptions with respect to culture, money and fame. It encourages people to find their voice and discover the value of home.

Honourable Speaker, when I asked the volunteers why this musical was important to them, they talked about how it is history in the making right here in Manitoba. And an inspiration for visible minorities who are underrepresented to be aware that there is support for every voice to be heard, and the performing arts can provide this opportunity.

Now, Honourable Speaker, what makes this musical so unique is that it was created by Joseph Sevillo, a Filipino born and based in Winnipeg. He has joined us in the gallery today with executive director of Rainbow Stage, Andrea Pratt McDowell; artistic director of Rainbow Stage, Carson Natrass; and six cast members, volunteers and choreographers including: Ramon, Joy, Dutchess, Victoria, Arnold and Jayel.

I ask that my colleagues—to join me in celebrating their upcoming musical, Ma-Buhay!.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Minister of Labour and PNP Program Premier's Knowledge of Minister's Actions

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Welcome to all our guests in the gallery today.

Honourable Speaker, we know that the Premier has dodged and deflected from the question all week. What does he know about the Minister of Labour and Immigration (MLA Marcelino) making threats to hopeful Manitobans, and when did he know about it?

Because according to the member from Brandon East, if the Premier has the courage to call for an investigation and when Minister of Labour and Immigration goes down for her abuse of power, according to the member from Brandon East, they're all going down.

Why is the NDP leader covering up for the Minister of Labour and Immigration's actions on threatening hopeful new Manitobans?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to take a moment just to put on the record that for the students who encouraged our member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott) with their good words, we thank you. And that their reflection that these hallowed halls are open for any Manitoban to serve in, well, we're living proof that that is true. And so we encourage them to pursue their great dreams and destiny.

I know that the Minister of Labour and Immigration (MLA Marcelino) is one of those case studies. She is a second-generation person to serve in these hallowed halls. And when I see the humility, when I see the community connections, when I see the passion that she brings forward, I know that she stands up as a remarkable public servant who many young Manitobans want to model themselves after.

\* (14:10)

And so, yes, she has my complete confidence. We have done a draw last week, we are doing a draw this week, we're doing another draw again next week. The good—

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

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

#### Call for Independent Investigation

**Mr. Ewasko:** So once again, Honourable Speaker, it seems that this Premier's words are one thing, but his actions are completely opposite to what he's saying.

Honourable Speaker, the issue of Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program applicants being afraid of this government is absolutely serious, and members opposite unfortunately think it's a laughing matter.

If he's so confident there was no wrongdoing, why won't the Premier ask for an independent investigation to clear the air?

**Mr. Kinew:** There are so many good things being done by our Minister of Labour and Immigration. I just want to take this opportunity to thank her for her remarkable service to the people of Manitoba.

In just a few months since taking office, not only has she conducted multiple draws for the Provincial Nominee Program, but she has done extensive outreach across the entirety of the province. She's visited northern Manitoba, she's visited Eastman, Westman, she's visited southern Manitoba, in the heart of the Pembina Valley, spending hours talking to employers about meeting labour market needs in a way that advances workforce development in our province, but

also welcomes new Manitobans to this great place, to call it home.

One crucial bit of feedback she's heard at every stop along the way? They were never visited by the PCs for the past seven and a half years.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** So once again, Honourable Speaker, no answers coming from this Premier. Matter of fact, more dodging and deflecting every time this Premier stands up.

Honourable Speaker, since we shed light on this issue, more individuals have come forward to corroborate the story. We heard that the minister, the MLA for Notre Dame, and the Premier had both been in the room when the threats had happened. We have heard audio recordings relaying the minister's threats of consequences.

If the Premier won't call an independent investigation, would he at least be willing to co-operate with any investigation that does take place? Simple yes or no.

**Mr. Kinew:** You know, it's interesting to hear this coming from the member opposite, given that he's launched an investigation of the shameful conduct by the PC Party at the behest of the Stefanson government in last year's provincial election. I look forward to him tabling the results of said investigation with this Chamber.

On the substantive matters at hand that are raised when it comes to Labour and Immigration, we hear questions about draws, we hear questions about what is being done to help post-graduate work-permit holders. Again, there was a draw held last week, there's a draw being held today, there's another draw scheduled for next week.

And when it comes to continued work status for post-graduate work-permit holders here in Manitoba, we're hard at work with the federal government, and look forward to sharing more good news on an important substantive step forward for these Manitobans very soon.

#### Provincial Finances and Debt Level Credit Rating Downgrade Concerns

**Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte):** Honourable Speaker, there is no stopping this out-of-control spending machine called the NDP. And worse yet, there's no plan.

They made impossible and irresponsible promises during their campaign. Manitobans, hold onto your seats; your gross debt under this NDP will increase to over \$60 billion this time next year. To put that in perspective, every single Manitoban's share of this debt will be \$40,000.

With all of this uncontrolled spending and debt, will the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) stand up today and guarantee that Manitoba's credit rating will not be downgraded?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to take this opportunity to thank our Finance Minister, first and foremost, for making life more affordable for the people of Manitoba. A provincial government like ours, we can't do everything, but we can take some important steps to help you, the people of Manitoba.

And that's what we did. With one of our first steps in office, we cut the PC gas tax 14 cents a litre on January 1 of this year. The upshot of that is that for three consecutive months, we've had the lowest inflation rate of any province in the entire country.

Now here's the thing: we know that there's so much more work to do. We know that Manitobans are still struggling with high interest rates and, again, the lagging impacts of inflation felt these past few years, which of course they never took action on during their time in office.

So we're here to say that we're going to continue to work with you—

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

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

**Mr. Khan:** If the Premier wants to thank the Minister of Finance so much, why won't the Minister of Finance stand up today and defend his terrible, fiscally irresponsible budget?

He won't, because the facts are simple, Honourable Speaker: \$60 billion of debt under this NDP; \$40,000 of debt—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Khan:** —for every single Manitoban; \$148-million tax increase under this NDP; and \$2 billion in debt payments on the interest alone under this NDP.

And to top it all off, there is no plan. On page 101 of this Minister of Finance's budget, his plan is only quoted as: Diversify its borrowing plan. End quote. That is not a plan, Honourable Speaker.

Will the minister stand up today and tell Manitobans what his plan is—

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, on the question of whether members rise or stand in their place, I just want to point out that the leader of the PC party couldn't bring himself to stand and vote against our budget. That's how good Budget 2024 really is.

Now, we know that some of the affordability steps that we've taken when it comes to cutting the provincial gas tax, when it comes to helping the average person have more money in their hand at the end of the month, well, we're taking important steps, but we recognize that there's more work to be done.

That's why our team has been working with the investment banks and the rating agencies to ensure that our creditworthiness continues to make strong steps in a positive direction.

And I am pleased to report back to the House that the initial responses we've heard to Budget 2024 have been very positive from the people of Manitoba, but very positive from the financial industry as well.

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

**Mr. Khan:** Honourable Speaker, once again, this Minister of Finance will not stand up and defend his terrible budget that is adding \$60 billion of debt to Manitobans under this NDP. If the Minister of Finance likes it so much, why won't he stand up today?

The smoke and mirrors of the NDP are starting to clear and Manitobans are seeing. Gas prices are higher now than they were on January 1. Grocery prices are higher now than they've ever been. They're higher here than they are in Saskatchewan and Ontario. Renters are paying more. Homeowners are paying \$148 million more. Every single Manitoban will pay \$40,000 more in debt because of this NDP.

Since the Minister of Finance's strategy is so terrible, will the Minister of Finance at least say and promise and guarantee—

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

**Mr. Kinew:** I just want to point out the difficult truth that we're confronted with here each and every day, which is that the Finance critic for the PC party doesn't understand commodity prices, doesn't understand the economy. That's tough.

Again, I want to set the record straight with a simple fact: Manitoba has the lowest gas prices in the entire country because of the actions of our Finance Minister. And while our provincial government is not able to contain the global fluctuations in commodity prices, we are able to cut taxes and to save you money each and every day.

And so I would like to invite the Finance critic—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —of the Progressive Conservative Party to humble himself before our Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) and ask: Please, would you help enlighten me on how to save Manitobans money?

\* (14:20)

### Provincial Nominee Program Number of Draws Conducted

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** This government is saying one thing and doing another. This minister says she encourages immigration, but slams the table and threatens applicants in closed-door meetings.

This Premier (Mr. Kinew) said that draws took place last week. I table that quote for the House. But no draws are reported.

Why are these draws not being reported as all others are?

**Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration):** You know, more slander from members opposite today. That's all that they have on offer, unfortunately, for the good people of Manitoba.

My son, who is seven, overheard some adult conversation regarding this PC slander. He asked me on the way home from church on Sunday, why are they saying this about you? I can't remember my exact response, but I remember his clear reply to me, and I'm going to remember this for a long time. He said, Nanay *[Mother]*, the opposite of a threat is helping, and you are helping people.

Honourable Speaker—

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

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Byram:** I am just as passionate about this issue as that member opposite. I, too, am helping people.

Honourable Speaker, what the minister has spent her time saying in this House is categorically untrue.

She speaks to the health of our provincial nominee system, so I table for her a chart compiled from public data. So far this year she has issued 1,774 invitations; in the same time period in 2022, our government here issued 2,146. And last year in the same time period, 4,373.

This minister talks a big game, so I ask a simple question: Why is she only doing one third—

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

**MLA Marcelino:** Honourable Speaker, my son is a hundred per cent right: Our NDP team is about helping people, okay?

We are working towards an agreement with the federal government to allow thousands of temporary foreign workers to stay here in Manitoba. We are prioritizing the processing for those whose work permits are expiring, and we are making draws for newcomers every two to three weeks, including today, and I'll table that for the members opposite.

Honourable Speaker, Budget 2024 brings resources to get the MPNP back to its former glory. We're doing all this and more. My son is a hundred per cent right.

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

**Ms. Byram:** My tabled—the document I tabled includes today's numbers, Honourable Speaker. This minister threatened to cancel draws after applicants protested in January. Well, the chart I tabled shows that in February and March, this government issued far fewer application letters than in 2022 and 2023.

This minister can clearly make—made good on her threat.

So I ask the minister: Why did she only start drawing again earlier today after we brought her scandal to light?

**MLA Marcelino:** There was an MPNP draw today, just like there've been numerous draws since we took office in October. In fact, by the end of April 2024, Honourable Speaker, there'll have been—there will have been three draws just this month.

These draws are essential in meeting Manitoba's long-term economic goals and skills for development, and this is a priority for our government. I will repeat for the members opposite: by the end of April there will have been three draws for PNP in just alone in this month of April.

Members want to divide, but it is our government that brings people together to work towards solutions, solutions like Budget 2024, that includes \$1 million to properly resource our MPNP program, something that members opposite never did.

### **Minister of Labour and PNP Program Concern for Applicants**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** Honourable Speaker, throughout Manitoba, communities rely on our amazing Provincial Nominee Program to bring in hopeful new Manitobans. I remind this House this program was created by a PC government and it was our previous PC government that won dramatically more allocations from the federal government.

We built it, we grew it and now this minister is trying to destroy it.

Why is this NDP minister playing political games with the lives of potential newcomers?

**Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture):** It's my pleasure to stand up and make a comment about the importance of agriculture in the province of Manitoba.

I want to acknowledge the member opposite from Portage la Prairie, as we took a drive down to Brandon yesterday and observed the hard work of the producers out there, out in the field, and the importance of what agriculture is to our province of Manitoba. And I think today it's more importantly to take acknowledgement of the risk and challenges our agriculture producers face in today's society and what they contribute to our economy in the province of Manitoba.

I want to show and acknowledge, in a clap of hands, of the importance of agriculture producers in the province of Manitoba.

**MLA Bereza:** Honourable Speaker, members opposite continue to dodge and duck and deprive Manitobans of any real answers.

This minister threatened hard-working Manitobans just looking to stay in this amazing province. These people have built lives, invested in our economy and contribute to our economies, and this minister thanks them for this with threats and slamming the table.

Will this minister stand in her place and apologize to every applicant; every applicant who is now fearful of this government's retribution?

**Mr. Kostyshyn:** Some of the appropriate wording that the members opposite use about the lies and the

threats. Let me bring forward the question, and I make a wholesome invitation to the member opposite and anybody else that chooses to join me in the future, to join me in a discussion with a number of agriculture producers referring to the Crown lands, and the opportunity where these people—where this government tells to make a decision to talk about taking away the importance of their livelihood.

And I wonder why the member opposite is choosing not to entertain that. But I will welcome you—

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

Order. Order.

**MLA Bereza:** These are people's lives, Honourable Speaker. We're not talking hypotheticals or legislation; we're talking about the lives who have chosen, of all the places in the world to come to, Manitoba, home, or at least they tried to.

This minister's response to get on board or get out: this is not leadership, this is not compassion and it's certainly not becoming a minister of the Crown.

Out of respect for all of these applicants, this minister must resign today.

**Mr. Kostyshyn:** I beg to differ with the member opposite. I've known the Minister of Immigration and her family for a lot of years, even in my previous time of existence in the government of Manitoba.

And for those accusations to be brought forward, I would challenge the member opposite to go out and ask the general public of the importance of what this minister has done for the province of Manitoba and what her family has done and what the culture has done for the province of Manitoba.

I beg to differ with the members opposite and show some respect to our minister to deal with the—

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

### **Government Borrowing and Spending Provincial Debt Level Concerns**

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** Honourable Speaker, as we've already heard today, this NDP Premier has no plan to reduce the debt from the backs of Manitobans.

\* (14:30)

In fact, they are planning to borrow more and more, adding \$5 billion to net debt by next spring. Total public debt will be over \$40,000 per Manitoban by next year.

How is this new NDP debt going to affect our credit rating in four years and will Manitobans be—paying even more interest to bankers in Toronto and New York when this Premier (Mr. Kinew) and Finance Minister are done?

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families):** Miigwech to my critic for the question. It does allow me to put on the record some of the good things that we're doing in Budget 2024.

In fact, the member opposite hasn't even asked me one single question on the good work that we're doing in respect of families in our budget. So I do want to take this opportunity to put some of that on the record.

This year, we are implementing a \$20-million fund that will flow through the Women and Gender Equity to support an MMIWG2S strategy.

I will—also want to put on the record that in the last six months since we've been—we formed government, that member opposite hasn't gotten up once in this House to ask about—

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

The honourable member for Midland, on a supplementary question.

**Mrs. Stone:** Honourable Speaker, every time I've asked a question from this minister, all we get is yelling and shouting and attacking. Still no answers from this Premier and this NDP minister.

At the rate of spending under this NDP Finance Minister, Manitobans will have more than \$80 billion in debt by the end of their mandate. That's \$40,000 in debt per Manitoban. This will rise to \$54,000 for every Manitoban living today.

The Premier needs to stop listening to Justin Trudeau. Budgets do not balance themselves. This Finance Minister and Premier need to actually propose a plan to get us to balance and to start paying down the debt that they've created.

What is their plan? What are they telling the credit rating agencies and why won't they tell Manitobans the truth about their borrowing and spending plans?

**MLA Fontaine:** So, as I was saying, Budget 2024 is also investing \$2.7 million towards the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. Again, I want to put on the record that the member opposite has not asked me one single question in respect of gender-based violence. Considering that Manitoba has some of the highest levels, you would think that she would have made that a priority, but she didn't.

We've also invested in 20—Budget 2024 \$1.4 million to the Sexual Assault Crisis Response and Healing programs with Ka Ni Kanichihk, HSC and Klinik doing wraparound supports for those Manitobans that are facing sexual—

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

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

**Mrs. Stone:** Sounds like this NDP government is taking a playbook from Selinger. Every year, Selinger would spend more than budgeted and end up bigger and bigger deficits and more public debt that was saddled on the backs of hard-working Manitobans.

This Premier is jeopardizing our credit rating and mortgaging the future of all Manitobans. This will impact investment and job creation of people looking to spend money here in our province.

What is this Finance Minister telling the credit rating agencies and what is their plan to get us out of deficit and out of debt and stop putting the debt on the backs of hard-working Manitobans?

**MLA Fontaine:** So, to continue along with the good work that we're doing, we've invested \$20 million in funding for Community Living disABILITY Services and Children's disABILITY Services. Also, Honourable Speaker, another question that my critic has never once gotten up to ask me about: we have also committed to free contraceptives for all Manitobans. We've doubled the fertility treatment tax credit and we've doubled the prenatal benefit to \$162.

As well, Honourable Speaker, we've increased \$1.2 million to Manitoba Possible, including Manitoba Possible's wheelchair repair programs; something they could care less about.

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

### **City of Brandon Operating Funding**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** It was rich to hear the Premier pretend that Brandon has not been on the forefront of our questions in this House. But I do understand your—or, his confusion, since his entire Cabinet sits and reads from prepared statements rather than listens to the questions.

So I ask the member for Brandon East (Mr. Simard) a question that he's dodged so far: When can Brandon expect the other \$1.75 million in annual funding that is our fair share?

**The Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Justice.  
[interjection]

Order.

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** You know—think we're—I think we're getting the sense that not only the Finance critic over there didn't have a chance to read and comprehend the budget, but the member opposite may not have caught on either.

The member for Brandon West should know very clearly that funding for Brandon, along with all municipalities across the province, has actually increased this year for the first time in seven and a half years. And that funding was asked for by AMM. Year after year, this government went to their convention, they ignored AMM.

We'll work with AMM, we'll work with the cities—

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

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

**Mr. Balcaen:** Since the member from Brandon East loves his sports analogies, I would say that's two minutes for delay of game.

Based off the facts—based on the fact we can't get a straight answer to an incredibly simple question—  
[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Balcaen:**—this minister is really just filling space, it seems.

We've continually asked for Brandon to get the respect it deserves, and it's sad that only two thirds of Brandon's MLAs are advocating for the city.

Why does this minister refuse to push for fair funding for Brandon?

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, not only does the member from Brandon West not understand finance, he apparently doesn't understand hockey either, because it's in fact his party that's been holding up legislation in this Legislature rather than getting to work.

But the reality is, is of course we respect and we work with the good people of Brandon. We meet with the mayor on a regular basis, we were—have nothing but glowing quotes and reviews from the current chief of police over in Brandon. And in fact, we've increased our funding significantly, by over \$300,000 specifically for crime and police funding.

We on this side of the House are standing with the people of Brandon, standing for community safety all across this province.

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

**Mr. Balcaen:** Even though I only get 45 seconds, I'd love the time to spend speaking about all of the great things that this side of the House did for Brandon while in government.

So—must understand that there'd been underfunding, cancelling of new schools, cancelling of daycare spaces, calling a moonscape a repaired road; this minister has done nothing to advocate for our community.

Why has this minister sold out to Brandon as soon as he got housing allowance in Winnipeg?

**The Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Justice.  
[interjection]

Order.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Let's talk about this member's record in Brandon. Over his time as police chief, a 17 per cent increase in reported assault, 43 per cent increase in sexual assault, 31 per cent increase in frauds, 80 per cent increase in offensive weapon crime. Violent crime went up by 29 per cent.

And what did the member for Brandon West say at the time? He said, when he was police chief, you know, while BPS had the authority to lay charges under provincial regulations, they didn't have the necessary resources to follow up on all complaints.

Why didn't they have the necessary rebates—why didn't they have the proper resources? It's because this member stood with a party that didn't fund the police, didn't fund Brandon and still won't stand up for the city of Brandon.

### **Violent Incidents at Children's ER Use of Institutional Safety Officers**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Situations involving children and youth presenting violent behaviours has caused incredibly dangerous situations and seems to be happening more and more often. We are seeing this escalating rapidly at the children's ER over the past few months.

\* (14:40)

Does this minister believe that using institutional safety officers is going to resolve this problem, or does the minister have any further plans in mind?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I appreciate that really important question from the member in terms of—in regards to safety at emergency rooms.

You know, the previous government had seven and a half years to take action and to take measures to make sure that health-care workers and that patients alike are safe at hospitals.

Our government, one of the first things we did, knowing the safety concerns were there, was to action institutional safety officers being on-site at Health Sciences Centre by the spring. That has happened; institutional safety officers are on campus at HSC; the training is ongoing, and they're rolling out across the province.

It's also important for folks to note that investing in front-line capacity decreases pressures in ERs, which improves safety and security concerns as well. We've taken steps; there's more to do that—

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

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

#### **Increase in Child Psychiatric Unit Patients Bed Capacity—Expansion Inquiry**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** The Manitoba Nurses Union has sounded the alarm about children arriving on a Friday needing to be admitted to the psychiatric unit, only to learn that the child psychiatric unit only has a total of 14 beds. If these beds are full on a Friday, these children and families have nowhere to turn.

Child psych has been having to admit over capacity the past few months to accommodate the growing need for young people with mental health challenges.

In light of the increasing number of children seeking mental health services, does this minister have any plans to expand the current number of psych beds in the children's psychiatric ward?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** Again, a really important question from the member opposite. As somebody who worked on the front lines as an addictions specialist and worked with youth and their families in the area of psychiatric health, I take this issue very, very seriously.

We are adding capacity across the system. We've invested in this budget, over 150 beds being added to the system. Unfortunately, the previous government

cut over 500 throughout the province in their two terms of government.

We are adding psychiatric bed capacity to Health Sciences Centre to the tune of nine beds, but there's more work for us to be doing on this front.

We've been working with the Minister of Mental Health on this front, working with our partners at the Children's Hospital, and we're going to keep taking steps forward in the right direction for families.

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

#### **Youth Mental Health Strategy Request for Government to Implement**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** The number of children presenting with mental health challenges highlights the need that a youth mental health strategy is desperately needed.

Does the Minister of Health, Seniors and active living agree with the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth and many others that a youth mental health strategy is needed, and will they commit to implementing the strategy today?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I really appreciate that question. Youth mental health is an area of high priority for our government.

I know that the Minister responsible for Mental Health (Ms. Smith) is working every single day to improve capacity in this area across our health-care system, actively working with families and partners throughout the system to improve access to services.

I also want to note that you have to take a holistic approach to this kind of care, which is why our government's investment to make sure there's a universal nutrition program is an important, fundamental step to supporting kids having better outcomes and supporting their families as well.

Again, our budget makes significant investments across the system. That work is ongoing. We're doing it alongside our partners throughout health care.

#### **Victoria General Hospital New ER Announcement**

**MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson):** Honourable Speaker, the PC government closed emergency department after emergency department, leaving thousands of Manitobans without immediate access to emergency services.



The Victoria General Hospital was one of many sites that faced emergency closures under their government, causing wait times to climb, workers to burn out and patients to suffer.

But today we took a major step in undoing their damage.

Can the Minister of Health tell the House about the announcement made today at the Victoria General Hospital and about how we're undoing the damage done by the previous government?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I thank my friend, the MLA for Radisson, for that great question.

I am so happy to share that we stood today with the Premier (Mr. Kinew), with colleagues on this side of the House, with many, many health-care workers, to announce the new emergency department at the Victoria General Hospital, the reopening of the Mature Women's Centre and the establishment of the Anne Oake family treatment centre.

This \$1.5-million investment fulfills a commitment that we've been talking about for a long time. Step by step, we're moving toward undoing damage that the previous government did.

This announcement sends a clear message to Manitobans: you deserve quality health care where and when you need it, and you deserve it close to home here in Manitoba.

### **Genesis House—Expansion of Services Request for Government to Support**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** Genesis House is a shelter located in Winkler that provides a safe space for women and children. Their goal is that people in south-central Manitoba will be able to live their lives free of domestic violence. They offer an extensive list of programming—of services that include support groups, counselling, a 24-7 crisis line and much more.

They have purchased land for a new transitional housing shelter to further expand their services to women and children fleeing domestic violence.

Can the minister share what support is being offered to Genesis House by the Province in this last budget?

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families):** I want to say miigwech to the member opposite for that important question.

Our government is supporting those that are on the front lines that are working with some of our most vulnerable women and families, ensuring that they get the resources and the supports that they need and that they certainly deserve. As I stated earlier, in my earlier question, we've invested \$2.7 million towards the national action plan ending gender-based violence.

Those dollars will support a—numerous, a myriad of programs and services that are coming in to wage for support, as we, again—

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

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

**Mrs. Hiebert:** This new project will include 25 units with a—and a variety of suites that will be able to accommodate families and help shelter, support reunification of women and children in care. Southern Manitoba is desperately in need of this type of transitional housing and support for women and children fleeing domestic violence.

The current shelter has been at capacity for all of 2024. The shelter has said they are—need significant financial investment to get shovels in the ground.

So I ask: Can the minister inform the House on how she plans to support the shelter in rural Manitoba, specifically Genesis House, and meet the needs of women and children in crisis?

**MLA Fontaine:** Our department officials have been having discussions with Genesis House, and really I just want to take a moment to lift up the very important and critical work that Genesis House does on behalf of all Manitobans, to offer that immediate support and that transitional housing that's so desperately needed for Manitoban—Manitoba mothers and women.

Again, our department's been working alongside them and having some of those discussions. What we've found in the last many years, under the previous failed government, is that there wasn't a significant increase to budgets, and there certainly wasn't any commitment or increase to dollars in respect of transitional housing for women across the province—

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

The time for oral questions has expired.

### **Speaker's Ruling**

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

Order, please.

During routine proceedings on March 19, 2024, the honourable member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) raised a matter of privilege alleging that during a debate in private members' business on March 14, 2024, the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) revealed details of a bill in the Chamber before the bill had been introduced in the House and before members of the Assembly had the opportunity to review it.

\* (14:50)

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The member concluded his remarks by moving: That the honourable Speaker immediately direct the government to no longer use debate to discuss bills that have not been introduced, and secondly, to immediately refer this matter to the Rules committee.

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

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

On the condition of timeliness, the honourable member for Riding Mountain indicated that this was his first opportunity to raise this matter after taking time to research. Given that the incident in question occurred on March 14 and that the member raised it on March 19, five calendar days and two sitting days later, I would respectfully disagree with his contention that he raised it—this matter—at his earliest opportunity, and I would rule that he did not meet the threshold of timeless—timeliness.

Despite that failing, the member did raise some important points in his submission. Accordingly, for the record, I will address the question of whether a prima facie case of privilege has been established.

The member quoted Hansard from the morning of Thursday, March 14, when the member for Seine River stated that there was a bill on notice which would hold polluters accountable and require them to notify all affected parties when there is a spill.

The question of whether or not this is general or detailed information about a bill is, of course, subjective. In my analysis, the first part of this quote, that the bill will hold polluters accountable, is quite general, whereas

the information about notifying the affected parties could be considered more detailed.

Former House of Commons Speaker Peter Milliken offered some useful information on the distinction between general and detailed information in this context. As has been referenced in rulings by previous Manitoba Speakers, in 2003, Speaker Milliken ruled that a significant burden of proof existed in order to achieve a finding of a prima facie breach of privilege in relation to a claim of disclosure of a bill to the media before distribution to members of Parliament. He stated that unless there is some considerable evidence that the minister has made available copies of the bill to someone else, it's hard for the Chair to find any breach of privileges of the House.

The primary Canadian procedural authority on privilege also has some useful information to share in this regard. On page 224 of the second edition of *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, Joseph Maingot advises that a complaint that a member—minister of the Crown has made a statement outside the House rather than in the House may amount to a grievance against the government, but in the absence of an order in the House forbidding such activity, there is no personal or corporate privilege that has been breached in the doing.

On June 2, 1983, former Manitoba Speaker Walding ruled that such a complaint may be a matter of discourtesy, but it is not a matter of privilege. Manitoba Speakers Phillips, Rocan, Hickes, Reid and Driedger have all supported this sentiment in subsequent rulings.

With all of this in mind, I am ruling that a prima facie case of a breach of privilege has not been established in this case. As your Speaker, however, I do feel the need to share a further thought with the House on this matter.

The underlying principle in this discussion is the primacy and authority of the Assembly. We all share a duty to carefully consider the business before us so that we may make informed decisions on behalf of our constituents. Any matter destined for consideration by this House, including legislation, should be introduced and explained here first before being shared with the public or the media. This has been the practice of this place for many decades.

That being said, in the last 20 years, it has become more commonplace for members on both sides of the House to discuss, in general or conceptual terms, potential legislation outside the House in advance of

introduction. This has led to a gradual but noticeable erosion in respecting the primacy and authority of the House in this regard. I believe this is a crucial point to make in the context of this ruling, as well as the other matters of privilege which have been raised recently regarding similar circumstance.

Over the past two decades in this House, MLAs from both the New Democratic Party and the Progressive Conservative Party have raised a comparable number of matters of privilege alleging that members of the other party breached the privileges of the House by sharing information about a bill before it had been introduced in the House. In each and every one of these instances, the Speaker ruled that a prima facie case of privilege had not been established.

Given that members of both parties have at one time expressed the sentiment that disclosing any information about a bill before introduction is inappropriate, perhaps members on either side of this House should govern themselves accordingly. Further, if members wish to settle this once and for all, the issue could be referred to a Standing Committee on Rules of the House where a clearer practice could be considered and adopted.

Thank you for your attention to this ruling.

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

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

#### Voice Vote

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of sustaining the ruling, 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:** Hi, can I request a recorded vote, please?

**The Speaker:** The member—*[interjection]*

Order, please. Order, please. Order, please.

The member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler) will come to order, please.

A recorded vote has been called. Call in the members.

\* (15:00)

Order, please.

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

#### Division

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

#### Ayes

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

#### Nays

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

\* (16:00)

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 29, Nays 19.

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

\* \* \*

**The Speaker:** Returning to business.

#### PETITIONS

##### Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices

**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:

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

(2) Staple food products such as baked goods, margarine and other oils, dairy products and eggs have seen some of the largest price increases.

Agriculture and the—sorry.

(3) Agriculture and the agri-food sectors contribute close to 10 per cent of Manitoba's GDP.

(4) There are increased costs added at every step of the process for Manitoba's agriculture producers. In order to make 18 cents from one loaf of bread worth of wheat, farmers are paying carbon tax at every stage of production to grow the crop and get it to market.

Grain drying, fertilizer and chemical production, mushroom farming, hog operations, the cost of heating a livestock barn, machine shops and utility buildings are all examples of how the carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels cost farmers and consumers more each and every year.

(6) In food production there are currently no viable alternatives to natural gas and propane. The carbon tax takes money away from farmers, making them less profitable and hindering rural agricultural producers' ability to invest in upgrades and improve efficiency while reducing emissions.

(7) The provincial government neglected farmers in the six-month fuel tax holiday until the opposition critic and local stakeholder groups called for their inclusion.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to call on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels and farm inputs for Manitoba agriculture producers and the agri-food sector to decrease the costs of putting food on the table for Manitoba consumers.

This petition is signed by—let's just go with many, many, many Manitobans.

### **Removal of Federal Carbon Tax**

**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) 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.

Pardon me.

(2) Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with high-efficiency furnaces, 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.

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

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

\* (16:10)

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Theresa Jaenen, Mike Thoreau [*phonetic*], Donna Fraser and many, many Manitobans.

### **Louise Bridge**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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.

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, the 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.

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) 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 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. 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 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; and

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

And this petition is signed by Errol Glenn Dickson, Ed Grenier, Todd Labelle and many, many, many other Manitobans.

**The Speaker:** The honourable Opposition House Leader, on House business?

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** On House business.

**The Speaker:** The honourable Opposition House Leader.

**Mr. Johnson:** Is there leave to interrupt petitions to give royal assent to Bill 200 and immediately return to petitions once royal assent is complete?

**The Speaker:** Is there leave of the House—order, please.

Is there leave of the House to interrupt petitions to allow for royal assent of Bill 200 and then return to petitions at the conclusion of royal assent? [*Agreed*]

Petitions are therefore paused, and we'll prepare for the LG.

\* (16:20)

## ROYAL ASSENT

**Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Cam Steel):** Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

*Her Honour Anita R. Neville, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the throne, the Speaker addressed Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor in the following words:*

**The Speaker:** Your Honour:

At this sitting, the Legislative Assembly has passed a certain bill that I ask Your Honour to give assent to.

**Clerk Assistant (Ms. Vanessa Gregg):**

Bill 200—The Firefighters Recognition Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended); Loi sur la Journée de reconnaissance des pompiers (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** In His Majesty's name, Her Honour assents to this bill.

*Her Honour was then pleased to retire.*

\* \* \*

\* (16:30)

**The Speaker:** We will now—*[interjection]*

Please be seated.

As previously agreed, we will now resume with reading of petitions.

## PETITIONS

*(Continued)*

### Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

Number 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.

Number 2. Manitoba Hydro estimates—thank you—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.

Number 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.

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

Number 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.

Number 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.

Number 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 Irene Abraham, Patricia Walsh, Janice Sayer and many other fine Manitobans.

### Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices

**Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte):** 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) In 2022—two-zero-two-two—according to Statistics Canada, there was an 11.4 per cent increase in food prices.

\* (16:40)

Number 2—2. Staple food products, such as baked goods, margarine and other oils, dairy products and eggs have seen—they have seen—some of the largest—largest—price increases.

(3) Agriculture and the agri-food sectors—sorry, will repeat that, sorry. Agriculture and the agri-food sectors contribute close to 10 per cent of Manitoba's GDP. Ten per cent of Manitoba's GDP.

4. There are increased costs added at every step of the process for Manitoba's agriculture—sorry, I'll go back and repeat that. Sorry, I got thrown off.

4.—(4) there are increased costs added at every step of the process for Manitoba's agriculture producers. In order to make 18 cents—zero dot one eight, 18 cents, sorry—from one bread loaf worth of wheat, farmers are paying carbon tax at every stage of production to grow the crop and get it to market.

(5) Grain drying. Grain drying, fertilizer and chemical production, mushroom farming, hog operations, the cost of heating—the cost of heating—a livestock barn, machine shops and utility buildings are all examples of how the carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels cost farmers and consumers more each year. Each year.

(6) In food production there are currently no—there are currently no—viable alternatives to natural gas and propane. The carbon tax makes—the carbon tax takes money away from farmers, making them less profitable and hindering rural agricultural producers' ability to invest in upgrades and improve efficiency while reducing emissions.

(7) The provincial government neglected farmers in the six-month fuel tax holiday until opposition critic and local stakeholder groups called for their inclusion.

Number 8. It's bad. It's bad. Other—sorry.

(8) Other provincial jurisdictions and leaders have taken action—have taken action—on calling on the federal government—on the federal government to remove—I can't repeat, well, yes. Sorry.

**The Speaker:** I'd ask the member to read what's on the page and not keep repeating parts of it to try and make emphasis. Just read it as it's written, please.

**Mr. Khan:** I'm just asking the Honourable Speaker if I can just go back. I think was on point 8, just go—I don't know—remember where I stopped on point 8. So just asking the Honourable Speaker if I can go back and just start out with No. 8.

**The Speaker:** Yes.

The honourable member for Fort Whyte.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to call on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels and farm inputs for Manitoba agriculture producers and the agri-food sector to decrease the cost of putting food—

**An Honourable Member:** Putting.

**Mr. Khan:** Putting, apologize—putting food on the table for Manitoba consumers.

\* (16:50)

Number 1, the full name, Don Bowes; No. 2, Jonathan Damon; No. 3, Lauren Hammond and many, many, many, many Manitobans.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Yes, I was seeking leave if the member for Interlake-Gimli can read the petition from the honourable member—on behalf of the honourable member from Turtle Mountain.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave for the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli to read the petition on behalf of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Piwniuk)?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** Leave has been denied.

**Louise Bridge**

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** 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:

**An Honourable Member:** Just given up, huh?

**Mr. Nesbitt:** One—I ain't giving up.

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 has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

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) The City tethered the Louise Bridge replacement issue to its new transportation master plan and eastern corridor project. Its recommendations have now been identified—have now identified, sorry, the location of the new Louise bridge to be placed just to the west of the current bridge, not to the east as 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 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.

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

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Johnson:** Can you please seek if there's leave of the House for the member for Interlake-Gimli to read the petition on behalf of the member, the honourable almighty member for Steinbach?

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

Is there leave of the House for the member from Interlake-Gimli to read the petition on behalf of the member for Steinbach? Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** Leave has been denied.

### Medical Assistance in Dying

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** I'll struggle through after capturing—or, losing my voice at the game last night.

Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for the petition:

(1) Beginning March 17, 2024, persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

Signed by many Manitobans.

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The hour being 5 o'clock, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 tomorrow morning.



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Wednesday, April 24, 2024**

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