



PRAYER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1:30 O'CLOCK P.M.

The following Bills were read a First Time and had their purposes outlined:

(No. 35) – The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months and Related Repeals and Amendments Act/Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs et abrogations et modifications connexes

(Hon. Mr. GOERTZEN)

(No. 233) – The Engineering and Geoscientific Professions Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les ingénieurs et les géoscientifiques

(Mr. WISHART)

Mr. NESBITT, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, presented its Fourth Report, which was read as follows:

Meetings

Your Committee met on April 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 254 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 31)** – The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2022/Loi corrective de 2022
- **Bill (No. 32)** – The Victims' Bill of Rights Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Déclaration des droits des victimes
- **Bill (No. 205)** – The Filipino Heritage Month Act/Loi sur le Mois du patrimoine philippin
- **Bill (No. 223)** – The Ukrainian Heritage Month Act/Loi sur le Mois du patrimoine ukrainien
- **Bill (No. 227)** – The Turban Day Act/Loi sur la Journée du turban

Committee Membership

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020 and subsequently amended, Rule 82(2) was waived for the April 20, 2022 meeting, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

- Mr. BRAR
- Mr. ISLEIFSON
- MLA MARCELINO
- Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE
- Mr. NESBITT
- Mr. SMOOK

Your Committee elected Mr. NESBITT as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE as the Vice-Chairperson.

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record

- Hon. Mr. GOERTZEN
- Ms. LAMOUREUX
- Mr. WASYLIW

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 31)** – The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2022/Loi corrective de 2022

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 32)** – The Victims' Bill of Rights Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Déclaration des droits des victimes

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 205)** – The Filipino Heritage Month Act/Loi sur le Mois du patrimoine philippin

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill with the following amendment:

THAT the preamble of the Bill be amended by adding the following after the fourth paragraph:

AND WHEREAS recognizing the Filipino Community will provide opportunities to educate the public about the contributions of the community and increase public awareness of their role in enhancing Manitoba;

- **Bill (No. 223)** – The Ukrainian Heritage Month Act/Loi sur le Mois du patrimoine ukrainien

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 227)** – The Turban Day Act/Loi sur la Journée du turban

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

On motion of Mr. NESBITT, the Report of the Committee was received.

Hon. Mr. JOHNSTON presented:

Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure 2022-2023 – Departmental Expenditure Estimates –
Seniors and Long-Term Care. (Sessional Paper No. 31)

Hon. Ms. SQUIRES presented:

Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure 2022-2023 – Departmental Expenditure Estimates –
Families. (Sessional Paper No. 32)

Hon. Mr. WHARTON presented:

Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure 2022-2023 – Departmental Expenditure Estimates –
Environment, Climate and Parks. (Sessional Paper No. 33)

Hon. Mr. CULLEN presented:

Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure 2022-2023 – Departmental Expenditure Estimates –
Economic Development, Investment and Trade. (Sessional Paper No. 34)

Madam Speaker presented:

Auditor General's Report Follow-up of Previously Issued Audit Recommendations dated
April, 2022. (Sessional Paper No. 35)

Auditor General's Report Manitoba's Implementation of The Path to Reconciliation Act dated April, 2022.

(Sessional Paper No. 36)

Hon. Ms. GORDON, the Minister of Health, made a statement regarding the Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil Campaign.

MLA ASAGWARA and, by leave, Hon. Mr. GERRARD commented on the statement.

Hon. Mr. SMITH (Lagimodière), the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage, made a statement regarding Yazidi New Year.

Mr. KINEW and, by leave, Ms. LAMOUREUX commented on the statement.

Pursuant to Rule 27(1), Hon. Mrs. GUILLEMARD, Ms. LATHLIN, Hon. Ms. GORDON and Messrs. WASYLIW and LAMONT made Members' Statements.

Following Oral Questions, Madam Speaker made the following ruling:

Prior to Routine Proceedings on Thursday, April 7, 2022, the Honourable Official Opposition House Leader raised a Matter of Privilege regarding the Honourable First Minister organizing events outside of the House that on several occasions coincided with Oral Questions. The Official Opposition House Leader claimed these actions served to avoid accountability and that this lack of participation in Question Period makes it harder to keep the Government accountable. At the conclusion of their remarks, the Official Opposition House Leader moved "*THAT the matter of the Premier's failure to participate in Question Period be condemned, and that this matter be referred to a Standing Committee of this House for review.*"

The Honourable Government House Leader also offered contributions to the Chair, and noted that it is up to the discretion of the Government to decide which Minister will answer a question. He further noted that from time to time Ministers, including the First Minister, have duties that need to be attended to outside of the Chamber.

The Honourable Member for River Heights shared the observation that in his experience, there have been occasions when Premiers were not in attendance during Oral Questions for one reason or another. He also opined that such an absence is not determined by a Matter of Privilege or a Point of Order.

I took the matter under advisement in order to consult the procedural authorities.

There are two conditions that must be satisfied in order for a Matter raised to be ruled in order as a *prima facie* case of Privilege – was the issue raised at the earliest opportunity, and was sufficient evidence provided to support the Member’s claim that their privileges or the privileges of the House were breached?

On the first issue of whether the issue was raised at the earliest opportunity, it is difficult to make a determination that timeliness was met, as the Honourable Official Opposition House Leader referred to this non-participation in Oral Questions happening on several occasions but did not identify any specific dates. Therefore, it is difficult to assess whether the test of timeliness has been met, and I am unable to do so.

On the second issue, whether sufficient evidence was provided, I must advise the House that a lack of participation in Oral Questions by the First Minister or any other Minister is not a violation of the privileges of the House or of individual Members.

Beauchesne’s Sixth Edition, citation 31(2) advises that the failure of a Minister to answer a question may not be raised as a question of privilege. In addition, as noted in Beauchesne citation 31(4), the absence of a Minister, such as from a Committee studying Estimates would be a grievance but not a question of privilege.

Further, as Bosc and Gagnon explain on page 127 of the Third Edition of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, although there is a collective privilege of the House regarding the authority of the House to maintain the attendance and service of its Members, it refers to the privilege of exemption from jury duty and exemption from being summoned to appear as a witness.

Bosc and Gagnon further state on page 127:

“The Standing Orders of the House of Commons provide that every Member is bound to attend the sittings of the House unless otherwise occupied with parliamentary activities or functions or on public or official business. Because the House sits during prime working hours, scheduling conflicts with other parliamentary or official commitments (for example committee meetings) may prevent Members from being present in the Chamber. In practice, considerable leniency is exercised in this regard. Indeed, the Chair has often discouraged any references to the absences of any individual Member.”

On the issue of the operations of Oral Questions, questions are technically put to the Government as a whole, and it is the prerogative of the Government to decide which Minister will answer the questions. Additionally, each Ministerial portfolio has through Order in Council assignments a listing of first and second Acting Ministers who can answer questions or act if the Minister responsible is not able to do so. With this statutory provision in place, it should be possible to receive information and answers to questions even in the absence of the Minister responsible.

I therefore rule that although this issue may be considered discourteous by some Honourable Members, there is no *prima facie* case of a breach of parliamentary privilege.

In accordance with Rule 33(8), the Opposition House Leader announced that the Private Members' Resolution titled "Calling on the Provincial Government to Resolve Issues Afflicting Northern Manitoba" will be considered on the next Thursday of Private Members' Business.

The House resumed the Debate on the Proposed Motion of Hon. Mr. FRIESEN:

THAT this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government.

And the proposed amendment moved by Mr. KINEW as follows:

THAT the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after "House" and substituting:

therefore regrets that this budget neglects the priorities of Manitobans by:

- a) continuing with Brian Pallister's plan and failed approach to health care, education, reconciliation and the economy; and
- b) taking Brian Pallister's failed plan for health care cuts from Winnipeg to rural Manitoba; and
- c) instituting a de facto cut to hospitals, emergency rooms and clinics across Winnipeg, Brandon, Swan River, Dauphin, Selkirk, Gimli, Thompson, Flin Flon, The Pas, Churchill and many other rural, Northern and remote communities across the province; and
- d) offering more empty promises to fix the extremely high surgical and diagnostic caseload backlog that has only grown larger because of the inaction and refusal to work with front line workers and invest in real solutions; and
- e) refusing to stop the practice of sending seniors hundreds of kilometres away from home for health care because the PC cuts have removed capacity from the system; and
- f) failing to increase the amount of personal care home beds as Manitoba now has fewer personal care home beds today than when the Progressive Conservatives took power in 2016; and
- g) refusing to offer a comprehensive workforce agenda for the health care sector or for reversing their cut to health care coverage for International Students in Manitoba; and
- h) failing to present a plan for adult education or other supports for Manitobans;

- i) rejecting evidence of the effectiveness of safe consumption sites to address the addictions and mental health crisis as the province experienced the highest number of overdose deaths last year in its history; and
- j) continuing to underfund, underspend and cut the K-12 education system leading to larger classes and fewer supports in the classroom for students; and
- k) offering no plan to create the spaces needed in the early learning and child care sector, no real capital program or a workforce strategy to staff the sector; and
- l) failing to implement a universal school breakfast program to ensure every child succeeds in the classroom; and
- m) refusing to provide products in schools, to make sure no student is subjected to period poverty; and
- n) failing to provide for regular families as the cost of everyday essentials including electricity and natural gas bills increase; and
- o) making permanent a renters tax hike in the midst of the highest inflation in decades; and
- p) making life more unaffordable by increasing tuition for colleges and universities by millions while continuing to freeze support for post-secondary institutions across the province; and
- q) refusing to help municipalities deliver their essential services by not increasing the funding for municipalities for a 6th consecutive year; and
- r) underspending last year's infrastructure budget by nearly \$60 million dollars and freezing the maintenance and repair budget for provincial roads and highways for at least the next three years while refusing to invest in important projects like repairs to Highway 6 or improvements to Chief Peguis Trail; and
- s) continuing to send hundreds of thousands of dollars of Manitobans' money to a Texas based company in order to access our provincial parks while failing to fix the technical failings of the booking system; and
- t) ignoring the climate crisis by not offering a real plan or targets to address it, underfunding programs meant to support cleaner energy and not adopting measures to support transition like updated Building Codes; and
- u) failing to offer leadership or a plan to grow Manitoba's economy for the next ten years; and
- v) refusing to offer a real plan to create good jobs in rural and Northern Manitoba or to invest in the mining sector; and

- w) jeopardizing access to rural broadband by pursuing privatization and failing to provide investments to ensure rural and northern communities can get connected to highspeed internet; and
- x) ignoring the needs of small businesses who have been left behind by this Provincial Government while it rewards its friends and other well connected insiders; and
- y) lacking any real action on reconciliation with Indigenous peoples; and
- z) refusing to engage in good faith negotiation with rights holders like the Manitoba Métis Federation; and
- aa) failing to offer a plan to build or repair social housing in Manitoba, housing for seniors or a comprehensive plan to address homelessness; and
- bb) refusing to offer real support for settlement services for people fleeing the War in Ukraine while at the same time cutting funding for programs such as ‘Immigration pathways’; and
- cc) cutting funding to the Fair Registration Office after having failed to support Internationally Educated Nurses and other professionals in having their credentials recognized in Manitoba; and
- dd) failing to address the concerns of producers, including their concerns regarding increased lease costs, a failing crown lands program and closed Agriculture Offices across the province; and
- ee) rejecting the need to provide proper salaries for working people, failing to properly address the needs of workers in sectors like Community Living Disability Services or Home Care workers or other health care workers and refusing to address the challenges experienced by women, BIPOC and other marginalized groups to fully participate in a pandemic recovery; and
- ff) failing to learn the lessons of the pandemic by further cutting healthcare funding, refusing to release up to date data about the spread of COVID-19 and refusing to call for an independent investigation into the Provincial Government’s pandemic response.

As a consequence, the Provincial Government has thereby lost the confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

And the proposed sub-amendment moved by Mr. LAMONT as follows:

THAT the amendment be amended by adding after clause (ff) the following clauses:

- gg) failing to make new investments in improving the lives and abilities people of Manitoba, choosing instead to expand existing inequities and selecting the status quo over growth and innovation; and

- hh) failing to increase funding for the Emergency Measures Organization, despite two years of historic crises, including pandemics, fires and floods; and
- ii) failing to provide any sort of a plan for individuals seeking to escape wars in Ukraine and Afghanistan by partnering with local organizations to ensure a proper and smooth resettlement transition to Manitoba; and
- jj) failing to commit to equitable health and education funding for all Manitobans, choosing instead to continue concentrating services in Winnipeg; and
- kk) failing to provide adequate relief and support to smaller enterprises in Manitoba and mom and pop businesses who are struggling to survive after two years of pandemic struggles; and
- ll) failing to create an independent, non-political means of distributing \$50 million in venture capital, which is essential to establishing business confidence; and
- mm) failing to pursue fiscally sound measures, choosing to issue cheques with no lasting economic benefit that will have to be paid back by future generations, while shunning meaningful investments in growth and stability; and
- nn) failing to make desperately needed new investments in education, and in reducing barriers and obstacles that block Manitobans from meeting their full potential; and
- oo) failing to make proactive investments to avoid health concerns especially areas such as diabetes supplies and medications that can prevent death and disability; and
- pp) failing to provide a plan of relief for the thousands of Manitobans that have waited weeks, months, and sometimes years on a waiting list to have necessary medical needs addressed; and
- qq) failing to address the significant impact COVID-19 has had on the mental well being of Manitobans and the development of children by providing a plan that focuses on mental wellness and brain health to ensure that Manitobans are living healthy, fulfilled lives; and
- rr) failing to ensure children attending Manitoba schools receive a minimum of one meal or snack each day; and

- ss) failing to recognize that health care reforms to date have been a disaster, and choosing to build new hospitals across Manitoba while failing to recruit and hire enough hire doctors, nurses and other health professionals to staff existing facilities; and
- tt) failing to provide a seamless, integrated and effective approach to addictions where people can get the help they need at any time of day or night, instead of through RAAM clinics which have limited hours and therefore limited effectiveness; and
- uu) failing to close the wage gap to ensure that rural paramedics are given a wage incentive to live and work in rural Manitoba; and
- vv) failing to present a plan to address economic issues while at the same time making Manitoba more sustainable by making drastic reductions in net carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide emissions; and
- ww) failing to allow Manitobans to take steps to reducing their own carbon footprint by following the Federal Government's lead by providing rebates for the purchase of electric vehicles, major retrofits to existing buildings and adaptations of agriculture.

And the debate continuing on the sub-amendment,

And MLA LINDSEY, Hon. Mr. CULLEN, Ms. LAMOUREUX, Hon. Mr. FIELDING, MLA MARCELINO and Hon. Mr. GOERTZEN having spoken.

And Mr. SALA speaking at 5:00 p.m. The debate was allowed to remain in their name.

The House then adjourned at 5:00 p.m. until 10:00 a.m. Friday, April 22, 2022.

Hon. Myrna DRIEDGER,
Speaker.