

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

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

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 21, 2018

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

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

Please be seated. Good afternoon, everybody.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**Madam Speaker:** Introduction of bills? Committee reports?

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to table the following reports.

Pursuant to The Statutes and Regulations Act, a copy of each regulation registered under that act after the last regulation tabled in this House and more than 14 days before the commencement of the session—the Annual Report of the Provincial Court of Manitoba for this fiscal year, 2016-17; Annual Report for the Manitoba Office of the Commissioner Law Enforcement Review Agency for the fiscal year of 2017; Annual Report for the Independent Investigation Unit of Manitoba for the fiscal year of 2017; and the annual report for the independent investigation union of Manitoba for the fiscal year of 2017.

\* \* \*

**Madam Speaker:** Ministerial statements.

The honourable Minister for Sustainable Development, and I would indicate that the required—*[interjection]*

### MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Assiniboia, on a matter of privilege?

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Yes, Madam Speaker, the—this is the first opportunity I've had to say anything since the Throne Speech, obviously.

The issue is the—it's a bit of a tempest in a teapot, but—is the tense that was used in the Throne Speech. It is customary that a Throne Speech be done in the third person: your government, for example. Yesterday it was done in the first tense, like: me, I, my.

And it—this brings up two issues, Madam Speaker. First, it's not consistent with tradition. But second, if we criticize the Throne Speech with that tense, are we then criticizing Her Majesty using that pronoun?

And there's a reason why the third tense is used. There are rules in the—that govern this place. I just want to make sure that none of us are going to be caught up in a—any kind of, perhaps, any kind of difficulty as the debate and replies to the Throne Speech are 'undercurred'.

So, I, seconded by my colleague in Maples, move that a committee—or that the Speaker report back on the feasibility or to confirm that their—that the Throne Speech was in a proper text—or in the proper tense—proper pronoun was used, and that no member of the Assembly will be considered speaking against Her Majesty when replying to the speech of the throne. Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** I would ask the member that it—as it is a rule of the House, as well, that the motion needs to be sent up in writing. *[interjection]*

Okay, the member has indicated that he would provide that.

Before recognizing any other members to speak, I would remind the House that remarks at this time by honourable members are limited to strictly 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. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader):** I won't dispute the fact that the matter may have been raised at the earliest opportunity by the member. I don't believe it raises—rises to a prima facie case, Madam Speaker.

I take this as a good sign that the only criticism that this member, and I assume all opposition, could come up with is that the tense of the Throne Speech wasn't to their liking. That is an excellent sign that the Throne Speech was well received by all members of the House.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** I, too, will not take issue or try to defend whether or not this is the member's first opportunity to bring this forward.

However, I do have to just put on the record, Madam Speaker, that on this side of the House we found lots wrong with the Throne Speech, with or without that very possessive pronouns that were used in the Throne Speech.

Miigwech.

**Madam Speaker:** On this matter of privilege, I would indicate that the member does not have a matter of privilege.

Grammatical issues are not the basis for a matter of privilege, and issues to do with debate and practices and procedures in the House are more relevantly considered points of order, and they are not matters of privilege.

So, respectfully, the member does not have a matter of privilege.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**Madam Speaker:** Moving forward, then, with ministerial statements.

The honourable Minister for Sustainable Development—and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

#### Transgender Day of Remembrance

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for the Status of Women):** I am proud to rise today to acknowledge and commemorate that November 20th is Transgender Day of Remembrance. This day of remembrance is an annual observance that honours the memory of those whose lives have been lost in acts of anti-transgender violence.

This important day was founded in 1999 by transgender advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith, in California, as a vigil to honour the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was killed

in 1998. The vigil commemorated all the transgender people lost to violence since Rita Hester's death and began an important tradition that has become the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance.

\* (13:40)

I wish to share a few words of Gwendolyn Ann Smith regarding the importance and need for this date: The Transgender Day of Remembrance seeks to highlight the losses we face due to anti-transgender bigotry and violence. I am no stranger to the need to fight for our rights, and the right to simply exist is first and foremost. With so many seeking to erase transgender people—sometimes in the most brutal ways possible—it is vitally important that those we lose are remembered and that we continue to fight for justice. I know many of us are familiar with Gwendolyn's words, but they certainly bear repeating.

I also want to recognize those strong Manitobans who have made the hard decision to live their truth. We stand by you and with you today and every day.

As the Manitoba government, we are pleased to have employee networks such as WAVE, which stands for We are All Valuable and Equal, to help foster understanding and inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity diversity in our workplace. The network is open to all interested Manitoba government employees, including those who identify—self-identify along the LGBTQ\* continuum, as well as allies.

I am also proud to announce that online training is also being developed for employees of the Manitoba government on the topic, called supporting transgender and gender-diverse Manitobans: a conversation. This new online course will be accompanied by a group discussion guide to assist work groups in debriefing the course content and exploring ways they can apply the learning in their specific work contents.

These are a few initiatives we are doing to ensure for a respectful workplace. And I'd like to thank my colleagues and all Manitobans committed to building a more respectful and diverse society.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** We honour the lives that been lost to transgender-anti violence. In doing so, we must also recognize the many transgender and gender-variant people who have been—who have fallen victim to suicide. This

day of remembrance brings much-needed visibility to a marginalized community.

We are all culpable in this—in the violence that is perpetrated against trans people—because we all participate in a society that allows for bigotry and intolerance to thrive. Today is a promise to change the norms.

While progress has been made in terms of transgender rights, today is a sombre reminder of the work that still needs to be done. Trans people still face discrimination that affects their access to basic necessities like health care, employment, education and housing. They are also disproportionately the victims of violent crime. We need to commit to making our province a safer and more inclusive to people of all gender identities.

Trans people are also often forced into the role of activist simply because nobody is standing up for their rights, so they have to fight for themselves.

As legislators, we all need to support our relatives by shouldering that burden. We need to work in partnership with our trans relatives and thrive—or, strive for justice. We have to step up and educate ourselves as well as the public. It is all of our responsibility to improve transgender rights and to support and uplift their communities.

We have to be loud in our support, otherwise we allow for hatred to fester.

Today, we mourn our relatives who have passed on, we remind ourselves of the violence that trans people have had to endure, and we commit to standing up for our trans relatives until no such violence exists.

Miigwech.

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, the Transgender Day of Remembrance was marked yesterday with an annual memorial service for the victims of anti-transgender violence.

The 368 victims were honoured by the reading aloud of their names by local members of the transgender community to a crowd of over 100 community members and allies at the University of Winnipeg.

To be transgender, even in today's world, means to risk harassment, ridicule, violence and, in many places of the world, death. These forms of prejudice and hate are also more directed at indigenous trans women and women of colour.

There are still victims today who are brutally murdered, some of their names remain unknown, and their murders are rarely solved. All of this creates deep despair in the hearts and minds of their community, which is often their only family.

We are fortunate that there were no murders here in Canada this past year, but it is worth mentioning that even with all of our protections, harassment and risks of violence are still everyday occurrences for transgender, non-binary and other gender non-conforming people.

Madam Speaker, politicians from our neighbouring countries to the south and from our neighbouring province of Ontario regularly debate the importance of transgender identity, causing concern amongst many for their hard-fought rights and renewed attention and misogyny from those who hate.

In spite of this, progressive governments in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario currently have made it possible to provide gender-neutral identification for people who do not identify as simply male or female, and British Columbia has worked hard to now provide gender-affirming surgeries to their citizens.

Transgender people want and deserve the same respect as all other people in our society. It is important that we as legislators and lawmakers are aware and sensitive to that. We, as humans, should set the example to the world to raise awareness and reduce the violence and misogyny against transgender people.

Thank you.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### 2019 Budget Consultations

**Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West):** Madam Speaker, starting just over a month ago I have travelled over 6,500 kilometres listening to Manitobans about what they want to see in our next budget. These budget consultations often included the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), one or more local MLAs and many, many Manitobans.

The minister has an excellent approach to showing Manitobans the many challenges that were left to our government by the previous NDP regime. Many are shocked by the constant deficits and staggering debt left to us. More troubling is the over \$1 billion in interest costs for the debt that was ramped up by the previous NDP government.

Madam Speaker, that's a billion dollars that leaves the province of Manitoba. It's gone forever to pay just the interest on the NDP debt. That money cannot be used for health care, education, families, roads, bridges, schools, personal-care homes or any other services that our government continues to improve and provide for Manitobans—a sad but enduring legacy of NDP mismanagement.

Madam Speaker, in traveling and meeting with many MLAs and their constituents all over Manitoba, we continued to receive excellent advice on how to continue to improve Manitoba.

Thank you to the many MLAs who have arranged meetings and budget consultations. Thank you to the many Manitobans who have attended these consultations, made presentations, asked questions and give us direction and advice.

Manitobans continue to make submissions through the website at manitobansmakingchoices.ca.

Madam Speaker, Manitobans told us their personal stories of reduced health-care wait times or how our changes are improving the outlook for those working in our health-care system. While there are spending increases in Health, Education and Families, the civil service is helping us to find more productive and efficient uses for that money.

Madam Speaker, as we heard in the Speech from the Throne yesterday, we continue to fix our finances, repair our services and rebuild our economy.

I know that Manitoba is the best—

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

#### **St. John's High School Football Champions**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I am so proud today to celebrate the St. John's High School Tigers football team's championship on Thursday, November 8th, 2018. Despite the cold weather and snow on the field, the players gave their all, winning a 13-10 victory against the Elmwood Giants.

The member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) and myself were able to sneak away from the House for just a little while to watch the game at Investors Group Field alongside parents and supporters, where we were all on the edge of our seat, Madam Speaker. Ultimately, the Tigers intercepted a pass by the Giants, snapped the ball and brought home the historic win, breaking a 38-year drought of a

championship win—truly a phenomenal and inspiring accomplishment.

Winning the championship held a deeper meaning for the Tigers, who lost their quarterback, Jordan Thomas, to a violent crime last year. At the start of the season, the Tigers promised they would bring home the championship for Jordan. Middle linebacker Nick Wakos shared, and I quote: It felt like we had a 13th man on the field, like he was watching over us and he was helping us.

The Tigers showed acts of thoughtfulness and love when they included Jordan's No. 7 jersey at the very front of their championship banner photo. It was a beautiful, inclusive commemoration of Jordan and his loving family, who are here today with us in the Speaker's Gallery.

\* (13:50)

The member for Point Douglas and myself are so proud of each of the player's hard work, determination and perseverance, alongside the dedication and commitment shown by coaches and support staff not only to the game, but to one another.

A particular miigwech to coach—Head Coach Grant McMillan, Principal Doug Taylor and St. John's school parent and community council.

Tigers, you should be so proud of your accomplishments and how you represented our community and, in particular, the North End. And here's to another championship next year.

#### **Dauphin Area Community Events**

**Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin):** I want to thank all the volunteers in my constituency of Dauphin and acknowledge those who contribute a lot towards making their communities great.

Just to name a few events: Roblin hosted the Bug Chucker Cup and the king and queen farmer events this year; Grandview hosted the Head Cheese Contest and the Mud Bogs; Gilbert Plains hosted the fair and rodeo; and Ste. Rose again played host to Hoof 'n' Holler Days. Dauphin hosted Countryfest, the Ukrainian festival, the Mud Run and a visit by Barry Trotz and the Stanley Cup.

On November 15th, I had the opportunity to thank and acknowledge just a few of the many people who help out in community events, as well as others who serve in many ways as active board members and event co-ordinators. Dauphin's active

'volunteery' community helps out with arts promotion, health and well-being causes, sport, recreation and culture development, community and heritage buildings and maintenance and much, much more.

Volunteering is a lot of fun and a great way to meet great people doing great things in the community.

A wonderful part about living in rural Manitoba is watching all these activities go on during a very busy agriculture time. It takes a lot of people to produce a crop, and I want to thank the business community and their staff for the longer hours and the extra effort that they do put in during the growing season, especially when the going gets tough.

And early in the fall is also when hunting season begins, and I want to acknowledge and thank everyone who contributes to keep hunting safe, sustainable and respectful. Hunting season is enjoyed by many and respecting the wildlife and property owners goes a long way to ensuring greater access and more opportunities for all hunters.

Thank you.

#### **Northern Health-Care Services**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** Madam Speaker, since this government took office, they have slashed nearly \$10 million from the northern regional health authority, they have cancelled plans for a primary-care clinic in The Pas and the Flin Flon obstetrics department has been closed, leaving pregnant women unsure of how and where they will give birth. They also cut at least \$1 million from the Northern Patient Transportation Program, which the minister denied every day in this House until we provided him the undeniable proof: his own department's NRHA funding letter.

These deep and unfair cuts are depriving northern Manitobans the same level of service as their southern counterparts.

Now, this government is—wants to privatize Lifeflight, an emergency air ambulance service that provides medivacs for northern patients. Lifeflight, under this government—under government operation, has operated for 30 years, accident free. That's because safety and patient care are their No. 1 priority. But when services are privatized, profit becomes the most important factor.

Over 15 doctors working for Lifeflight have come forward with their concerns about

privatization. They are concerned that when profits are at stake, a private organization will not put patients first. They are also worried that, in the transition to private ownership, some northern areas will experience further service delays or become inaccessible altogether.

This government is putting cost efficiency and cost saving before the health and lives of Manitobans.

Madam Speaker, where you live should not affect the quality of health care you get. This government needs to listen to northern Manitobans and the doctors who are on the front lines, and reverse their inequitable policies. And a good place to start is stopping the privatization of Lifeflight.

Thank you.

#### **Steinbach Named Cleanest City in North America**

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education and Training):** Good afternoon, Madam Speaker.

Today, I'd like to recognize Steinbach for being named the Canadian Beverage Container Recycling Association's 2018 cleanest city in North America for the second year in a row.

This accomplishment is a testament to the community's focus on being green and helping our environment. A recent audit of the city of Steinbach yet again showcased a cleanliness of the city. According to Ken Friesen, the executive director of Recycle Everywhere, since the start of the audit five years ago, there has been a decrease by 39 per cent of the garbage in Steinbach.

Steinbach has improved every year since the testing began. Recycle Everywhere noted a few things about Steinbach. Their commitment to keep the city clean is largely because of the Public Works Department and their outstanding efforts to keep the bins clear and useable, which contributes to everyone's ability to keep their home neighbourhoods clean.

It was also noted there is an abundance of containers around the city, and the ease of recycling is an important part of everyone's ability to do their part.

Another great community initiative is that of the Steinbach's Pick Up 'n' Walk effort, which is done every year by a group of area churches, where individuals in our community go out and spend time in their neighbourhoods cleaning up the streets.

Final congratulations to all those involved in this initiative that helps keep Steinbach the Canadian Beverage Container Recycling Association's 2018 cleanest city in North America. This significant effort is done by many individuals and organizations and means that those who are in Steinbach can live, work and play in a place that values cleanliness and environmentalism.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, we have some guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

We did have in the Speaker's Gallery, Jordan's family that was acknowledged earlier in a private member's statement. And just for the record, I would like to indicate that we had joining us: Kathleen Bremner, Lance Thomas, Brandon Thomas, William Bremner, Cecilia Pelletier, who are the guests of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine).

And also in the public gallery, we have from Linden Christian School, 21 grade 11 students under the direction of Mark Glor, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable First Minister.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Health-Care Services Government Intention

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Yesterday's Throne Speech shows that it's not about what the Premier says; it really matters what he does.

So what has the Premier done over the past two years in office? Well, we know that he's cut health-care services like physiotherapy and occupational therapy, the special drugs program. He's announced closures of more emergency rooms, more than the emergency room and urgent-care centre that he's already closed, and he's cut coverage for other medical services like sleep apnea machines.

So now with him announcing that he's looking to target CancerCare again, it certainly raises a lot of concerns for people here in the province. Every time this Premier sets out to try and fix something, he just ends up cutting the service.

So I would ask if the Premier will stop this attack on health-care services, and will he stop the cuts?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, after a week away from the questions, Madam Speaker, that's the best the member could come up with? Referencing reductions when our actual budget this year for health care is close to three quarters of a billion dollars more than it ever was under the previous government isn't an indication of having much material to go on.

I would tell the member that we certainly are aggressively addressing the challenges of making the health-care system that was broken under the previous government better, and I assure him to find comfort in the certain knowledge that what they broke, we will be fixing.

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

### Methamphetamine Abuse Treatment and Services

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Well, there really was no shortage of material that the Premier could have included in the Throne Speech, but chose not to.

And what was missing from the Throne Speech yesterday really speaks volumes. The meth crisis was almost entirely overlooked, and even when it was raised it was only in relation to law and order. They didn't talk about treatment in response to the meth crisis.

Now, we know that every day it seems that there's more and more information that's causing alarm to some 80 per cent of Winnipeggers. Just today we learned that there's a 42 per cent increase in the number of babies born at St. Boniface Hospital who are addicted to drugs, and nurses there are pointing to the meth crisis as part of the reason for this dramatic increase.

\* (14:00)

Now, we know that it's not just health-care professionals. The chief of police, the mayor, many other people are demanding action on the meth crisis.

So I'd ask the Premier: Why doesn't he listen to the chief of police, to the nurses, to the experts who are speaking out, and come back with a plan to bring a safe injection site, more detox and more treatment beds to fight the meth crisis in Manitoba?



**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, certainly, the member does focus on this particular issue, one of urgent concern, and, certainly, we have acted and will continue to act in consultation with all other concerned Manitobans in addressing the issues of addictions.

We understand the human costs. We understand the challenges, and we understand also the need to consult, and have with those who have expertise and have knowledge of approaches that have been taken in other jurisdictions who have also faced up to these challenges. And acting on that advice is important as well.

We've taken steps to protect and improve the safety of health-care workers, of front-line workers. We'll continue to strive to do our very best to make sure that we effectively address this urgent problem, and, as well, Madam Speaker, at the same time that we effectively heal a health-care system broken by the previous government that was failing Manitobans.

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

#### **Income Assistance Recipients Transition Support Services**

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Well, again, Madam Speaker, whenever this Premier tries to fix something he just ends up cutting the program. That's why it was concerning yesterday to hear the Premier, in the Throne Speech and scrum afterwards, begin to talk about making changes to the social assistance program here in Manitoba.

Now, we know that every Manitoban who wants to work should be able to work, should be able to get a job, but, unfortunately, the Premier has already cut a lot of the programs to help people on social assistance transition back into the workforce.

What these documents show—that I will table now for the benefit of the Premier—is that the Premier eliminated a program called Transition Support Services that helped hundreds of Manitobans get off of social assistance and back into the workforce. That's the sort of support that this Premier has already cut, and now with him targeting social assistance our concern is that he's going to cut even further.

Why has the Premier already cut supports for people who are trying to move off of EIA and to get back into the workforce?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** An interesting observation from one who just featured a alternative throne speech which made not one reference to creating jobs in the province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, frankly, people on welfare who I have had contact with over recent years—and will continue to, as will my colleagues—are telling us that they want an opportunity to develop skills. They want an opportunity to find work, and that's what we'll focus on making sure they have the opportunity to do.

The old government actually just believed that handing out cheques to people and asking them to go away was the right approach. They've taken that approach for far too long.

The people in our province, Madam Speaker, are industrious and enterprising people. They want to support themselves and their families, and we're going to help them do that.

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

#### **CancerCare Manitoba Government Review**

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** All right, well, here's a question for you, Madam Speaker.

What does CancerCare have in common with Deloitte management services, Ernst & Young LLP, IBM business consulting services, KPMG LLP, Meyers Norris Penny, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Workforce Edge Consulting, and BDO 'Canadit' LLP?

Of course, respectfully, this is a rhetorical question, Madam Speaker.

The answer is that they have nothing in common, nothing except for the fact that all of these big consulting firms are companies who have accessed the procurement process, as documented through the government's website, as companies that want to bid on the Premier's new review of CancerCare services.

We've also learned that the Premier is willing to spend up to \$1 million on this review of CancerCare.

The problem that we see is that CancerCare is already providing excellent services.

Will the Premier back off of his plan to review CancerCare and instead commit to enhancing services and health for Manitobans?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well again, Madam Speaker, we've seen the level to which the NDP and that member will stoop when they tried to get votes just before the last election by frightening cancer patients and telling them they'd lose their medication. This is the kind of scare tactic the member likes to employ.

Madam Speaker, people want to know that they have a government that will respect the money that is taken from them, that they will be confident in that government managing it well; and that involves asking for help.

The previous government was lost. It didn't have the fortitude to ask for help. It didn't have the fortitude to ask for directions. It pretended that it had everything answered when it didn't even have the ability to address the questions.

Why were we 10th out of 10 in health care, 10th out of 10 in education, last on dealing with poverty? They didn't even have the intelligence, Madam Speaker, over there to ask for the assistance of experts.

That's exactly what this government is doing and we're acting on the advice, and things are improving and they'll continue to because we work with those who share our goal of making Manitoba the most improved province in the country of Canada.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Madam Speaker, CancerCare is No. 1 in the country for delivering care quickly and with high quality to patients suffering from cancer here in Manitoba, and yet the Premier's response to date has been to cancel their badly needed new headquarters and to order CancerCare to cut two and a half million dollars from their budget last year.

Now he's going to review the program. The problem is every time they review something they just end up cutting the program.

And has he asked oncologists, physicians, experts in health sciences to review the program? No, he's put out an RFP, and the respondents are KPMG, Deloitte, Ernst & Young,

PricewaterhouseCoopers. Now, these are hardly experts at delivering care, Madam Speaker. Again, the Premier seems to focus on the money, but not on the care.

Instead of handing out another million-dollar contract to a big consultant, will he instead commit to protecting CancerCare and enhancing the services for Manitobans?

**Mr. Pallister:** Madam Speaker, the member cites research to support his argument. Actually, interestingly, he tells us not to do research because his research is enough.

It's never enough, Madam Speaker.

If we can improve, if we can get better services to the people of Manitoba this government's going to pursue that goal. We're not going to stand back and listen to a member advocate we do nothing. When our system is broken we're going to fix that system and make it work better for the people of Manitoba.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** It's tough to believe that with this Premier's track record, Madam Speaker, when any time they review a program they just end up cutting that service. It's even more difficult to believe, because if this government wanted to enhance services they would go and talk to the oncologists, the experts, the physicians based right here in Manitoba. Instead they've put out this RFP. They've announced they're willing to spend \$1 million on it, and the respondents to date are big multinational accounting firms like Deloitte, like MNP, like PricewaterhouseCoopers.

So, again, it seems to be quite clear what this government is up to in announcing this review of CancerCare and it just doesn't make sense.

Will the Premier cancel his review of CancerCare and instead come back to the table with a new plan that would actually involve consulting the experts based right here in Manitoba, those serving Manitobans at the bedside?

**Mr. Pallister:** It's hilariously wrong-headed, Madam Speaker. What the member has just said is that we shouldn't do research outside of Manitoba when, in fact, we should be looking globally for the best practices and adopting them right here in Manitoba.

We have leaders in this province, true, but we have leaders elsewhere who want to help and we are going to pursue that help.

When the member talks about a track record, his track record is not one, Madam Speaker—  
[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —leaving anything but a trail of pain behind him. I don't want to do that. This government won't do that. What we'll do instead is make the system work better for the people of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, he also says that we should not spend money on research. They spent more money buying untendered Tiger Dams than we spent buying research.

Madam Speaker, our return on investment—  
[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —investing in research will far exceed any investment they made in untendered contracts buying orange garbage bags from party donors.

We'll invest money wisely for the people of Manitoba. We'll get a return for it, and we'll keep shortening wait times and lowering ambulance fees and improving services in health care for the people of this province as well.

#### **Deer Lodge Centre Staff and Services**

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Madam Speaker, yesterday's Throne Speech left no doubt that it—  
[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Swan:** —is, indeed, full speed ahead for the Pallister government's plans to cut Manitobans' health care.

Last year 50 nursing positions were eliminated at Deer Lodge Centre in St. James, and now, as feared, we learn that nurses, recreational therapists, messengers, even clerks are all being cut at Deer Lodge Centre.

Why is the minister cutting staff at Deer Lodge Centre for the second year in a row?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I thank the member for the question.

\* (14:10)

It gives me an opportunity to underscore, as the Throne Speech indicated yesterday, that this government is doing the heavy lifting of transforming our health-care system in order to consolidate our resources better, to organize our system better. And to do that, why? To get better results, more access and better outcomes for Manitobans, and why? Because Manitobans deserve better care sooner.

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

**Mr. Swan:** Well, Madam Speaker, one of those Manitobans, Pamela Tennant, emailed me about her father, Jack Tennant, who lives at Deer Lodge Centre.

Jack's a 95-year-old World War II veteran. He was injured in Normandy after D-Day, and Pamela knows that her father deserves quality care, but says she already sees the effects of the Pallister government's cuts: people run off their feet, staff shortages and no coverage when workers are away.

She calls these cuts a disaster. She said she's never seen the staff so depressed, demoralized and unhappy. Instead of bringing gratitude to staff and services for our veterans, all she sees is cuts.

She says the whole thing is a mess and a disgrace.

I ask the minister: Why is he cutting services for veterans and other residents at Deer Lodge Centre?

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, what is a disgrace is this question, and the member knows it because he knows the formula on which that centre is funded for services. He knows that it is a federal formula. He knows that some of the services are directly rated and ratioed to the number of veterans and forces members retired and now needing those services.

As those numbers dwindle, those services are then rejigged by the federal government. The expression of support is commensurate with those individuals who are in the centre. Shame on him for trying to represent the information differently.  
[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member for Minto, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Swan:** I can only assume this minister didn't know the direction the previous minister gave to Deer Lodge Centre to cut funding at Deer Lodge Centre apart from anything else the federal government did.

If there are less veterans, there are more other residents that should be properly funded by the provincial health-care system. And last month we showed this government is nickel-and-diming even the most basic services to residents at Deer Lodge, cutting snacks for volunteers who bring flowers or read to seniors at the lodge.

This government is completely out of touch and the minister is putting false information on the record about his role in these cuts.

When will the minister take responsibility for the cuts he's making and when will he listen to the concerns of real Manitobans like Pamela Tennant and her 95-year-old father at Deer Lodge Centre?

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, it is once again the member for Minto who is truly out of touch, because what this government is doing is investing in health care.

Only a week ago we opened the latest RAAM clinic in Selkirk. And I was pleased to have with me both the MLA for Gimli, the MLA for Selkirk, and the individuals in that community say this will help.

Only a week before that we added 30 more units—30 more nurses at the NICU unit at St. Boniface Hospital.

We are making—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** —good investments in the health-care system. Everyone else recognizes it except the member for Minto.

#### **Income Assistance Recipients Transition Support Services**

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** Yesterday, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) gave warning that he is targeting low-income Manitobans for more cost cutting.

We know Manitobans want to work, but they also know that it's its government job to help them. This Premier's cuts are making it harder to move off of EIA. If only there was a program to help Manitobans on EA—EIA combat housing and mental

health issues, overcome addictions and deal with child-care challenges.

Wait, actually, there was a program and it was called transitional support services, and guess what? This Premier cut it in May.

Why did this Premier cut the actual services and programs that help Manitobans get off of EIA?

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families):** Once again the member opposite is misrepresenting the facts, Madam Speaker.

There is, in fact, the—an additional \$5.5 million that was earmarked for EIA—more in Budget 2018. The member opposite should know that, Madam Speaker.

But we will continue to work with members of the community who are on EIA and who want to move, Madam Speaker, from the dependency of welfare to the independency of the workforce. We will ensure that we provide them with the tools that they need to do so.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Point Douglas, on a supplementary question.

**Mrs. Smith:** So let me educate the minister on what this actual program did. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** Transitional support services actually helped people with barriers to employment. Statistics show the reason—or the main reason folks for—on EIA were referred to this program was because of mental health challenges and homelessness. Five hundred and five people receive supports for mental health, 430 people for housing issues and several dozen others for addictions over the past few years.

TSS also helped to access child care. Moving on to an online portal system does not help Manitobans who are homeless.

There are barriers to employment people on EIA face, and TSS was set up to help them get off of it—

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

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, let me educate the member opposite on some of the NDP failures, Madam Speaker.

Under the NDP, Manitoba had the highest food bank use per capita of any province at 53 per cent. Manitoba was then the child poverty capital of Canada, something we are no longer. Manitobans

under the previous NDP government had the highest percentage of children using food banks in Canada at 41 per cent, and the list goes on.

Madam Speaker, we are listening to Manitobans. We are working with Manitobans. We will ensure that those Manitobans who want to move from the dependency of a welfare system into the independency of the workforce have the tools that they need to do so. We will offer them that hope.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Point Douglas, on a final supplementary.

**Mrs. Smith:** It's too bad—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —this minister continues to take credit where credit isn't due. Those statistics were from 2016 when we were in government, not when they were.

FIPPA documents show the last—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —that the last minister hadn't even heard of TSS. [*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** When we raised the issue in this very House, he actually ordered his staff to go and cook up a briefing—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Smith:** —for him after question period, but that request was after he had already ordered the program to be cut, which was cut in May.

I hope that this new minister is better briefed on the TSS program, even though it's already been cut.

Will—why is this Premier (Mr. Pallister) picking on low-income Manitobans and continuing to cut services that make a difference and help people get off of EIA? [*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Madam Speaker, after 17 years of NDP mismanagement, you know, we have a lot of work ahead of us and we will continue to work with Manitobans towards that effort.

We have already stated—and I was very proud of our Throne Speech yesterday, delivered by the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba yesterday—and we—we're very proud of the fact within that there were many areas of Families that were covered in

that area. But one of those, of course, is the movement from the dependence of welfare to give people the independence they need to move to the workforce.

We will work with the Department of Education; we'll work in a whole-of-government approach to ensure that those individuals have the tools that they need to succeed. We will offer hope, while they offered despair under their government.

### **Independent Investigation Unit Timeline for Tabling Reports**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Madam Speaker—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** —there have been a number of reports in the media that show that emails and freedom of requests—information requests show that the internal investigation unit has not been able to get the information it needs to do its job, which is overseeing the police.

The IIU was created long after two incidents, the shooting of J.J. Harper and the death of Crystal Taman, where investigations went seriously wrong.

Madam Speaker, we all know the police have a hard job to do. In order to do their job well the public has to have confidence in them and we all have to know they will be held to the same standard of justice as anyone. They cannot investigate themselves.

The IIU has submitted two annual reports to the Department of Justice that were only tabled today. Can the minister explain the delay in tabling these reports?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I do appreciate the question from the member opposite.

I do want to take this opportunity to thank our law enforcement people from across the province who are dealing with many Manitobans—hundreds of Manitobans, potentially thousands of Manitobans—on a daily basis and we thank them for the good work they do.

Also, in terms of the Independent Investigation Unit, I know they're doing good work as well over there. When situations do arise, they do have, certainly, important work that they are doing.

\* (14:20)

We have made the commitment—and we made the commitment yesterday in the Throne Speech—to review The Police Services Act, and that's what we will do.

### **Police Services Act Review**

**Mr. Lamont:** Madam Speaker, the issue of police oversight is not new. There's an old saying: Who shall watch the watchmen? It is not supposed to be the watchmen themselves.

One of the issues identified in media reports is that the police were refusing to co-operate with investigators.

There was a problem identified with Ontario legislation that was introduced in the early 1990s—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** —and one of the solutions that has been recommended and is in legislation elsewhere is that police would have to co-operate with the IIU and have sanctions if they failed to do so. They would still have the right not to incriminate themselves, but they would not be able to ignore the IIU's requests.

The Throne Speech did mention amendments to The Police Services Act. Will it include ensuring the police co-operate when the IIU asks them to?

**Mr. Cullen:** Certainly, no province in Canada compels subject officers to disclose incriminating information relevant to an investigation. These are the same rights that are afforded to all citizens.

I will say, furthermore, that, certainly, Manitobans do want to make sure that—have assurances that there is an effective investigative tool in place, an investigative process in place. That's why we said we will review The Police Services Act and we will engage Manitobans in that review and listen to what Manitobans have to say.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Second Opposition, on a final supplementary.

### **Provincial Audit**

**Mr. Lamont:** Madam Speaker, police officers are human, and like any human they can make mistakes. They have difficult jobs. They put their jobs on the line and they depend on each other to make it home alive.

But we also know they should not be investigating themselves. That was the finding of the

Crystal Taman inquiry and the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

Nobody wants a repeat of J.J. Harper. Nobody wants a repeat of Crystal Taman—not the police, not families and not the public. This requires a change of culture, but to change the culture we need to change the rules.

Robert Taman, Crystal's widower, has said there needs to be a full provincial audit of the IIU.

Will the Minister of Justice commit to such an audit?

**Mr. Cullen:** Well, Madam Speaker, we do 'recognize' the challenges that police officers face across our province. And, yes, mistakes can be made, for sure, and we certainly want to make sure that this Independent Investigation Unit does have the tools at their disposal.

Clearly, maybe the previous NDP legislation isn't correct. That's why we've made the announcement we're going to review this legislation. We'll engage Manitobans across the province and we'll hear what Manitobans have to say, and we will make positive changes to that legislation.

### **Flin Flon General Hospital Suspension of Birthing Services**

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** I'd like to acknowledge the work of the We Want Birth Committee.

This organization popped up overnight to oppose this government's decision to suspend childbirth at the Flin Flon General Hospital.

Mothers-to-be and families in northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan are furious with this government's decision to suspend births in Flin Flon. They should be able to deliver their babies close to where they live and where their families are. They shouldn't have to travel long distances, increasing physical 'risk' and stress.

Will this minister please reverse this decision, restore birth services at the Flin Flon General Hospital?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Well, the member should be clear that if the group indicates that they are furious with the decision, then they should understand that it is a medical decision that is undertaken. It is taken—undertaken to preserve safety in a health facility.

That member knows that heroic efforts were made over the past number of years to be able to both retain and attract obstetric anesthesia services to Flin Flon. When it became the case, medically determined, that it could not be done so, the decision was made by medical experts to direct those births to a more safe facility.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Flin Flon, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Lindsey:** Madam Speaker, through their hard work, the We Want Birth Committee has collected letters addressed to this Premier (Mr. Pallister). People in Flin Flon and surrounding area don't want cuts and they don't want excuses from this government. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lindsey:** They want to be able to give birth close to where they live in a safe environment surrounded by their loved ones. They want—they don't want the risk of giving birth on the side of a highway. Birth certificates shouldn't say Highway No. 10.

I table one of these letters now, one of many letters, and ask the government to fulfill their request, these people, these families' request, to take doctor recruitment seriously—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lindsey:** —in northern Manitoba, fulfill their responsibility to support a vital service and do what is needed—

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

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, from what the member just shared, there is a—there is broad agreement, because the member indicated that this group is coming forward to say that they want patient safety and that is exactly what we want for people in Flin Flon and in the—*[interjection]*—regional—

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** —area of that facility, and it's why this decision was undertaken not on a political basis, but on the basis of what was called a significant risk to patient safety.

Efforts are being made to make sure that these expectant mothers can be directed to The Pas and then directed back to Flin Flon where pre-birth and then postpartum services will continue.

So I believe there's a lot of agreement and that's why we're making the changes we are.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Flin Flon, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Lindsey:** That's the kind of answer that really makes mothers-to-be in Flin Flon upset and scared.

This government decided to suspend delivery services in Flin Flon. A woman by the name of Logan Oulette broke down and cried when she heard that. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lindsey:** She was left scrambling to find a place to deliver her baby, due sometime next week.

Logan has a child who can't be left home alone. Her family can't afford to spend a week in The Pas.

Instead of ignoring people like Logan, will this government stop cutting, take real action so that Logan can give birth where she lives with her loved ones at her side to support her?

**Mr. Friesen:** Well, I would want to ensure the people of Flin Flon and the surrounding area that real action has been taken.

What did that action look like? It looked like very significant efforts to try to procure new obstetric and anaesthesia experts in that community, but it was also the determination by experts—obstetricians from Winnipeg, nurse clinical experts from Winnipeg—who came out and conducted a multi-month review of the services. And on their medical determination, these steps have been taken.

We all want to have more health services in Manitoba. Our government is working far harder than theirs ever did to ensure that. And, Madam Speaker, we will continue to build a more sustainable health-care system, but this is an issue of patient safety. Patient safety comes first.

### **Domestic Violence Prevention Expansion of Programming**

**Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River):** We know domestic violence in our communities remains a significant concern. We on this side of the House take these issues seriously.

In yesterday's Speech from the Throne our government reaffirmed our commitment to expand domestic violence prevention programs in our province.

Can the Minister of Justice please update the House on this important programming that will continue to help victims of domestic violence?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I do appreciate the member for that question. I'm proud to announce that we will be supporting victims of domestic violence with two new pilot programs. The family support worker program and Domestic Violence Support Service will help victims who have been in an abusive relationship navigate family court and restorative justice programming.

Along with that, we will continue to invest in organizations that support victims, including the Canadian Centre for Child Protection and the Manitoba Organization for Victim Assistance.

Madam Speaker, our government will always stand up for victims.

#### **Economic Development Strategy Request for Government Plan**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Madam Speaker, I'd like to quote from yesterday's Throne Speech: "For too long, Manitoba's approach to economic development has lacked focus, driven by short-term, politically expedient decisions." I couldn't agree more.

Two years ago, in December 2017–2016, the Premier announced the members of his enterprise team. One year later, the Premier announced at the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce he paid Deloitte \$150,000 to tell them his government had no plan, and a new team was appointed to come up with another one. That team's new plan is supposed to have timelines and action—good for that.

\* (14:30)

Why has it taken more than two and a half years for this government to come up with an economic growth strategy?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Why has it taken the member a lifetime to come up with an economic development strategy that says two words: raise taxes.

Madam Speaker, we're not interested in the member's advocacy for job creation, because, frankly, he's never created one. And the fact of the matter is people in Manitoba are ready to invest in this province. People around the country and the world are proving this is the place to invest. And

that's why we lead the country of Canada in attracting private sector capital investment.

This government will keep working hard to attract capital to this province because capital at risk creates jobs here and economic growth gives families the security they deserve, Madam Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lamont:** The Premier is mistaken. I've helped a number of companies acquire venture capital and created a number of jobs. But, well, moving on.

Look North; there are extremely serious economic issues in the North, Madam Speaker. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** The Employers Council of Manitoba has pointed to the loss of hundreds of jobs that pay well being lost in Thompson and elsewhere and a further slowdown as Hydro projects are completed. The \$150,000 Deloitte report, which stated that the government, quote, is unable to articulate a forward-looking strategy for the Manitoba economy, end quote, also recommended the creation of a central economic development agency for the whole province to co-ordinate provincial efforts instead of a series of disconnected small ones.

Why is this government yet again paying for reports whose advice it ignores?

**Mr. Pallister:** Why would the member, who now has confirmed that he, indeed, is a great job creator and has attracted venture capital to the province of Manitoba, make any proposal which says we should do other than that?

We are attracting venture capital in this province. We're attracting it in record dollar amounts, and it's resulting in higher job creation numbers.

The fact of the matter remains, Madam Speaker, that we need an economic development strategy, moving forward, that can work even better. And so, being first in a number of key economic indicators is not enough for us. We want to move further ahead of second on the rankings in the country.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Second Opposition, on a final supplementary.



### Manitoba Entrepreneurs Access to Capital

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** The companies the Premier were referring to are almost all companies from outside of Manitoba.

I participated in some of the consultations run by Dave Angus and Barb Gamey with business and stakeholders here in Winnipeg. What I heard at that meeting from Manitoba companies, and what I heard from chambers of commerce and entrepreneurs, is their No. 1 issue is access to capital.

There are companies run by Manitoba innovators and entrepreneurs who want to stay here in Manitoba but are forced to leave because they can only get capital elsewhere. Manitoba has a capital drought, and it has been made worse by this government's inaction and lack of a plan as well as the decision to freeze commercialization support for Manitoba businesses.

What is this government going to do to improve access to capital for Manitoba entrepreneurs, as they promised in their campaign in 2016?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Capital spending on new residential properties here in Manitoba was second in the country last year; on industrial properties, it was second highest in the country.

The member is concerned that we're attracting money from outside exclusively. We're not. We're attracting investment capital inside Manitoba as well. In fact, retail vehicle sales is an example, which are generally done to people in—with the people of Manitoba in mind, lead the country in the past 18 months. Private sector capital spending growth is the first—ranks first in the country, Madam Speaker.

And these are private sector capital investors from Manitoba who are choosing—and they could invest anywhere else, but they're choosing to invest in Manitoba.

I'd encourage the member to get with the program and start to realize that Manitoba is moving forward, attracting capital, attracting job creation and growth and that Manitoba families are better off for it.

### Independent Investigation Unit Statutory Authority Review

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Manitoba's Independent Investigation Unit provides civilian

oversight of our police forces. This is important because it helps the public have confidence in our justice system and in our policing overall in the province.

However, the—over the last week, we've seen concerns raised about the effectiveness of the Independent Investigation Unit, Madam Speaker.

Will the minister ensure that his forthcoming review of our police forces includes consideration of the statutory authority of the unit to ensure that it has the tools and authority to do its job?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I know we're talking about NDP legislation here, so I'm sure there will be changes required.

We have—we did make the announcement that we are going to review this legislation.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for St. Johns, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Fontaine:** We know that reports have been brought to the ministry's attention but, really, only released today. And we've heard breaches of protocol during investigations or disagreements as to whether the matter falls under the purview of the unit.

The responsibilities of investigators should not be the—subject to ongoing negotiations, Madam Speaker. There should be greater certainty and clarity on these matters.

Will the minister ensure that his forthcoming review clearly defines what officers are subject to independent oversight and will he include a review of the authority of the IIU?

**Mr. Cullen:** I see we're getting advice from the NDP. We will certainly be seeking advice from more Manitobans.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for St. Johns, on a final supplementary.

### Meth Addiction in Health Facilities Security Officer Expansion of Powers

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Well, certainly, I think that we hope the—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Fontaine:** —minister's review of police services is not just an exercise in cuts, as his other reviews have been, Madam Speaker.

We have called for an expansion of the authority of security guards to deal with a growing meth crisis.

Will the minister take the opportunity in this review to consider expanding the powers of security guards in hospitals to give them the tools they need to deal with this current meth crisis?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** To the member's question, we certainly are working with the Department of Health in terms of addressing some of those situations in health-care facilities.

Certainly, this review will be a wholesome review. We made a commitment to review the public services act—or The Police Services Act, and we will certainly do that and we will be engaging Manitobans in that as well. And this will be, I will assure the member, a very comprehensive review of this legislation.

#### **Fiscal Stabilization Account Balance Update**

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake):** In the last six years of their government, the NDP withdrew funds from the Fiscal Stabilization Account to make up for their reckless spending to hide their massive deficit. We on this side of the House think this is wrong and we are on a path of recovery to fix the finances in Manitoba.

Can the Minister of Finance provide an update to the House on the current situation and our Fiscal Stabilization Account?

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance):** Our government has reached an important milestone in terms of fixing the finances for the province of Manitoba. We know under the NDP, under their rule, they drained the rainy day fund. It was over a quarter of a billion dollars, Madam Speaker.

And, Madam Speaker, we're very proud of the fact we're able to deposit over \$50 million in a rainy day fund because Manitobans deserve to have a fund available when there is a rainy day, as opposed to what the NDP in government did.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Time for oral—the honourable First Minister?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Madam Speaker, it is important to note today, I think, if I could make a point, that the member—

**Madam Speaker:** Is this a point of order?

#### **Point of Order**

**Mr. Pallister:** For a point of order.

The member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) was first elected to this Chamber 18 years ago today, and I don't think it should go by with us—without us acknowledging that that period has been met by her, that period of service. That she has served 18 years the people of her constituency is a proud accomplishment and we should acknowledge it.

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

**Madam Speaker:** While the—[*interjection*]

On the same point of order? Oh.

I—while the point was very good, I would indicate that the Premier did not have a point of order.

The time for oral questions has expired.

#### **PETITIONS**

**Madam Speaker:** And I've got the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) indicating—oh, the—

**An Honourable Member:** Point of order.

#### **Point of Order**

**Madam Speaker:** Okay, the honourable leader—House Leader of the Official Opposition, on a point of order.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** And I apologize for this, Madam Speaker, but I forgot to ask for leave for the names of my guests in the House, if we can have them inputted into Hansard.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to include the names of the football team? [*Agreed*]

*St. John's High Tigers, 2018 Championship Team. Players: Nicholas Anderson; Jordie Boulette; Dylan Bowman; Kristine Bowman; Ryan Ducharme; Ryu Forsythe; Micah Humberstone; Shawn Inglis; Myles Kakewash, captain; Chase Kaminski, captain; Jerico Laurea; Rhaven Macabeo; Eric Martin; Jacob Mayer; Kaiden Mercer; Riley Mercer; Jewles Morrissette; Jacob Mpoyo; Lance Paul; Shawn Pirrie; Matthew Proulx; Trent Raven; Avaneet Sandhu; Natasha Sinclair; Kaylem Swan; Nick Wakos, captain; Asher Wood, captain; Jaron Yakimishyn, captain. Coaches: Matt Fox; Brian Marks; Grant McMillan, head coach;*

*Jullian Radocaj; Brad Schwean; Ben Shedden.  
Support staff: Tierra Ducharme, Alicia Franczyk,  
Carla Humberstone, Sinesee Keewatin.*

\* (14:40)

### Vimy Arena

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The residents of St. James and other areas of Manitoba are concerned with the intention expressed by the provincial government to use the Vimy Arena site as a Manitoba Housing project.

(2) The Vimy Arena site is in the middle of a residential area near many schools, churches, community clubs and senior homes, and neither the provincial government nor the City of Winnipeg considered better suited locations in rural, semi-rural or industrial sites such as St. Boniface Industrial Park, the 20,000 acres at CentrePort—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Fletcher:** —or existing properties such as the Shriners Hospital or the old Children's Hospital on Wellington Crescent.

(3)—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Fletcher:** The provincial government is exempt from any zoning requirements that would have existed if the land had been owned by the City. This exemption bypasses community input and due diligence and ignores better uses for the land that would be consistent with a residential area.

(4) There are no standards that one would expect for a treatment centre. The minister of health, science—Health, Seniors and Active Living has stated that the Department of Health had no role to play in the acquisition of the land for this Manitoba Housing project for use as a drug addiction facility.

(5) The Manitoba Housing project initiated by the provincial government changes the fundamental nature of the community. Including park and recreation uses, concerns of the residents of St. James and others regarding public safety, property values and their way of life are not being addressed.

(6) Concerns of the residents of St. James are being ignored while obvious other locations in wealthier neighbourhoods, such as Tuxedo and River Heights, have not been considered for this Manitoba Housing project, even though there are hundreds of acres of land available for development at Kapyong Barracks or parks like Heubach Park that share the same zoning as the Vimy Arena site.

(7) The Manitoba Housing project and the operation of a drug treatment centre fall outside the statutory mandate of the Manitoba Housing renewal corporation.

(8) The provincial government does not have a co-ordinated plan for addiction treatment in Manitoba as it currently underfunds treatment centres which are running under capacity and potential.

(9) The community has been misled regarding the true intention of Manitoba Housing as the land is being transferred for a 50-bed facility even though the project is clearly outside of Manitoba Housing responsibility.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Vimy Arena site is not used for an addiction treatment facility.

(2) To urge the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure the preservation of public land along Sturgeon Creek for the purposes of parkland and recreational activities for public use, including being an important component of the Sturgeon Creek Greenway Trail and the Sturgeon Creek ecosystem under the current designation of PR2 for 255 Hamilton Ave. located at the Vimy Arena site, and to maintain the land to continue to be designated for parks and recreation active neighbourhoods and communities.

This has been signed by many Manitobans, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** In accordance with our rule 133(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to be received by the House.

### Flin Flon General Hospital Obstetric Services

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Access to quality health care is a fundamental right of all Manitobans, no matter where they live.

(2) The Premier slashed budgets, cancelled projects for northern communities, making it harder for families to get the primary health care they need.

(3) The budget of the northern regional health authority has been slashed by over \$6 million, which has negatively affected doctor retention programs and the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

(4) With limited service in the North, the Premier is forcing families and seniors to travel further for health care they need.

(5) On November 6, 2018, the northern regional health authority announced that obstetric delivery services at the Flin Flon General Hospital would be suspended, with no discussion regarding when they will be reinstated.

(6) The result of this decision is that mothers in Flin Flon and surrounding area will have to travel at least an hour and a half to The Pas, creating unnecessary risks for mothers and their babies.

(7) The people of Flin Flon are concerned for the health and safety of mothers-to-be and their babies, including the extra physical and financial stress that will be placed upon them by this decision of the provincial government.

(8) There has been no commitment from this provincial government that mothers and their escorts who have to travel to The Pas will be covered by the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

(9) Flin Flon General Hospital is a regional hub that serves communities on both sides of the Manitoba and Saskatchewan border.

(10) Because this provincial government has refused to invest in much-needed health-care services in The Pas, the hospital in The Pas may not be able to handle the extra workload created by this decision.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reinstate obstetric delivery services at Flin Flon General Hospital and to work with the government of Saskatchewan and the federal government to ensure

that obstetric services continue to be available on a regional basis.

And this petition, Madam Speaker, has been signed by many Manitobans.

### **Concordia Hospital Emergency Room**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government has announced the closures of three emergency rooms and an urgent-care centre in the city of Winnipeg, including closing down the emergency room at Concordia Hospital.

(2) The closures come on the heels of closing of nearby QuickCare clinics, as well as cancelled plans for ACCESS centres and personal-care homes, such as Park Manor, that would have provided important services for families and seniors in the area.

(3) The closures have left families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg without any point of contact with front-line health-care services and will result in them having to travel 20 minutes or more to St. Boniface Hospital's emergency room for emergency care.

(4) These cuts will place a heavy burden on the many seniors who live in northeast Winnipeg and visit the emergency room frequently, especially for those who are unable to drive or who are low-income.

(5) The provincial government failed to consult with families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg regarding the closing of their emergency room or to consult with health-care officials—sorry, with health officials and health-care workers at Concordia to discuss how this closure would impact care in advance of the announcement.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse the decision to close Concordia Hospital's emergency room so that families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg and the surrounding areas have timely access to quality health-care services.

This petition was signed by many Manitobans.

**Addictions Services—  
Brandon and Western Manitoba**

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

\* (14:50)

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Addictions are a health and social problem that requires—that require co-ordinated responses from the health-care, social services, education and justice systems.

(2) It is well known that the number of people addicted to alcohol, drugs and other substances is on the rise in Manitoba, with a notable increase in use of methamphetamine and opiates, two highly addictive and very destructive drugs.

(3) Between April 2015 and April 2018, drug abuse and alcohol abuse were two of the top three risk factors identified by the community mobilization Westman HUB when dealing with persons with acutely elevated risk.

(4) Recent Brandon Police Service annual reports show a steady increase in calls for service for crimes against property and person.

(5) In Brandon and western Manitoba, individuals seeking addictions treatment and the families trying to help them do not have local access to the services or supports they need.

(6) There is no publicly available centralized list of addictions facilities in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To request the provincial government consider establishing a cross-departmental team to provide leadership on a culturally appropriate, co-ordinated response to the growing addictions crisis in our province that includes an aggressive, widespread education campaign on the dangers of using methamphetamine and opiates, along with addictions education for front-line medical staff in health-care facilities.

(2) To request the provincial government consider providing additional addictions services in Brandon and western Manitoba across the continuum of care, including acute response, detoxification, long-term rehabilitation, transitional housing and support for managing co-occurring disorders.

(3) To request that the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living consider establishing a publicly available inventory of all addictions facilities in Manitoba.

(4) To request the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living consider providing supports for the families of people struggling with addiction, including counselling, patient navigation and advocacy, and direct access to free naloxone.

This petition is signed by many Manitobans, Madam Speaker.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY  
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**Madam Speaker:** The House will now consider the reply to the Throne Speech.

**THRONE SPEECH  
(First Day of Debate)**

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** I move, seconded by the member for Selkirk (Mr. Lagimodiere), that the following address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, thank Your Honour for the gracious speech addressed to us at this Fourth Session of the 41st Legislature of Manitoba.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Smith:** Madam Speaker, it is a tremendous honour to speak to our government's fourth Throne Speech in this 41st Legislature.

We are fast approaching the 150th anniversary of our great province. As we look to celebrate our sesquicentennial—is important milestone where we can look back on our past with pride, a province that was built both by our indigenous people and by the many groups who have immigrated here over the past century and a half. To know that we, in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, will be part of that 150 years of Manitoba's history is incredibly humbling.

Just two and a half years ago, in 2016, our Progressive Conservative caucus formed an historic majority government, and on April 20th of that year Manitobans woke up to blue skies and renewed hope for a brighter future, a future that would provide our children with the same opportunities that we inherited from our parents.

Manitobans are optimistic people and know that their future is in good hands. In fact, it is said that the only thing better than today in Manitoba is tomorrow in Manitoba.

Madame la Présidente, c'est un grand honneur pour moi de prendre la parole lors du quatrième discours du trône prononcé par notre gouvernement au cours de cette quarante-et-unième législature. Nous approchons rapidement du cent-cinquantième anniversaire de notre province. En célébrant notre anniversaire, il s'agit d'une étape importante dans laquelle nous pouvons nous tourner vers notre passé avec fierté : une province qui a été construite à la fois par notre peuple indigène et par les groupes nombreux qui ont immigré ici au cours des dernières 150 années. C'est une leçon d'humilité : à savoir, nous ferons partie des 150 ans de l'histoire du Manitoba, lorsque aujourd'hui nous siégerons au sein de cette Assemblée législative.

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

Puisque 2016, c'est deux ans et demi que notre parti Conservateur a formé un gouvernement majoritaire historique. Le 20 avril de cette année, les Manitobains se sont réveillés au ciel bleu et à un nouvel espoir d'un avenir meilleur, un avenir qui offrira nos enfants les mêmes possibilités que celles que nous avons héritées de nos parents.

Les Manitobains sont optimistes et savent que leur avenir va être bien soigné. En fait, on dit que la seule chose meilleure qu'aujourd'hui au Manitoba, c'est le futur du Manitoba.

### **Translation**

*Madam Speaker, it is a great honour for me to speak in response to our government's fourth Throne Speech in this 41st Legislature. We are fast approaching the 150th anniversary of our province. Celebrating our anniversary is an important milestone when we can look back at our past with pride: a province that was built by both our indigenous people and the numerous groups who have immigrated here over the last 150 years. It is a lesson in humility to know that we are going to be part of that 150 years of Manitoba's history as we sit in this Legislative Assembly today.*

*Indeed, 2016 marks two and a half years since our Conservative Party succeeded in forming a historic majority government. On April 20th of that year, Manitobans woke up to blue skies and a renewed hope for a better future, a future that offered our*

*children the same opportunities that we inherited from our parents.*

*Manitobans are optimistic and know that their future is going to be well taken care of. In fact, it is said that the only thing better than today in Manitoba is tomorrow in Manitoba.*

### **English**

For too long, Manitoba's approach to governing has focused on short-term, politically expedient decisions. Today, Madam Speaker, I am proud to say that our government has been working towards a long-term, economically sustainable approach to governing this great province.

It has been said that leadership is not just about the next election; rather, it's about the next generation. Manitobans know that their children deserve to enjoy the same levels of service that we have come to rely on. That is why our government is focused on fixing the finances of our Province so that our children are not saddled with an insurmountable debt.

With Christmas only a month away, imagine yourself decorating your home, building the excitement for Christmas with your children and all of their friends. We can all relate to being a child waiting for those long weeks just before Christmas. Families will have friends, relatives visit from across the province, the country and even from around the world.

On Christmas Day, at the crack of dawn, when children run to the Christmas tree to open their stockings, instead of finding presents, instead of finding coal, they find unpaid credit card bills, unpaid invoices and possibly even an eviction notice. Madam Speaker, that's not the future any parents want to leave for their children.

That's exactly why our government is working tirelessly to bring this province back to much-needed balance. A balanced approach will help us repair our services so that Manitobans can enjoy the same benefits today as they will five, 10 and 15 years from now.

Spending more and getting less was not a formula for success, and Manitobans deserve better. Their hard-earned money needs to be respected and used to deliver on tangible results. It has been a long time since Manitobans had a government that focused on results, and that is precisely why our government is working hard to repair our services.

As Progressive Conservatives, we believe that we should leave the province in better shape than the one we inherited. Our government continues to reduce wasteful spending on administrative layers, allowing us to invest in front-line services.

We have taken steps to improve and modernize our civil service by introducing the transformational capital project. Creating balanced scorecards will help us focus on outcomes and track our progress.

\* (15:00)

Our government inherited a complex and top-heavy health system where Manitobans were spending more per capita than any other province, yet were experiencing the longest wait times in the country. Manitobans need a health-care system that focuses on the patient and not on ballooning the bureaucracy.

We took the initiative to consolidate services in our Health Department and have seen reduction in wait times. We know that the proximity to emergency departments was not of much value when wait times were at record high.

We created a shelf-a-Shared Health Services, which brings together clinical experts from across the province to deliver a patient-centred, accessible, responsive health system that people can count on. Shared Health plans clinical and preventative services across the entire province, supported by centralized administrative functions that use human capital and financial resources in the best way possible. We work—they work collaboratively with communities to make sure they meet the health-care needs compassionately, effectively and as close to home as possible.

With the meth problem in Manitoba, our government has opened five Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine clinics. These clinics have focused on addressing the long wait times for Manitobans seeking treatment for substance-related concerns, whether they're opioids, methamphetamine or alcohol. The first clinic to open up opened up near HSC and was opened on August 31st of 2018.

In addition to repairing our services and fixing our finances, our government remains fully committed to rebuilding the economy.

Governments do not get elected only to serve the immediate needs of the province, but also to serve the interest of our collective future.

I am very proud to say that in a few short months my wife and I will be expecting our very first child. And, yes, our child, on February 23rd of 2019, will be Manitoba's youngest Tory.

Every day that I come to this Legislature, I'm reminded that what we do today will have an effect on our children and grandchildren, and even those who are not yet born. When making decisions that affect our province, we must frame our actions in this lens. And part of that thinking includes ensuring that our children will have a province with a bright and prosperous future.

That is why our government is working on a comprehensive economic development strategy for the province, ensuring that there are opportunities now and into our future. A comprehensive review has been initiated, led by both Dave Angus and Barb Angus—or Barb Gamey, where representatives from the private sector, industry, economic development agencies and many other stakeholders have been consulted. Additionally, an action plan will be released, outlining the restructuring of Growth, Enterprise and Trade, to align it with its partners.

I am proud to say that our government is, after a decade of debt, decay and decline, taking serious action on the environment. We have seen a scathing report from the Auditor General regarding the dismal performance of the previous government. Although they may have had a very good record on virtue signalling, they did very little to deliver any tangible results. We have listened to the concerns of Manitobans and I believe that we have struck the right balance between developing a green plan and saving Manitobans' hard-earned tax dollars by not introducing a carbon tax.

The previous administration increased the scope of their—the PST and then, shortly after, increased the amount of the PST charged to Manitobans to 8 per cent. This, after that previous government and that previous premier, Greg Selinger, promised they would not increase the PST. In fact, it was said that it's ridiculous, everyone knows that we're not going to increase the PST.

Madam Speaker, we are on track to reducing the PST back to its original 7 per cent, taking money off the Cabinet table and putting it back into the kitchen table.

Additionally, our government's on track to construct 1,200 new personal-care homes by 2025

and is currently investing in new child-care spaces for families across this great province.

Our government has made a tremendous progress in reducing our deficit. A deficit is nothing more than a deferred tax, and we, as responsible legislators, cannot justify mortgaging our children's future for short-term political gain. Although there's a time for politics, it does not come at the expense of our future and our children.

As a government, we have introduced a no-wrong-door policy in the Legislative Assembly addressing the neglected concerns of harassment complaints. The NDP government created a culture of cover-up when it came to staff complaints about harassment and sexual harassment. In fact, staff members were actually told to suck it up by then-chief of staff Michael Balagus.

We, on this side of the House, believe that the staff of all political parties should be free to bring their concerns forward and have them taken seriously.

We, on this side of the House, know that our government was elected by the people of this province, and I want to thank Manitobans for placing their trust in our government to fix our finances, repair our services and rebuild the economy.

I personally thank the people of Southdale for placing their trust in me as their representative in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. It remains a tremendous honour to represent our community as the MLA, and I will continue to work hard to maintain that trust.

Every day, as I enter the building and as I walk up the grand staircase, I am reminded of the responsibility that has been placed on us as legislators, that we're given a rare opportunity to sit in this Chamber on a daily basis and represent our communities. Very few Manitobans have that privilege, and I am incredibly humbled by the experience.

I could not be here today without the support of my friends, family, parents and all those who believed in me: my campaign team, my volunteers and, of course, my wife. At the time of the election, my wife and I actually weren't even engaged, but today we've been married for over a year and a half and expecting our first child. We'll be welcoming our new member of the Smith clan on February 23rd of 2019.

Again, I could not be here today without the tremendous support of the people of Southdale. Ours is dynamic community, ranging from young families to mature families to new Canadians and seniors. We have neighbourhoods such as Sage Creek; Bonavista; and more established areas such as Island Lakes, Royalwood and, of course, Southdale proper.

Our community is growing quickly thanks to the large number of young families moving into the area and the new Canadians who have immigrated here from all parts of the world. There has been tremendous growth in parts of the area like Sage Creek and Bonavista. With increasing diversity, ours a community—to people from all parts of Asia, Europe and Africa.

We have very active community members in our neighbourhoods, and with—a number of community-led groups. In Sage Creek, we have the Sage Creek Residents' Association, who have done an amazing job serving our community by hosting annual events such as the Sage Creek Canada Day Celebration, Tricks on the Trails, skate—and Skate with Santa.

The Sage Creek 'rendinse' association also deal—does a fantastic job welcoming new businesses to the community, advocating for the community and working closely with all three levels of government. I want to take the time to thank the Sage Creek Residents' Association for all the amazing work that you do in our community.

In Island Lakes, the Island Lakes Residents' Group has been instrumental in building the community over the many years they have been around. They have lobbied for and secured a number of projects for the area and organized neighbourhood events such as the spring barbecue, community clean-up day and the Island Lakes garage sale day.

Thank you to everybody who—for the incredible contribution to our neighbourhood. The longevity of the group is a testament to the value and the contribution they have to the neighbourhood.

The Southdale Community Centre is truly the heart of our community. The centre hosts a number of events year-round, but the most recent event occurred this past Saturday. The St. Boniface Seals came together to honour Owen Robertson, a nine-year-old player of the Seals.

Owen developed a tumour behind his right eye and has undergone chemotherapy. Due to his condition, he won't likely be playing this year. The



Seals have organized an event with the players of all ages cheering on Owen as he's ushered into the community centre by his parents.

The event brought over a thousand people, and the day the 9A2 red-seals red squared off against the River East Royals. It was an emotional and heartwarming event. The Royals, in fact, made a special presentation to Owen that very afternoon.

This strong sense of community is what makes me proud to represent and advocate for the people of Southdale. I know that our government will continue to work with the neighbourhood to ensure that we continue to grow and prosper.

Just recently, I, with the Minister of Families (Mrs. Stefanson) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), announced 74 new child-care spaces in Sage Creek. This came under the new Child Care Centre Development Tax Credit, which leverages the private sector to encourage investment in new child-care spaces.

\* (15:10)

Sage Creek was the first project announced under this tax credit, where the Province contributed \$740,000 and partnered with Qualico.

I know that child care remains an issue in our community and our government is using innovative strategies to address these and other important issues.

Since we have taken over from the NDP, we as a government had to play catch-up with our strategic infrastructure and child care is no exception. I'm very encouraged to see our province moving forward, being more innovative, and treating the private sector as a partner, rather than an adversary.

Cell service remains an issue across this province. As most people have moved away completely from the traditional landlines, cell service has become incredibly important. My colleagues in rural Manitoba have issues with cell service, and, interestingly enough, my own community of Island Lakes and Sage Creek had similar issues.

I have worked with community groups and other levels of government to advocate for more cell towers in our neighbourhood and, in fact, we were successful in getting a new cell tower in Sage Creek and continue to advocate for a new cell tower in Island Lakes.

Like all Manitobans, we believe that cell service is a matter of safety, and I know that my colleagues

in rural Manitoba, on this side of the House, are advocating very strongly for their constituents as well.

And Madam-Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do thank you for the opportunity, again, to speak to this Throne Speech that was delivered yesterday so eloquently by our Lieutenant Governor of this province.

I do want to leave the Legislative Assembly with this—that our government is looking to the future to ensure that our children and grandchildren have the same opportunities that were given to us.

As I said earlier, leadership is not about the next election; it's about the next generation.

Thank you.

**Mr. Alan Lagimodiere (Selkirk):** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly, thank you for the opportunity to rise in the House today and put a few words on the record as a secondary to the Throne Speech.

I wish to thank the Lieutenant Governor for yesterday's Throne Speech which outlined the government's agenda and focused on our government's ambitious plan for the upcoming session.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is truly an honour, a great privilege to be selected by the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and Executive Council to be the seconder to the Throne Speech.

I want to personally thank our Premier for his vision and leadership, as well as our ministers who are working very hard correcting the problems left by the previous government.

Many Manitobans have noticed our Premier often speaks about the Manitoba bison and how it faces into the storm, and many asked me what has this got to do with governing Manitoba.

As a veterinarian, I can help shed some light on this for all Manitobans to comprehend. I've always had a love for animals and wanted to understand as much as I could about their behaviours. There's a great lesson about success and leadership that comes from watching how animals respond to a storm.

I think the best way to understand what the Premier is saying is to compare the response of bison to that of domesticated cattle when a storm hits.

If you were to watch cattle and bison in the same field when a storm is approaching you would see two extremely different behaviours as they face the same storm. Cattle, like all animals, can sense a storm is coming. Instinctively, they always head away from the storm, and, as long as there is nothing stopping them, they will continue to move away from the oncoming storm.

The problem is instead of outrunning the storm, the cattle actually end up running right along with the storm. This only maximizes the amount of time that cattle spend in the storm and only increases their pain, suffering, stress and frustration that they experience from that storm.

Bison, on the other hand, are very unique in the animal kingdom. Bison also sense a storm is coming, but as the storm rolls in, the bison turn and head directly into the storm. By tackling the storm head on, bison minimize the amount of pain, frustration and time in the storm.

For humans, there's much to be learned from studying the different behaviours of cattle and bison as they face the very same storm. Their approaches are much different, however the lessons to be learned are important because in life individuals and governments are always dealing with some types of storms.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we don't always get to choose whether or not we have storms, nor when the storm will hit, but we do have a choice as to how we respond to those storms.

Our government has chosen to face the storms created by our previous government, head-on. This will lead us out of the storm much more quickly.

As we move forward to fix the finances, repair the services and rebuild our economy, we need to acknowledge, as a province, as a government, we face many threats and storms, including rising interest rates, trade disputes, federal tax rate increases and declining federal support for our health-care system. Our Throne Speech included all areas of government. We have made the choice to make the tough decisions we all know need to be made, and we are making those decisions after careful consideration and evaluation in order to get Manitoba out of the storm as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The Throne Speech sees our government continuing to make progress in all areas, reducing wasteful spending, placing a balanced-taking a

balanced approach, focusing on change and tracking our progress. Mr. Deputy Speaker, every government department was in the midst of a raging storm when we took office. The previous government was satisfied with the status quo and continued walking with the storm. They were a government afraid to face the facts. They were afraid to use science, afraid to trust the experts, afraid to make the tough decisions. Our Throne Speech shows we are not a government that is afraid to listen to experts or those on the front lines. Our government is not afraid to face the facts or to change the course for the betterment of all Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are so many departments I could speak to with respect to the Throne Speech, but I must keep my comments focused on only a couple in the essence of time. I will start with some of the largest government departments. Health care: The Throne Speech direction we are headed in is the direction the majority of Manitobans want our health care to take. Manitobans are pleased to hear our government continued commitment to working on improving our health-care system with a focus on ensuring Manitobans have sustainable access to services they need now and into the future.

Manitobans want a health-care system that is family centred, where the patient is at the centre of the health-care system. Manitobans also want us to ensure the system is sustainable for the long term while providing safety and the quality of care our health-care professionals want to, and are trained to, deliver. Manitobans know there was a storm in health care when we took government. They knew we had a very complex health-care system that was top heavy. Manitobans knew the previous government was running with the storm instead of facing it. The previous government's approach only exacerbated the problems in health care for all Manitobans, resulting in Manitoba having the worst health-care outcomes in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a government, we headed directly into the health-care storm created by the previous government. The Throne Speech continues on our plan to provide better care sooner. We are encouraged that our reforms and clinical services to date are showing early indications of positive outcomes, such as the reduced wait times at emergency departments. Seniors in my constituency are very pleased with our Throne Speech commitment to enhancing supports for those who want to remain independent and stay in their

homes as long as possible. We ran on a mandate of adding 1,200 additional personal-care-home beds over eight years. We are making progress towards that goal with the approval of 270 additional personal-care-home beds—140 in Steinbach, 10 in Carman and 120 in Winnipeg.

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

Madam Speaker, I am pleased the Throne Speech has us continue our progress toward the development of a provincial clinical and preventative services plan. Our government is doing this the right way by engaging hundreds of provincial clinicians to work to develop Manitoba's first ever provincial clinical preventative services plan in conjunction with a patient safety and accreditation strategy to ensure standards of care and accountability of delivery for health-care services across service organizations.

I'm encouraged by our government's creation in 2018 of Shared Health with a goal to provide co-ordinated clinical and business services to ensure consistency of health-care services across Manitoba.

I look forward to the forthcoming amendments to The Regional Health Authorities Act to consolidate four acts and clarify their respective roles of Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living; Shared Health; CancerCare Manitoba and our regional health authorities.

Madam Speaker, it is our government who commissioned the wait times task force to report on recommendations to address Manitobans' bottom-of-the-barrel wait times for hips, knees, cataracts and diagnostic services. Manitobans can rest assured we will carefully consider all of the recommendations of the task force.

\* (15:20)

Madam Speaker, Manitobans are also pleased to see we are also working to provide better health care in Manitoba through recruiting more doctors to practise in rural Manitoba. In our area alone, our IERHA has attracted 19 new doctors. Throughout Manitoba, 89 new doctors have been added to Manitobans' physician network. Ongoing physician recruitment and retention efforts will continue to be a key priority for our government.

We are focused on streamlining and co-ordinating medical services for all Manitobans. Providing poorly staffed units spread throughout the

province and city was not working. Some clinicians and departments were overworked and understaffed, while others were not seeing enough patients with specific problems to allow clinical staff to maintain their clinical expertise.

I'm also happy to hear in the Throne Speech our government's plan to broaden access to mental health and to addictions. For addictions, we have added RAAM clinics to five communities in Manitoba, including one last week in Selkirk.

When elected, residents in my area brought their concerns over the delays to access for addictions treatments to our government's attention; the concerns were that someone suffering from addiction who decided they were ready to seek professional help with their addiction was being placed on a very long waiting list.

Families, friends and those suffering from addiction sat by, waiting and hoping the call that support was available would come sooner than later, hoping the addiction would not become worse, praying the addict would not change their mind, or the worst possible outcome: their family member or friend would lose their battle to their addictions before help was available.

Madam Speaker, these clinics have been asked for by Manitobans, and we have delivered. These clinics will fast-track those with addictions who want treatment. Those seeking help will be connected with professionals who can begin immediate integration to support and treatment programs.

Madam Speaker, the Throne Speech also announced our government is beginning changes to The Child and Family Services Act and the child and family authorities act. When we were elected, serious problems existed in our Child and Family Services.

There was a storm of unimaginable magnitude. Serious problems existed in child-care spaces, Manitoba Housing, and, most disturbing of all, Madam Speaker, was Manitoba's child welfare system, which had some of the worst results in Canada, and horrible outcomes for our children.

The needs of our children in care, our most vulnerable, our future, were not being adequately addressed or delivered. One needs to ask just who was in charge during that period, and why did they—no, Madam Speaker, why would they let this happen

to some of our most vulnerable, those very individuals the NDP claim to advocate for?

Madam Speaker, the Throne Speech proves our government is continuing to face this storm head-on by following through with the most extensive Child and Family Services reform ever in Manitoba, with four goals: fewer children in care, fewer days in care, community-driven prevention, and lifelong connections.

It was appalling that Manitoba had the highest rate of children in care of any province in Canada. Our Throne Speech sees our government continue on our goal to reduce this number through new partnerships with communities and organizations, with a view toward family reunification and permanent homes for children and youth.

Madam Speaker, our ministers work long, hard hours to reduce the number of children in care through the development of new partnerships, new programs and new CFS reforms. The benefits of these changes are already evident in our province.

When we started, Manitoba was ranked 10th out of 10. We were the worst province when it came to addressing child poverty. Today we are now ranked fifth out of 10 in Canada. Manitoba has shown the greatest improvement in decreasing child poverty out of all Canadian provinces.

Madam Speaker, the Throne Speech outlined how our government is investing in child care and new initiatives to create new child-care spaces, to reduce wait times, to eliminate red tape and foster better outcomes for families with young children.

Our new Early Learning and Child Care Strategy is focusing on partnerships with other levels of government, traditional and home-based service providers, businesses, employers, schools, rural and northern communities, and is introducing new incentives for private investments in child-care spaces.

To address homelessness in Manitoba, we are working to improve the stock and quality of safe and affordable housing throughout our province. We continue to introduce new provincial housing strategies for affordable and social housing. We are working in partnership with non-profit groups, the private sector and other levels of government to deliver affordable–affordable housing solutions for Manitobans.

Our Throne Speech addresses every area of government. It is refreshing to see a government focused on listening to Manitobans, then following through with a Throne Speech that addresses these concerns.

Manitobans asked the previous governments whether there were options that might provide a better way to deliver the services Manitobans rely on from all government departments. The previous government response was that nothing they were doing should be reviewed. When reviews did occur, they decided to ignore the recommendations.

Our approach is quite the opposite, Madam Speaker. Our response was to engage Manitobans in consultations. We listened. We took Manitobans' concerns seriously and we came up with a plan to move forward. We asked those serving Manitobans the tough questions: questions about value for money, questions about what could be done to harness savings from Manitobans, to improve the services Manitobans rely upon and to expand our Manitoba economy—savings that can be reinvested back into providing better sustainable services.

Madam Speaker, it is important to state those we asked the questions of have stated it is not only our right but our obligation, our duty as their elected representatives to ask questions about efficiency. We initiated the transformation capital contest, which saw front-line workers and government departments bring forward their ideas to produce better outcomes for all Manitobans while decreasing costs for taxpayers. Their ideas focused on transforming government departments, reducing red tape and delivering services more effectively.

Madam Speaker, the road to recovery is not an easy one, but the Throne Speech outlined an ambitious and detailed list: reducing wasteful spending; transforming the culture and work of public service; ensuring a safe and harassment-free workplace; modernizing procurement practices; ending the need to be unionized to bid on government projects; understanding and addressing the cost to our society for mental health; a new flexible framework for public housing to deliver cost-effective housing; removing barriers to Manitobans with disabilities; reducing 'powerty' and helping Manitobans who want to work transition from welfare to our workplace; pausing gaming expansion; increasing the number of women serving on boards; making communities safer through our

Criminal Justice System Modernization Strategy; enhancing supports for victims of domestic violence; a first-in-Canada family resolution service; working with our dedicated teaching professions and support staff to improve educational outcomes; committing to supporting the vitality of Manitoba's French population; streamlining supports for our non-profit sectors; an action plan including goals and priorities for economic development; advancing reconciliation for respective, productive consultations; a long-term Look North strategy focused on priorities and economic development; ensuring the safety of Manitobans following the legalization of Canada; supporting Manitobans' agribusiness industry; and continued investments in clean energy, climate mitigation and adaptation.

Madam Speaker, this is by no means an all-inclusive list, but it goes to the heart of our Manitoba government working to be the most improved province in Canada.

The outline and agenda in the Throne Speech was quite clear as we continue on our course our government set out in 2016—our promise to fix the finances, restore the services and rebuild the economy. We are continuing on the new course with a broad and ambitious plan. Our plan has been focused on long-term, sustainable measures. Our plan is producing exciting results. For the first time in years, we have a government which is producing positive results for all Manitobans.

Madam Speaker, all Manitobans know that change is never easy. They also know that this government is not losing sight that this work needs to be done—work that is needed, work that is bringing our province closer to being Canada's most improved province every day that we are in power. As a government, we are committed to ensuring value for money for Manitobans. We are a government that is asking the questions Manitobans want answered.

Madam Speaker, value for money matters to all Manitobans except members opposite, who do not seem to understand what value for money means. Coming from a business and scientific background, it is—extremely important principle to follow. Members opposite believe it means providing cheaper services, a practice we saw year after year under NDP government as they threw more and more money at problems while obtaining poorer and poorer results. On this side of the House, and for the majority of Manitobans, value for money means finding

procedures which can produce better outcomes for the same or lesser costs.

\* (15:30)

Through providing goods and services at a lower cost, we can then take those savings and redirect them—more goods and more services or lower taxes. More goods and services ultimately means more jobs and more job security and more opportunities for all Manitobans. Lower taxes means Manitobans will have more of their own monies to spend on areas they know are priorities for their families. Manitobans understand this concept.

Madam Speaker, we are making the tough choices we were elected to make. We will continue to face storms head-on, and, more specifically, when we respond to those storms, we need to learn from the Manitoba bison: We are thinking smarter. We are minimizing the time in the storm.

We need to admit when problems are on the horizon, and we need to face our storms head-on. We need to accept the fact that procrastination, running with the storm and indulgence turns out to be creditors that charge you interest—interest that eventually becomes overwhelming, leaving one mentally stressed and one's future compromised.

Madam Speaker, in the coming days, I hope all members opposite will be taking their opportunity to honestly represent their constituents by openly discussing the Throne Speech and not place their own political agendas before the concerns of Manitobans or their constituents' concerns.

As members in this House, we should be proud to be part of a government that faces the storm head-on to minimize the effects for all Manitobans. As a government, we continue to work hard for the betterment of all Manitobans. The Throne Speech is keeping us on course. More blue skies are on the horizon—blue skies for every government department and for every Manitoban.

Madam Speaker, we are continuing on the new course with a broad and ambitious plan. Our plan has been focused on long-term sustainable measures. This is why we were elected. This is why we will be re-elected in the future. And this is why we as a government will work as a team to continue to fix the problems created by the previous government. This is why we will face the storms ahead head-on,

and this is how, and why, we will be Canada's most improved province.

Madam Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Throne Speech.

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I move, seconded by the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), that debate be adjourned.

*Motion agreed to.*

**Mr. Kinew:** I'd ask for leave to call it 5 o'clock.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to call it 5 o'clock?  
*[Agreed]*

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

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 21, 2018

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