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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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

Tuesday, May 7, 2019

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Good afternoon, everybody. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Madam Speaker: Introduction of bills? Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

National Child and Youth Mental Health Awareness Day

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): Madam Speaker, today is National Child and Youth Mental Health Awareness Day. Each year on May 7th, a special focus is put on the progress that has been made in supporting our youth through the challenges of maintaining a healthy mind in a pressure-filled world. There is still much more work yet to be done, but our society has shown that growth is possible when we all work together.

Madam Speaker, there are angels who walk among us, and I believe many of them work in the mental health field.

It was an honour to be a part of today's reception here at the Legislative Building and to present a proclamation on behalf of our government to recognize the significance of this day and to end the stigma surrounding mental health. Supporters today are wearing a green band around their heads to signify the message that we are to band together for mental health.

There is nothing that prepares a parent or caregiver to hear their child say they want to end their life. Yet many parents have heard these words, and many more will hear them. The fear that will grip their hearts like a vice will remain with them through the journey to find supports, but they won't be alone.

Madam Speaker, we are joined in the gallery today by some of the angels who walk among us.

We have Carmyn Aleshka, founder of KIDTHINK, and Analyn Einarson, executive director for KIDTHINK. Also joining us are Project 11 representatives Suzi Friesen and Kerri Waldbauer; La Division scolaire franco-manitobaine director of student services, Daniel Preteau; and

Tara Brousseau Snider from Manitoba disorder–Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba. Joining these guests are staff and friends who are all advocates of child and youth mental health.

I ask my colleagues in the Chamber to please join me in thanking each of them for all the hard work they do.

Thank you.

Winnipeg's North End

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): This government continues to let down Winnipeg's North End.

They claim to care about women, yet they cut funding to both North Point Douglas Women's Centre as well as the North End Women's Centre. The funding cut threatened the centres' ability to run their drop-in and counselling programs, which serviced vulnerable women in the community.

They claim to prioritize Manitoba's marginalized communities, yet they cut Manitoba Housing repair programs that supported essential home renovations to those without the financial means to repair their homes. This includes seniors, those with disabilities and low-income earners.

They claim to support community groups, yet the new building sustainability communities program will require non-profits to come up with 50 per cent of a project's cost on their own. If the group can't come up with its fundraising goal, the government's funding will be reduced. This puts a huge burden on community groups in low-income areas like the North End, who struggle to raise more money than groups working in more affluent neighborhoods.

There was no consultation, Madam Speaker, and they continue to make it more difficult for non-profits in the North End to provide essential services to the community.

To make matters worse, the election financing law imposed by this government is making it harder for marginalized people to get elected and represent their communities' best interests. Previously passed bills 9 and 26 eliminated the per-vote 'subsidy' for registered political parties and raised the political donation allowance to \$5,000, ensuring that only the wealthy are favoured.

This government needs to start supporting the programs and initiatives that help communities like the North End thrive, and they need to stop making it harder for the people living in these communities to get elected in this very Legislature.

Fort la Reine Museum Heritage Trust Fund

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): I am pleased to share with this House that Portage la Prairie's Fort la Reine Museum has established its first heritage trust fund in partnership with the Community Foundation of Portage and District and the Winnipeg Foundation, creating a sustainable source of revenue for the museum with an avenue for donors to support the museum now and into the future.

The museum received their first \$50,000 contribution from the Gilbert Vust estate, and with the Manitoba government program matching 50 per cent of every dollar contributed to it, \$25,000 in government funds helped stretch this.

This endowment fund will help the museum thrive long-term, helping to cover operation, programming and infrastructure costs. Fort la Reine Museum is dedicated to collecting, 'preserving' and exhibiting the history of the Portage la Prairie area and the natural and cultural heritage of the Canadian Prairies.

Home to 25 unique heritage buildings displaying thousands of artifacts, the museum provides educational opportunities, tourism information, interactive experiences to all visitors. It is the world—it also houses the world's largest indoor collection of Allis-Chalmers equipment and memorabilia, established by Gilbert Vust in 1996.

Executive director Madison Connolly says: By establishing Fort la Reine Museum fund through the Manitoba Heritage Trust Program, we can rely on annual funding model to help keep history education in our institution alive.

Please join me in acknowledging the museum director, Madison Connolly, and her assistant, Rachel Head, and through them, the volunteers who are dedicated to preserving our heritage.

Swan Valley Stampeders Hockey Team

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): I rise in the House today to recognize our Swan Valley Stampeders Junior A hockey team.

In their 20th season, the Swan Valley Stampeders stampeded their way to one goal away

from winning the Turnbull Cup in overtime and game 7 of the series. This was the first time in franchise history the Stampeders reached the MJHL final.

What excitement this playoff run created in our Swan River Valley. The corral was packed game after game as the playoffs heated up.

This team started their year with some challenges, like not having a head coach, but that didn't slow them down.

The playoffs were the buzz of the valley and momentum built to pre-game tail gate parties to the school students and residents lining the streets to send the Stamps off on road trips. What an exciting time.

The final series was loaded with excitement. First off, a game 7 series that was decided in overtime; but how about three dramatic overtime games in one series.

A long-time Stampeder assistant coach, Darren Webster stated: Watching and hearing the buzz on social media and seeing people wearing their Stampeder gear was incredible. All those that brought their jerseys out of the closets and wore them on game days, alumni reaching out and showing their pride in their team and all the fans proudly displaying Stampeder logos all over the town is what I will always remember.

Ryan, Darren and head coach Barry—hats off to your efforts. With only four losses for the ANAVET Cup winners, the Portage Terriers, three came at the hands of the Stampeders.

Congratulations, the Swan Valley Stampeders. Oh so close. Go Stamps go.

Shirley Malcolm Fontaine

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I would like to acknowledge Shirley Malcolm Fontaine for her contributions to Manitoba First Nations and her lifelong commitment to improving education opportunities for our children. She was an inspirational woman and has joined her husband Earl Fontaine and our ancestors into the spirit world. Earl was my employee for a bit here in the Legislature.

Shirley was born and raised in Ebb and Flow First Nation. She attended the day school there, graduated from Ste. Rose high school, and graduated with degrees from the University of Manitoba,

including a bachelor of arts and a master of education.

* (13:40)

Shirley continued her commitment to lifelong learning by pursuing a Ph.D. in education from the University of Manitoba. She was nearing its completion at the time of her passing.

Shirley began her career in First Nations education by working with the Manitoba Indian Education Association in the late 1970s and the late 1980s. She was one of the youngest First Nations instructors at the University of Manitoba when she began teaching her Anishinaabe language. She has always been connected to initiatives that advanced First Nations education and broke new ground.

As the education director of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, she helped create Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre, which provides the province's leading education, administration, technology, language and culture services—cultural services to First Nations high schools here in Manitoba. She also participated in the planning of the first Honouring First Nations Treaties Day at the Manitoba Legislature.

At the time of her passing, Shirley was the associate executive director at the MFNERC. Her most recent work was leading Manitoba First Nations—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to allow the member to conclude her statement? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Klassen: —strategies on First Nations languages, early learning, special education and post-secondary education.

Shirley believed in her people, language and commitment to bettering our youth through education. She will be missed, and I would like to request a moment of silence for her and Earl.

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

Please rise.

A moment of silence was observed.

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 have seated in the public gallery from École Sainte-Anne Immersion 25 grade 4 and 5 students under the direction of Nicole Desmarais, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lagassé).

Also seated in the public gallery from Twin Rivers Country School we have 10 grade 5 to 9 students under the direction of Steve Warkentin, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Smook).

And also seated in the public gallery from Thompson we have Ken Marshall and he is here as a guest of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Concordia and Seven Oaks Hospitals Request to Retain ER Services

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, families in northeast Winnipeg have been saying for years now that they want their emergency room open, not closed, and yet the Premier is not listening. We know that in spite of nurses carrying this message, in spite of health-care professionals carrying this message, in spite of people right across that quadrant of the city saying they want the Concordia emergency room to stay open, that this government is proceeding full steam ahead with their plans to close it.

And we've already seen the results of this misguided and rushed plan. We know that emergency room wait times are increasing month over month and year over year. Surgery wait times are increasing under this government's watch and, of course, nurse mandatory overtime is increasing.

With all this in mind, will the Premier cancel his plans to close the emergency room at Concordia and announce a new plan that includes keeping the emergency room open?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): The member's confused in his preamble, Madam Speaker. The actual—according to the Canadian institute of health information the actual numbers for waits—which

were the worst in Canada at Concordia Hospital for emergency treatment—have improved significantly. In fact, compared to the last year the NDP were in power, a 42-minute improvement in average wait times.

That's a significant improvement. More needs to be done. That's an improvement of just under 14 per cent, but it represents literally thousands of hours that Manitobans in that area of the city and province do not have to wait and are receiving care sooner. Progress is being made, never as fast as you would like, but certainly faster than was ever the case under the previous government.

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

Mr. Kinew: Well, Madam Speaker, no one believes the Premier when it comes to health care, and it's probably because the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's own statistics don't match up with what he's saying. We know that the WRHA's statistics are clear. They say that emergency room wait times have been going up every month since they started to close emergency rooms, and they're even higher now than when they first hatched this misguided and rushed plan to try and close emergency rooms across the city of Winnipeg. Not only that, surgery wait times are increasing. Nurses are being forced to work excessive amounts of mandatory overtime, and all the Minister of Health can do is heckle here in question period. He can't do anything to improve health care for the people of Manitoba.

We say that that's the wrong approach. We would ask this government to commit to a new direction when it comes to health care, beginning by announcing that Concordia and Seven Oaks emergency rooms will stay open.

Mr. Pallister: Well, Madam Speaker, if the member wants to have a duel with me on the issue of trust, I—he shouldn't come in unarmed, and the fact is we're doing what we promised to do.

The fact is the NDP government didn't do what it promised to do. It promised to end hallway medicine; instead, it created highway medicine where people were driving elsewhere to find treatment as far away as the United States, and that wasn't a solution. There were no solutions to be found when the NDP were in government. So the member ought not to, you know, attack from a glass house, Madam Speaker, throw stones, so to speak.

We are achieving progress. It took courage to pursue this reform. The previous government lacked that courage. We do not.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, nobody in Manitoba voted to close emergency rooms in the last election, and nobody voted to close ambulance stations right across the province, and yet that's what this Premier has done with his time in office. It's not a great legacy, but it is his record.

We know that his record is also that there are fewer nurses working in the bedside in Winnipeg because of the cuts that he's made, and those that remain are being worked to exhaustion. They, in turn, are calling in sick the following day, cancelling their shifts, and then the mandatory overtime continues to pile up for all the other nurses who are left holding the bag. This system is being moved into chaos and it's a result of this Premier's cuts.

Our suggestion is simple: stop the damage when it comes to health care.

Will the Premier agree and will he begin taking this new direction by announcing that he will keep the emergency rooms at Concordia and Seven Oaks open?

Mr. Pallister: Well, the member's, again, resorted to false statements in his preamble, as he is accustomed to doing, Madam Speaker. The actual overtime hours are down 26 per cent for nurses between 2016 and last year, the most recent up-to-date numbers we have. Ambulance fees are down 50 per cent from the highs of the NDP time, and the member chooses to attack my record. I welcome any comparison that the public might like to make between my record of keeping my word and his record.

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

Mental Health Recommendations Implementation of VIRGO Report

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, Madam Speaker, we know that today is a day to advance mental health for children and youth, and it was just yesterday that the Canadian Mental Health Association released a new report which called on governments across the country to take action to improve mental health.

Unfortunately, we've seen the opposite from this Premier. We know that the VIRGO report that he asked for has been sitting on a shelf collecting dust. Both he, his current and his past ministers of Health have refused to bring forward a plan to implement the recommendations of their VIRGO report, which is to say nothing of the recommendations that they erased from the VIRGO report that would have taken real action to fight addictions, Madam Speaker.

We know that the needs for mental health services in Manitoba have never been greater, particularly for young people in our province.

We'd ask the Premier: When is he going to bring forward a real plan to implement the VIRGO report?

* (13:50)

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, we have reserved \$20 million in this year's budget to allow the Province to sign on to a bilateral agreement with the federal government. We have partnered with Bell Let's Talk to contribute \$1 million to the Strongest Families Institute to expand mental health services. We've made a \$7-million investment in the 75-mental-health-bed consolidation and renovation project at the Vic; a number of other things, Madam Speaker. We are making progress on this important issue and I welcome the member's ideas if he has additional initiatives he'd like us to pursue and consider.

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

Inclusion in School Curriculum

Mr. Kinew: Well, unfortunately, Madam Speaker, they may have signed on to the federal government's plan, but they haven't spent any of the money. There are no new resources in Manitoba under this government to advance mental health. We know that their most recent budget didn't commit to hiring one more mental health doctor, nurse or psychologist in the province.

We hear over and over again from parents who say that they want their children to be able to access more mental health services. We hear from teachers, regularly, who tell us: We're experts at teaching; we are not experts at mental health. We need supports in classrooms. That's perhaps why the Canadian Mental Health Association recommended that mental health education be a compulsory part of school curricula. This would increase awareness and help many young people right across the province.

Would the Premier agree that including mental health education in Manitoba school curricula would be an important first step?

Mr. Pallister: The addition of six mental health in-patient beds at Health Sciences Centre just last year, Madam Speaker. The member says we're not investing. We are. So he's false in his assertions yet again. Doubling the number of women's treatment beds from 12 to 24 at the Addictions Foundation Portage Avenue site—these are significant and additional investments as well, again, giving the lie to the member's statement. Contrary to his false assertions in his preamble, we've also invested almost one and a half million dollars in the creation of rapid access clinics: walk-in clinics to treat individuals seeking help specifically for substance-related problems. These investments continue. Total investments well in excess of \$400 million more in health care than the NDP ever invested in health care, Madam Speaker.

The member may choose to be critical, but he's not accurate in his assertions when he does so.

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

Social Determinants of Health

Mr. Kinew: Well, we know that the government's record on addictions is abysmal because they've refused to take action. And similarly, they haven't done enough when it comes to mental health supports, Madam Speaker. We know that in order for us to get a handle on the mental health issues confronting Manitobans, that you also need to work on the social determinants of mental health: issues like housing, confronting poverty, offering access to training and jobs, and also supporting seniors to be able to age in place in the community. The CMHA report called for these sorts of measures, and yet this Premier has cut training for trades and nurses. He saw fit to increase tuition, including, again, the University of Winnipeg increased their tuition today. He sold off housing, and of course, they've cut supports for premier—for seniors in the community.

Will the Premier reverse course and instead invest in housing, invest in seniors, invest in jobs as part of a comprehensive approach to improving the social determinants of mental health in Manitoba?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, again, the member's assertions are utterly and totally inaccurate. The VIRGO report itself, if the member chose to read it with comprehension, noted that the NDP's approach

was unco-ordinated, Madam Speaker. The VIRGO report, if the member would choose to read it with comprehension, also said, that the NDP's approach to mental health was siloed. The member also would like to note, if he was to read the report with comprehension, that the VIRGO report noted the NDP's approach was characterized by excessive waits.

Madam Speaker, we're investing in mental health for effective outcomes for Manitobans. The previous government broke the system that we are now repairing.

Health-Care System Reform Service Delivery Concerns

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, for two years the message to this Premier (Mr. Pallister) from the community has been clear: keep the Concordia ER open. They've told him that the cuts that he's imposed on our health-care system are having real and severe consequences for families across northeast Winnipeg. But he wouldn't listen. Time and time again he's defended a decision that has caused chaos in our health-care system and made wait times worse. Now as staff are starting to leave because they know it's only a matter of weeks until the closure, patient care is suffering even more.

Why is this Premier refusing to stand and be accountable for the damage that his cuts are having on Manitobans?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): That member's only advice to Manitobans, Madam Speaker, is to go back. His message is clear. He tells Manitobans, go back. But Manitobans know what going back means. It means going back to the NDP failed 16-and-a-half-year experiment at the expense of Manitobans in waiting longer, waiting the highest levels in Canada, and not getting the care they need.

We believe in the plan to transform the health-care system based on evidence, based on the success of other jurisdictions. We will continue on this road to get better health care for Manitobans.

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

Mr. Wiebe: Madam Speaker, two years ago the Pallister government began closing emergency rooms, an urgent-care centre and clinics across Winnipeg. Since then, wait times are up across the city and are through the roof at Concordia Hospital.

Nurses have told him to slow down. Patients have told him to stop. With thousands of petitions, post cards, signs, the community has begged him to reconsider.

Now, at the eleventh hour, the government has called for a management review, but the damage has been done, Madam Speaker. Concordia has seen massive departures and there's chaos in our health-care system.

Why won't the Premier just admit that it was his decisions that have caused so much chaos and so much damage to our health-care system?

Mr. Friesen: The member for Concordia, Madam Speaker, has one tired message, and it is go back. I want to inform all Manitobans—I regret to inform that member, though—that the preliminary data for the month of April does show that emergency wait times are down and that we are past that what we would call that winter seasonal surge that we often see.

So I can tell him that wait times are trending down. He knows that nurse overtime is trending down. It doesn't mean that there aren't challenges in massively reforming the health-care system. We know that it does cause transition and that transition means change. It's why we've brought in Dr. Dave Peachey to validate the approach, to conduct quality assurance, to let us know what's working and what—let us know what might require additional resourcing.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Concordia, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Wiebe: Madam Speaker, from the beginning, the decision to close the Concordia emergency room was made by the Premier and the Premier alone. Front-line staff didn't make that decision. The community certainly didn't make that decision. Even Dr. Peachey didn't make that decision. It was the Premier who decided that a budget line was more important than the health care of Manitobans.

Now, as the Premier seems dead set on calling a snap election, he has a problem and he's looking for any political cover that he can find, but the reality is the damage is already done: longer wait times, less care at the bedside and massive departures of staff at Concordia Hospital.

Will this Premier reverse his decision and keep the Concordia ER open?

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, the member is just wrong. He knows, if he would bother to read the report, that the provincial clinical and preventative services plan clearly shows that by transforming the system and by rationalizing the number of emergency rooms, what happens as a result is that wait times actually fall. This is a clinical plan based on evidence by an independent expert who has done this in other regions and it worked.

Now, that member can say go back, but Manitobans know that there is no wanting to go back to a time of waiting longer for a service that wasn't there. We are transforming the health-care system. It is to strengthen the system. It is to reinvest in the system.

We are on the right track. More and more evidence shows we are getting results.

* (14:00)

Front-Line Services Consultant Spending

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): In November 2018 it was reported the Premier spent \$16 million on high-priced consultants in his—just his first two years in office. That is an incredible number and shows just exactly who the Premier is not listening to. He's not listening to front-line workers, families or communities. They have told this Premier time and time again to stop his plan for cuts. It shows a Premier that only cares about numbers and not families and Manitobans that are behind his callous cuts.

Why is the Premier refusing to listen to regular, concerned Manitobans?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, you'd think that a political organization like the NDP that is so bereft of any ideas would understand the importance of actually listening to those with expertise, but I guess they don't, Madam Speaker.

Actually, the total investment, which has already been paid back in multiples on consulting with Manitobans and with those from around the country and the world with expertise, has paid back many times already, but it doesn't compare, Madam Speaker, to the investment the NDP made in sole-source Tiger Dams purchases from a donor. It's actually less than that.

So, Madam Speaker, that was wasted money. We're investing money to find better ideas to make

Manitoba services better, fix our finances and make sure we rebuild—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —our economy in Manitoba. And, Madam Speaker, it's working. The only thing better than today in Manitoba is going to be tomorrow in Manitoba.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Well, when the Premier's massive payout to consultants was revealed by media, he didn't stop. Since November, the Premier has increased his spending on consultants by 50 per cent, Madam Speaker. It appears the Premier has committed to over seven million more dollars to consultants since only last November. That's \$23 million in total costs to consultants instead of investment to front-line services and programming.

Why is the Premier spending so much money, millions of dollars, on consultants rather than listening to regular, concerned Manitobans?

Mr. Pallister: This comes from political organization that fell apart—tore itself apart—because it wouldn't even listen to its own caucus members and colleagues, Madam Speaker. I don't need advice from the NDP on the ability to listen. We've demonstrated that by having over 30,000 Manitobans participate in our prebudget consultations thus far and by adopting ideas from our front-line workers in places like the Grace emergency room, by incorporating ideas that are coming from front-line civil servants to achieve better performance sooner for Manitobans in various categories.

We are engaging our civil servants and our front-line workers in ideas generation like no government has in the history of Manitoba, Madam Speaker. We'll continue to do that.

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

Ms. Fontaine: The Premier has spent \$23 million on high-priced consultants. That's a massive sum, Madam Speaker.

To put that in perspective, that amount could keep Seven Oaks ER running for three years. It could keep Concordia ER running for three years. But instead of investing in Manitoba front-line services, the Premier is giving millions of dollars to consultants and his friends. Decisions aren't being made

by front-line experts or Manitoba families; they're being made by accountants on behalf of all of us.

Why is the Premier spending so much money not to listen to concerned, regular Manitobans?

Mr. Pallister: Well, measure us on results, Madam Speaker, we're fine with that. We've set up a \$50-million ideas fund for front-line generated projects that's going to pay back at least triple that over the next 10 years.

Madam Speaker, we're listening to front-line workers in the respect of improving services at the front-line. We're engaging front-line workers. We're engaging Manitobans more broadly in generating ideas, but, more importantly, based on the Treasury Board projections where the NDP had us going, we started at close to a billion-dollar deficit, we were going to \$1.7 billion, and this year, instead of \$1.7 billion as was projected, we're 80 per cent lower on deficit.

Madam Speaker, what that means is we're saving millions of dollars that would've gone to happy moneylenders, thanks to the NDP and their overspending, that's instead being invested in services for Manitobans. That's getting results for Manitobans, something the NDP knows absolutely nothing about. All they know about is how to raise taxes and make it harder for Manitoba families and seniors and small businesses to survive in this province.

We're going to support those people; they ignored them. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Community Places Program Project Approval Concerns

Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition): The Community Places Program was by all accounts a highly effective, fair way of funding small projects across the province. It—on average it levered three and a half times more investment than it put in and more than paid for itself, and, naturally, with that kind of return on investment this government chose to shut it down.

I table a document that shows the most recent list of approved projects in the order they were announced. There are two things that are curious about it, Madam Speaker. First, of 187 projects, 158—or 85 per cent—are in PC-held ridings; second, the first 140 projects are listed in alphabetical order by constituency—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lamont: —which we have added.

Can the Premier please explain whether the non-partisan staff at Community Places were directed by anybody, any political staff, to add the constituency to the projects that would benefit so they could cherry-pick them?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, because our party was fortunate enough to be supported by Manitobans in the last election, we represent most of the ridings, and that would be the reason that the money goes to those ridings.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Second Opposition—*[interjection]* Order. Order.

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

Mr. Lamont: I would like to table another document. It's a spreadsheet we obtained with a list of approved and unapproved projects for the Community Places Program. The first column is a dollar figure, sometimes up to \$50,000; the second column is blank; the fourth column is approved projects; the fifth is projects that didn't cut muster. It's the middle column that's most interesting. I can't read it out loud, Madam Speaker, since it features members' names. But I can read their constituencies: the members from Midland, Morris, Morden-Winkler, Agassiz, Lac du Bonnet, Steinbach, La Verendrye, St. Paul, Dawson Trail, Selkirk, Gimli, Interlake, Lakeside and Thompson, just a few.

Can the Premier explain why his government asked public servants to provide the names and constituents of members next to projects that are supposed to be approved and chosen independently based on merit, not politics?

Mr. Pallister: He's got me there, Madam Speaker, I'll tell you. It might be because that's where the money went. It went to those ridings which are listed on the chart that he's just handed me. I would expect that's why the dollars are matched up with the name of the riding and the name of the MLA and the name of the project. That would probably be the reason.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

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

Mr. Lamont: The Community Places Program all to be—also used to be open to First Nations. The government's website now says that they are currently reviewing the program, but this government appears to effectively shut out First Nations from applying for these grants unless it is with a co-applicant.

First Nations are all still Manitobans; they should be able to apply for this grant as much as anybody else.

Has this government effectively cut off First Nations for applying for the community grants program?

Mr. Pallister: Not at all, Madam Speaker. We don't act like the Trudeau government and shut out indigenous women for respecting the rule of law and nor do we fail to stand up for communities all over the province.

I should mention, in the list the member provided me, that there is an exciting project here, the garderie—the bambino co-op, or something like that. I can't read it without my glasses. I'll just try again: the Garderie de Bambins Co-op Incorporated, natural playground and pergola, landscaping, water softener project that's listed here as being \$6,500 in St. Boniface. So I congratulate the member. It does say NDP/Liberal on here. So it must've been held by the NDP at one time and then, I assume, the member won the seat for the Liberal Party.

Snow Lake Centre on Family Violence, \$13,000, in Flin Flon—the member from Fort Rouge doesn't appear to support that project, but we do—Governing Council of The Salvation Army in Canada—

*(14:10)

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired. *[interjection]* Order.

Selkirk Laundry Service Closure Concerns

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Selkirk laundry has been a staple in the community of Selkirk for over 40 years, providing needed laundry service to patients and residents in hospitals, personal-care homes and medical clinics. The future of Selkirk laundry has been put in jeopardy since this government's \$750,000 KPMG report recommended its closure.

For months now, these 43 employees have been facing uncertainty and the minister and member for

Selkirk (Mr. Lagimodiere) are refusing to answer any questions.

Will the minister stand up today in this House and commit to keeping Selkirk laundry open?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, I do welcome any question from the NDP on dirty laundry, but this is a serious matter she raises.

I can assure that member that there will continue to be dirty laundry turned to clean laundry in the community of Selkirk. She points to 43 people that she thinks are in danger of losing their jobs, but that's not the case because we respect the bargaining process by which those employees could reapply in, based on their seniority, for jobs that will be posted.

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

Mrs. Smith: I don't think the 43 employees in Selkirk would think that was funny. Shame on the minister for laughing at those employees that are worried about their jobs.

Not only does Selkirk laundry provide a vital—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Smith:—public service, but also Selkirk mayor, Larry Johannson, pointed out, it's one of the city's largest employees, employing 43 people. Closure would be a big hit to the livelihood of these 43 people living in Selkirk. Larry Johannson wants to keep it open. I know on this side of the House we want to keep it open.

Will the minister stand up in this House today, apologize to those employees for laughing and commit to keeping that laundry service going in Selkirk?

Mr. Friesen: So the member's assertion is: don't change a thing. The NDP presided over a health-care system that cost \$1,000 more per person than the Canadian average in the delivery of health care. But did that get them that much more value in a system? No, because our wait times were the longest in Canada.

There is a reasonable suggestion to say you have two laundry services existing 25 kilometres apart. Can you make them co-operate better? That was the question. The answer was, yes, you could make them co-operate better by collaboration. There will be jobs posted.

The people who are working in Selkirk are welcome and able and, according to their labour agreements, able to actually apply in for consideration for those jobs that will be posted.

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

Mrs. Smith: I gave the minister an opportunity to apologize. Of course, he didn't.

The members of Selkirk keep saying that he—they need more information on this issue but, of course, the minister or the member from Selkirk are refusing to give them any information. But that's simply not the case, Madam Speaker. It's his job to provide those 43 employees with the information they need about their jobs.

Will the minister stand up today and guarantee that all 43 of those people that are employed at the Selkirk laundry have a job in the future?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I do appreciate the preamble of the member because it gives me the opportunity to respond in respect of covering up information.

We understand that the NDP organization is now going to not allow Steve Ashton to run, not for covering up information—which he did at times, Madam Speaker, in respect of untendered contracts, certainly—but rather for releasing information in respect of the past conduct of one of his colleagues.

Now, Madam Speaker, this non-disclosure rule the NDP has brought in for candidates would be interesting if it's being applied to all other candidates. Penalties for people who disclose facts—it doesn't make much sense in any political organization, but certainly, the NDP needs to answer the question is it better to have candidates run who have previously covered up facts, or is it better to have candidates not run who have previously not disclosed facts. Which of those two?

Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund Equipment and Safety Initiatives

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Our local police forces do an invaluable job every day keeping communities—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Nesbitt: —across Manitoba safe. These brave front-line heroes deserve our support, and that's exactly what they're receiving from our government.

Last week, the Minister of Justice was in Westman to share some good news with the police forces in Rivers and Brandon.

Can the minister please share the details of these announcements with the House?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I was pleased to be joined by the member for Riding Mountain and many of my other colleagues in western Manitoba last week as we announced some of the funding from the Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund.

The Rivers Police Service will be receiving new protective and tactical equipment as well as support for a local bicycle safety initiative, and in Brandon we were pleased to announce \$130,000 from the fund which will be invested in new equipment to assist with investigations and tactical response as well as increased support for the Brandon Police Service cadet program.

Madam Speaker, this funding will help save lives and enhance officer and community safety. Our government is pleased to invest in efforts to reduce crime and strengthen support for law enforcement agencies across our great province.

North End Sewage Treatment Plant Lake Winnipeg Phosphorus Reduction

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Madam Speaker, soupy-green and potentially toxic algal blooms accumulate each summer on Lake Winnipeg, one of the world's most threatened lakes. They often prevent those who live around or visit the lake from swimming and enjoying the waters.

The largest point source of phosphorus, the root cause of the algal blooms, is from Winnipeg's North End sewage treatment plant. Each day, it puts 600 kilograms of phosphorus into the Red River. The 2006 Lake Winnipeg stewardship committee report said Winnipeg's North End treatment plant will have removed the major proportion of phosphorus by December 31, 2014, but it hasn't happened yet.

Why is the government waiting and so many years behind?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): I'm pleased to take a question from the Liberals today on sustainability for Lake Winnipeg. Just last week, we were taking questions from the same Liberal Party about questions that would go in the opposite direction of sustainability,

so I'm glad to see that they're back on track supporting initiatives to clean up Lake Winnipeg, to address the sustainability on Lake Winnipeg.

We know under the NDP that Lake Winnipeg became the most threatened lake in the world, according to international agencies. We're taking action to clean up the lake. We've got several initiatives under way that I'll be more than happy to share with the member in my next answer.

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

Mr. Gerrard: Yes, Madam Speaker, the Lake Winnipeg Foundation and the International Institute for Sustainable Development have put forward a solution to reduce the phosphorus in Winnipeg's waste-water North End plant by 426 kilograms per day, or 70 per cent from its current levels.

The proposal involves the use of ferric chloride added early in the treatment process to bind and remove phosphorus, an approach already widely used in treatment plants around the Great Lakes.

It may be years before Winnipeg's North End treatment plant is fully upgraded, so I ask the minister: Will the Province support this initiative as an important and needed interim measure to meet the Province's phosphorus removal targets this year?

Ms. Squires: I'd like to take the opportunity to thank IISD and the Lake Winnipeg Foundation for their commitment to Lake Winnipeg and their initiative that they did bring forward to look at a chemical nutrient removal process as an interim measure.

Our government is committed to the biological nutrient removal process that we have committed to. And I do understand that the Lake Winnipeg Foundation and IISD have had many conversations with engineers about the chemical removal process, and that—I do understand that there are concerns with that process. We're looking through them, but we're listening to the experts on whether or not that would be a viable alternative for an interim measure for nutrient removal to clean up Lake Winnipeg.

*(14:20)

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Gerrard: I suggest the minister move that look along because it could be a long time before the full biological removal is completed.

At the Lake Winnipeg Foundation's annual general meeting last week, it was reported that their citizen science project to monitor waterways in the Lake Winnipeg watershed is going well and is identifying hotspots, including, for example, the Manning Canal in southeast Manitoba.

Now that the watershed monitoring is showing where the Province needs to act to clean up our waterways, will the Province now act to reduce the phosphorus in such hotspots to help Lake Winnipeg and so that Manitobans can once again be sure that they will be safe swimming in Lake Winnipeg whenever they want?

Ms. Squires: Not only is our government committed to the cleanup of Lake Winnipeg efforts, we're also committed to transparency. That's why last month our government was very pleased to partner with The Gordon Foundation and to now publicly release all the information that we're collecting on a regular basis about the nutrients and the various hotspots in the province of Manitoba.

This is information, I'd like to point out, that was hidden. It was concealed by the NDP government for years and years and years. Lake Winnipeg Foundation has asked for a very long time for the transparent process and the transparency of the nutrient information. We're releasing that data so that all Manitobans can have access to information about Lake Winnipeg. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Concordia Hospital ER Request to Retain Service

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): My question is to the Premier.

In the election three years ago no one voted to close the Concordia ER. Two years ago the Pallister government told residents of northeast Winnipeg and Transcona that they would lose their emergency room. Now, after 2018, they announced that in June 2019 was going to be the close date.

Now the Premier is concerned with poor polling results and losing seats in the election.

Why is the Premier causing such chaos in the health-care system, and will he cancel this hare-brained scheme?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, Vancouver has four ERs; it's twice the size of Winnipeg; its wait times are about half as long.

Calgary has four; significantly larger than Winnipeg, its wait times are just a little over half as long.

Why is the member standing in his place advocating for longer wait times for the people of Concordia and northeast Winnipeg?

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

Mr. Maloway: Now he's asking me questions that—*[interjection]*—that he doesn't know the answer to.

The fact of the matter is that they never had a mandate to close this ER at any time. The people don't like it and they want him to reverse his decision and keep that ER open.

Mr. Pallister: Quite the contrary, Madam Speaker, we ran quite openly on a commitment, after a decade of decay, to repair the services—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —of the Province for the people of Manitoba, and, of course, one of the most—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —important services the people of Manitoba value is access to quality health care. They were not getting it under the NDP. They're getting it now.

The member was so embarrassed about the lack of performance and results by the NDP government, Madam Speaker, he actually painted over the letters N-D-P on his own signs. He was so embarrassed he put his own party under the bus, and it was because they weren't getting the results this government is getting for the people of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired. *[interjection]* Order.

The honourable member for Assiniboia?

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): Yes, Madam Speaker, on a matter of privilege.

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

Mr. Fletcher: Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege. At—the main function of this place is to examine the Estimates or the budgetary expenditures of the government. Estimates—which we are told that we have 100 hours to conduct and ask questions

of the ministers—it seems to not be happening. The fact is that we are running out of time to fill that 100 hours before the end of this month.

Now, Madam Speaker, there has been talk of dissolution and an election and so on; all the more reason why we should have the Estimates process begin immediately.

My—and is this the first opportunity—prima facie case? This is, in fact, better than prima facie. This is pre-prima facie. It is before my first opportunity because soon it will be mathematically impossible to conduct the 100 hours before the end of this session.

So, in fact, this is prima facie because it raises an issue that can be dealt with well before it becomes a prima facie case. So I think it meets that test.

On the other side, Madam Speaker, on the Estimates, this is a very important process. This allows us to ask questions to ministers, to the Premier directly, and expect an answer. It's all recorded.

But the government doesn't want that to happen, presumably because they don't want to ask—or have to answer awkward questions, questions like are there connections between sweetheart land deals for \$1 and the emcee of the Tory fundraiser this evening who is helping raise—helping the party raise money, and yet a foundation with the same namesake is getting a sweetheart land deal, taxpayer assets worth millions, for a dollar.

So is that how the government treats taxpayer assets? People would like to know. People like to ask, would—people would like to know, why is the government borrowing so many billions—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order.

The member is going way off track right now in terms of relevance to this issue. So if he wants to bring forward a matter of privilege he needs to very specifically indicate what the breach is and, also, he needs to have a motion with a seconder and it needs to be sent up in writing.

So I would ask the member to stay on track with dealing with this matter of privilege and get to his point and immediately send up, then, his motion.

Mr. Fletcher: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and you're right.

Madam Speaker, this House needs to do its job. The government's not letting it do it by asking the appropriate questions at Estimates.

The motion that I have written, seconded by the member from The Maples, is that this House immediately begin the process of Estimates and allow for the 100 hours—a minimum of 100 hours—as required in the rules. Yes.

Madam Speaker: 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 probably deal with the issue of timeliness because I'm not actually sure what the member was talking about when he tried to describe a pre-pre-*prima facie* case, Madam Speaker. I don't think that exists in terms of the technology of a matter of privilege, so he would not have succeeded on that basis alone.

But he does bring up an interesting point, and the point is how this House functions and how it does business. Now, it is a little odd that the member who was in some sort of a cabal with the opposition for a long time in delaying matters in this House is now raising a matter of privilege that he's concerned that certain things aren't happening in the House. Didn't seem to bother him when he was trying to ring bells for days, weeks on end together with the official opposition—to some extent, the second opposition, Madam Speaker—delayed this House for days, weeks, perhaps, if I added it up, it might even account for a month while we were trying to debate legislation.

* (14:30)

And now he says, oh, well, the function of the House isn't working very well; things have been delayed. Well, duh. Things have been delayed because he was in a cabal with the opposition for days, weeks and months. Of course things were delayed because he's the instrument of that delay, Madam Speaker.

We want to have some bills debated and some passed. He's going to have his opportunity again this afternoon to pass some bills. Maybe if he and the opposition would pass some legislation, we could look at other things, Madam Speaker, but don't stand up and say I'm offended and my rights have been somehow violated because things haven't moved

along when you're the instrument for not moving things along.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (Second Opposition House Leader): Yes, Madam Speaker, this is an extraordinarily important matter. We should be doing Estimates. These have been held up. The House leader for the government grossly exaggerates the amount of time that the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) was responsible for delaying the Chamber.

There is, as the member for—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: —Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) well knows, it is up to the government to make sure it's steering things well. And it has had a problem, in terms of steering things well, but we should clearly be getting to Estimates, Madam Speaker, and I would urge the government and all other MLAs to try and move this Legislature to get Estimates as quickly as possible.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: On the matter of privilege raised by the honourable member for Assiniboia, I would like to inform the House that a matter concerning the methods by which the House proceeds in the conduct of business is a matter of order, not privilege.

Joseph Maingot, in the Second Edition of Parliamentary Privilege in Canada, states on page 14 that allegations of breach of privilege by a member in the House that amounts to a complaint about procedures and practices in the House are, by their very nature, matters of order.

He also states, on page 223 of the same edition, a breach of the standing orders or a failure to follow an established practice would invoke a point of order rather a question of privilege.

On this basis, I would therefore rule that the honourable member does not have a prima facie matter of privilege.

PETITIONS

Daylight Saving Time

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The loss of sleep associated with the beginning of daylight saving time has serious consequences for physical and mental health and has been linked to increases in traffic accidents and workplace injuries.

(2) According to a Manitoba Public Insurance news release, collision data collected in 2014 showed that there was a 20 per cent increase in collisions on Manitoba roadways following the spring daylight saving time change when compared to all other Mondays in 2014.

(3) Daylight saving time is associated with a decrease in productivity the day after clocks are turned forward with no corresponding increase—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Graydon: —in productivity when the clocks are turned back.

(4) There is no conclusive evidence that daylight saving time is effective in reducing energy consumption.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to offend—to amend The Official Time Act to abolish daylight savings time in Manitoba effective November 4th, 2019, resulting in Manitoba remaining on Central Standard Time throughout the year and in perpetuity.

And this petition has been signed by Jesse Williams, Wayne Klassen, Aaron Bolduc and many, many more fine Manitobans.

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

Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating

funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

Signed by Jacqueline Koenig, Florence Seibel, Jessica Stiller and many others.

Madam Speaker: Further petitions?

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 has slashed budgets and 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 transport program.

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

(5) On November 6th, 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 the surrounding area will have to travel at least an hour and a half to The Pas, creating unnecessary risk for mothers and baby.

(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 transport program.

(9) Flin Flon General Hospital is a regional hub that serves several communities on both sides of the Manitoba-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 work with the government of Saskatchewan and the federal government to ensure obstetric services continue to be available on a regional basis.

And this petition, Madam Speaker, has been signed by Cindy Jorgensen, Nikki Madarash and Taylor Raddysch and many other Manitobans.

* (14:40)

Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated; and

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

This petition is signed by Julie Sodowsky [*phonetic*], Andy Raible, Mae Russell and many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

Background to this petition is as follows:

Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a

fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

And, Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by Michael Kochan, Peter Pelletier, Aria [*phonetic*] Wilbur-Eliyahu and many other Manitobans.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to the petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately 'remunerated'.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

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

Madam Speaker: I would just ask members that when you are referring to who signed the petition, that the language to be used—and I've mentioned it to several people, several times—is just many Manitobans. There is no ability with our rules to say, many, many, many, many Manitobans or many fine Manitobans. The wording is just supposed to be many Manitobans.

So I would ask members for their co-operation in this, please.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to the petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase—to increase, period. 'Quality'—quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

This petition was signed by Rowena Cadilio [*phonetic*], Satish Abbi and Francis Martin and many more.

* (14:50)

Thank you.

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit

child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

Signed by many, many Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

And this petition is signed by A. Wall, Jennifer Hernandez and Leonard Day and many other Manitobans.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I wish to put the—I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Early learning and child-care programs in Manitoba require increased funding to stabilize and support a system that is in jeopardy.

(2) Licensed, not-for-profit early learning and child-care programs have received no new operating funding in over three years, while the cost of living has continued to increase annually.

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need for Manitoba families and contributes to a strong economy.

(4) The financial viability of these programs is in jeopardy if they cannot meet the fiscal responsibility of achieving a balanced budget, as all operating expenses continue to increase.

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase; quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

(6) Accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child-care programs must be available to all children and families in Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance of early learning and child care in Manitoba, which will also improve quality and stability in the workforce.

Signed by Darson Dueck, Sean Procter, Evan Balzer and many more Manitobans.

Miigwech.

**Addictions Services—
Brandon and Western Manitoba**

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Addictions are a health and social problem that requires 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 the use of methamphetamine and opioids, two highly addictive and very destructive drugs.

* (15:00)

(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 that 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 addiction campaign on the dangers of using methamphetamine and opioids, along with addictions education for front-line medical staff in health-care facilities.

(2) To request that 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 that 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 'naloxolone'.

This petition is signed by Stacy May, June Welsted and Kim Fallis and many other Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY*(Continued)***GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Deputy Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, can we resume debate on Bill 22?

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will resume debate on second reading on Bill 22 this afternoon.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 22—The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act (Various Acts Amended)

Madam Speaker: Standing in the name of the honourable member for Flin Flon, who has eight minutes remaining. I will therefore call Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act (Various Acts Amended).

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Just eight minutes. So, yesterday we talked a lot about the co-ops and things of that nature and tried to clarify some of the changes that the government is bringing in for that. One of the things that, particularly, the minister talks about so personally, but certainly this government talks a lot about—pretty much all it does is talk about it, it doesn't actually do anything concrete about it—is being transparent and open.

So one of the changes that they've made is to change the—when it comes to—let me just read this—ownership transparency. The Corporations Act and the corporation co-operatives act—harmonize the—corporations must maintain a register of individuals who separately or collectively exert more than 25 per cent of the shareholders' voting rights.

Mr. Andrew Micklefield, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

Now, that used to be 10 per cent, so clearly that makes it less transparent. But now, if we look at some of the conflict of interest things that have come out, Conflict of Interest Commissioner has been real clear that all companies, regardless of where they are in the world, should be disclosed.

And the commissioner said the member who owns a beneficial interest in 5 per cent or more of the value of a corporation must disclose the name of the corporation, and the jurisdiction that it's incorporated in was immaterial.

So again, we see this government that talks a lot about open and transparent, but then does the complete opposite of that. It's their usual double speak. So one always has to be cognizant to look at what—the opposite of what the government is saying because what they say and what they do aren't the same at all.

And clearly that's the case with this piece of legislation that's supposedly designed to make it more transparent to find out who owns what company. Particularly it becomes a concern when we look at, you know, who contracts are going to and things of that nature to find out who this government is giving the contracts to.

So we know that, particularly, this Premier (Mr. Pallister) has some problems with being open and transparent about some of his own holdings. And really, a lot of it comes to light only after he gets caught out and that he has to fess up to the fact that, yes, he owns this property or he owns that corporation, and then says, well, I don't really have to disclose that under the current disclosure laws, but some of what he declares and he says voluntarily.

So, does this change in the beneficial ownership reporting requirements, does anybody think it'll make it more likely that people such as this Premier will be more likely to disclose that which they're beneficial owners of?

And the answer, of course, is nobody in their right mind would agree that this legislation that takes an already weak reporting requirement of 10 per cent—when a commissioner of conflict of interest says it should be 5 per cent—when this legislation takes it up to 25 per cent.

So really, it's leaving Manitobans less well-informed again, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker. And that's really the hallmark of this government, I guess, is talking about open and transparent and doing the opposite. We see that time and again.

So, you know, sometimes it may sound like I'm repeating myself, but really, we can't repeat it often enough to make the citizens of this province aware that, be very careful about just taking what the government says at face value. You need to look into what's really in it.

So while this piece of legislation certainly claims to do something by its title, it, in fact, does the opposite again, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

So how will we get to a point where we actually know who owns these corporations and who's benefitting from things like tax laws? Certainly, we know that a lot of corporations in this country have billions of dollars stashed away in off-shore accounts that they're not paying tax on. So do members of this particular government, do they have beneficial ownership in some of those corporations?

*(15:10)

Well, we don't know that, and this particular piece of legislation won't really clear that mystery up for us now, will it? In fact, it'll make it easier for them to own a bigger piece of ownership in a corporation that may, in fact, be benefitting from tax laws, from contracts given by the government to any number of other things that would be seen as being in conflict, potentially, or at the very least, looking after themselves ahead of the majority of taxpayers.

So it's things like that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we really need to make sure we have clarity on before any bills such as this ever get passed. And, unfortunately, sometimes when we ask those questions during the question-and-answer portion we don't really get the clarity that the people of Manitoba deserve.

So, you know, before we blindly rush headlong into saying, well, let's just accept what this government and this minister says, I urge caution. And I urge, just hold on a minute, let's look at what's really in here. Let's look at who's really going to benefit. Let's look at the potentials that exist for conflict. We need to take into account all of that before we just blindly accept not just this bill but any bill that the government puts forward, particularly when it affects many different pieces of legislation.

So with those few words, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll conclude by saying, caution, careful; let's make sure we understand fully what this government is proposing, and let's understand who really is going to benefit from these particular changes that we're bringing in and, more importantly, who's not going to benefit, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Thank you.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): When I'll—beginning the conversation here on Bill 22, I want to follow up on what the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) just reflected on, and that is, you know, what other provinces and jurisdictions are bringing in legislation such as this.

I would assume that if this is an interprovincial effort, that there are—there's consistent wording throughout the bills in other jurisdictions as well. And I did listen to the minister's comments yesterday on the bill, and it wasn't clear to me that that is, in fact, the case.

Now, just want to get—you know, the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) wants to learn a little bit about the national securities commission, I'm sure. And about 10 years ago now, there was a big move on in Canada to follow what was discussed as sort of a world standard to have a national regulating body for securities, national securities commission.

And, of course, at that time the—you know, Toronto was the logical—

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Point of Order

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): The honourable member for St. Johns, on a point of order.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): A quorum count.

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): I would ask all members present to rise in their places, and ask the Clerk at the table to count out those present.

A QUORUM COUNT was taken, the result being as follows – Members present: 25.

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): A quorum is present.

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): The member for Elmwood may continue his remarks.

Mr. Maloway: I got to say that was certainly a very elaborate and roundabout way of making sure that the member for St. Paul was listening to the—my speech on Bill 22 because—

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): Order.

The honourable member should not reflect on the absence or presence of any other member of the House.

Okay, let's get this right. The honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) can continue his remarks.

Point of Order

Mr. Maloway: On another point of order, though: does my time get—does this get taken out of my time for my speech?

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): Okay. The honourable member for Elmwood does have the floor. His time will be adjusted accordingly.

* * *

Mr. Maloway: So I'm just getting rolling there. And now Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act, is being presented to this House by the government. Presumably it's similar to or should be similar to—if not intent, it should be similar, in terms of wording, in all the other jurisdictions that have agreed to this initiative that has been negotiated.

But I did want to reflect on the fact that a few years ago, we had a move in the country to have a national securities commission. And that was done during the Harper administration. And the whole part of—the whole initiative was designed to have the provinces give up their securities regulation functions and essentially have a national securities regulator out of Toronto.

This caused a lot of difficulty in all of the caucuses, certainly in our caucus too, where the members of Parliament from Toronto and vicinity, or in Ontario anyway, all backed having the whole securities regulation being run out of Toronto.

And, of course, in Manitoba and other provinces, we were looking at it from a provincial point of view, where we had a small but we had a active securities commission here in Manitoba, and all of those functions were going to be served by this national regulator.

*(15:20)

And so you can imagine that this did take a few more years to get itself resolved and, through compensation measures and negotiations—because there's also the constitutional issues involved in this too—there has been a rationalization of the system where, you know, I think Alberta got a special function delegated to it. And a lot of the functions are run through Toronto. But there are jobs being maintained in each of the provinces.

Now, why was all this necessary? Well, as I indicated to you, that it's a worldwide situation. And a lot of companies, when they were coming to do

business in Canada, would essentially, I would think, bypass some smaller provinces because each province had its own requirements for registration of companies. So a company to do business in a province like Manitoba, with a million people, in those days would have to hire a law firm in the province; they would have to get incorporated in the province and then they would have to, you know, keep their minute book for the province, like all corporations have to do, and they would have to do their annual filings. And that was a requirement of each of the jurisdictions.

So, as the minister explained yesterday, that now, the corporation only has to register in one province and they can essentially operate in two other provinces. And I wasn't really clear whether he meant they had to file papers on an annual basis. And the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) was asking the question, well, you know, what happens if you're in the province that the company is not from, how do you check out their registration and ownership? Because if they're selling products here in Manitoba, you may want to go to the Securities Commission or the companies branch here in Manitoba to check out who are the owners of that company. And the problem would be that, if they only file in, say, Alberta and they're operating in Manitoba, does—and he asked this question, he said, well would you have to go to Alberta to get the answers?

So that's an issue that we were not entirely clear about. But the reason that some of this is—these—you know, whenever you bring in legislation, there's a positive side and there's a negative side to the—to it. I want to give you a positive side: for example, on I think, probably lawyers, certainly insurance agents—I'm familiar with that—that if an insurance agent in the past was operating in Manitoba and decided that they wanted to move for family reasons to BC, to Ontario, they would have to start out from scratch and rewrite the exams. And these are quite time-consuming exams—or a lawyer—to qualify in another province.

And so what has happened over the last number of years is, through provincial negotiations, it's been agreed that if you're an insurance agent operating in Manitoba and you move to BC, you can essentially be operational, you know, within a couple of days. You don't have to take a different set of courses out in BC. And that facilitates, you know, free movement of people in those occupations. And you can see how good that is, because many people cannot afford to move to another province and have

to spend what is literally months to take all the courses that are required and become a real estate agent in another province. So this is the good side of some of the reductions in the interprovincial trade areas.

And you know, there were lots of comments made over the years since we've signed the free trade deal with United States and Mexico that we were having free trade among the three continental partners, but in actual fact, you know, where was the free trade within our own borders? And all the governments, whether they be Liberal, Conservative, NDP, have to deal with these issues.

And in order to resolve these issues, people have to, you know, put a little bit of water in their wine. Course that is one of the—that is one of the commodities—the wine, that is—that—maybe water, too—that is negotiated in these agreements.

So this, I—as I see it, is all part of the—of that change in the way businesses operate within the country and providing a ease of companies doing business, but also there's a reciprocal part of it that people have to not be disadvantages—disadvantaged by doing it.

For example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not sure whether you're familiar with this issue, but, you know, there is a big Say on Pay movement in Canada.

And I don't know whether people here are familiar with it, but it started to grow within about 10 years—about 10 years ago, I'm going to say that—because what happened in—unlike some parts of the world, Canada and the United States—and I think maybe Europe, but certainly Canada and the United States—have astronomical pay packages for executives of corporations.

So if you've got your retirements funds invested in, you know, stock market companies, you know, you may find, you know, companies like Air Canada, for example, who are operating basically just on a, you know, survival basis, and yet we had the president of the company making, I think, at that—this was 10 years ago now—making like \$14 million.

So, what Say on Pay legislation—I encourage the government to look into this and maybe introduce their own bill, but it's more applicable to companies that are publicly traded, and I don't know that—how many you'll have here in Manitoba, how many you're dealing with, but you'd be doing a big public service.

Matter of fact, I did have responses from actual Conservatives who said, you know, we love that bill because, you know, we see constant examples of these corporate executives, you know, coming in, and these corporate rating activities, and they come in and they become president of a company. They get stock options. They get all these things.

They—and basically what happens is they pocket all this money and—a lot of times, for actually taking people's jobs away, you know, reducing the functions of the company, splitting it apart, selling it to get the best dollar and then throwing the workers out of work and then—and putting the pensions of the workers in some sort of jeopardy.

So a lot of the Say on Pay movements started from, you know, in—through religious organizations. They're sort of informal, and I think it's about time the government looked at having some sort of rules on what corporate executives can do and how much they can pay themselves.

Clearly, you shouldn't be able to, you know, get yourself a job in a company as the president, whether it's Manitoba or any other company, and make millions, meanwhile, the shareholders are getting the short end of the stick.

An Honourable Member: What about the workers?

Mr. Maloway: I've got to tell you—well, I already talked about the workers.

And, you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, it's interesting that if you want to do research on a Canadian company, you know, any Canadian company you want—did you know that you could get better financial information on that company by just going to Washington and searching their filings there?

It's a sad state of affairs when corporate Canada, you know, has such lax rules on company filings and regulatory information you have to go across to the, you know, the United States, to actually get good information on your Canadian companies operating.

Did you also know that, in terms of corporate crime, that about 10 years ago there was only, like, three of these corporate criminals behind bars in Canada? That's all we convicted. The United States, there was, like, a thousand—over a thousand.

The Enron—remember the president of Enron corporation and other such operators in corporate America were actually being, you know, locked up,

to use the phrase, he would—put in jail, locked up for a number of years for stealing from their companies?

And so Canada doesn't have a very strong record of—you know, sort of follows the United States but a very weak—a weak, weak following of the United States. So we have to tighten up our rules in those areas.

* (15:30)

And I tell you that the Harper Conservative government, they, too, back in those days, started to look into these tax shelter countries, where really the only reason to put your money over there is because you're—can hide it from your country of residence.

Recently, we have Donald Trump, in the United States last year, having these huge tax reductions for corporations, and guess what? Now, Apple, storing billions of dollars in Ireland—and Ireland's become a tax shelter—have—are now repatriating that money because they've been threatened by Donald Trump that if they don't do it by a certain time, they are going to have to, I guess, pay excess taxes on that money.

So there are about 50 countries that have kind of set themselves up over the years as tax havens, right? And there's a—I used to have a list of them. There's some of them in the Caribbean, some in Europe. And so what we have is a system that facilitates that, that you can go offshore with your money; you can hide your money in a tax haven. And it's all, you know, nudge-nudge, wink-wink and it gets done. And this is how these drug dealers operate, you know, on an international basis, through banks, through banks in Mexico and other jurisdictions—operate that way because, well, you know, there are stories out now about the casino business in British Columbia, that a lot of money is coming into the country and it's coming in illegally and is being laundered through our financial system.

So, you know, governments sleepy—sleepy little governments and sleepy little ministers who aren't—you know, who don't care about these issues actually become the targets of these operators. You know? The people that are trying to launder the money and hide the money don't walk into a place that has super security. They look for your—they look for a sleepy government and a sleepy jurisdiction and that's where they go to hide the money.

So that's all, you know, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) was suggesting, that what we would like to know—whether this ease of registration in fact

facilitates any type of activity like that, you know? And it's fine to say that, well, we're going to, you know, open up the system and we're going to make it easy for the corporations. That's a laudable goal and that you're going to allow them to operate in multiple provinces. But the question is: what about the law firms in those provinces that they don't have to register in? Are they going to be laying off employees? Are they going to be losing business?

So I'm not sure whether there is some sort of compensation being required, whether or not the sharing of the companies—the head company, or where the company registers, its main registration, whether the company's division there remits some of that registration money. It's certainly done in interprovincial trucking that fees and so on, that are paid are shared within the jurisdictions that the trucking companies operate in, and rightly so, so that they get some compensation for the wear and tear on their roads. And that's a very complicated formula that's followed there and that's been done in the past by the motor vehicle branch.

So, you know, there's a lot of elements to this bill. For example, the bill itself amends The Business Names Registration Act. Now why they put this group of bills together for this particular approach, I'm not really sure because we—I haven't seen any spreadsheet on this bill. But they—it amends The Business Names Registration Act, The Cooperatives Act, The Corporations Act, then The Partnership Act—and together, all in one bill. You know, whether this is, you know, the way it should be, I'm not really sure, but that's nevertheless what they're doing. And so the registrars may enter into agreements with other Canadian jurisdictions, respecting the extra-provincial registration of corporations, partnerships and co-operatives, and Cabinet may make regulations about these registrations.

Now how that's going to look after the Cabinet makes its regulations and so on, maybe, there could be problems that develop in that process as to what the regulations are going to be look like. So we won't really know how this is going to develop until we actually see the regulations and see what, you know, see what happens, you know, going forward. But meanwhile it'll—going to be too late to backtrack on this particular legislation.

Now extraprovincial limited partnerships can now be registered in Manitoba. Extraprovincial limited liability partnerships that have an attorney for services no longer require a registered office in

Manitoba. Once again, there's less legal work, but I haven't heard any lawyer standing up here to complain about this yet.

So—but—and then they've got supervision of the co-operatives. And The Cooperatives Act is amended to authorize the minister to designate a superintendent of co-operatives, those functions of the registrar of co-operatives that relate to the supervision over financial matters, the issuing of securities and appeals and membership terminations in a housing co-op, are transferred to the superintendent. Okay. The registrar is no longer required to act as an advisory to co-operatives or provide model forms of articles and bylaws to co-operatives.

Now presumably the minister had a reason for putting that in there. Was there some complaint from the co-operative movement that they didn't want these services anymore, or is this another one of the government's cost cutting, you know, trying to reduce its operating deficit?

And then in terms of ownership transparency, The Corporations Act and The Cooperatives Act are harmonized with recent changes to federal legislation respecting ownership transparency. So once again, there's an element here involving federal legislative changes as well. So this is, this bill is fitting into some federal legislation that is, that we don't, you know, know about at this moment in terms of this bill.

Corporations must maintain a register of individuals who separately and collectively exert more than 25 per cent of the shareholder voting rights. And I think yesterday this issue did come up in the debate, in the conversation, and there was an argument that, actually, this is going to reduce the amount—or, reduce the rules on what has to be disclosed.

Like, right now there is filings. I mean, right now you currently do file every year. Every corporation has to file with the corporations branch across the street. And they have to list in there, you know, who owns what in the corporation, the percentage of shares.

So what they're saying here is corporations must maintain a registrar of individuals—well, they've got to do that right now—who separately or collectively exert more than 25 per cent. Well, right now you have to list them all for any per cent. So, you know, now you have to give it if it's more than 25 per cent of the voting rights. Reporting issuers, public traded

corporations, licensed insurers, and loan and trust corporations are exempt from this. Okay.

Now the point here is that, when you are dealing with insurers, for example, and you want to get insurance for your business, well, the insurance company wants to know who owns, you know, Manitoba 18756 Corporation, because here is what happens: people who may have operated the business in their own name may have a spotty record for insurance claims, could have criminal activities, could have a whole number of things, could be laundering money. And so a lot of people hide behind numbered companies for that very reason, that they don't want to disclose to the insurance company that they have two or three fires in the last year, or that they're—that they've got a criminal record. So they hide behind these corporations.

* (15:40)

Well, if you're saying that you've got to—and right now, each corporation has to list the owners of that corporation in with the percentage and the number of shares they own. And this is saying that it's going to be like—it has to be more than 25 per cent of the voter rights before they have to issue, right? So I don't see how this is a positive change. And, like I said, it was mentioned—you know, it was mentioned yesterday by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) who, in fact, did get the bill briefing on this bill and presumably had the spreadsheets and so on and so forth.

So these are questions that I—you know, I assume that if this bill ever gets to committee—and, I mean, we're—their constant talk here about election, we think we're going to have an election like every Tuesday pretty much. We have that little, like, ring around the tree, eh? That, you know, you mark your tree, see if this election comes past Tuesday.

So, you know, if this thing gets—goes to committee, then probably we'll be able to see if there's any, you know, lawyers come out and make a representation on this bill, or if there's other people that come forward to indicate as to whether or not this is a good provision or not.

I liked that—you know, I listened to the minister yesterday, and I got more confused listening to what he had to say about the bill than when I started. So—and, you know, maybe just like reading off his notes there, I mean, he's got a lot of—he has a lot of things to do. And, I mean, ministers have a lot of responsibilities and they can't be expected to know

every little detail about everything. But that's why we have the committee process in Manitoba. In fact, the committee process in Canada—in Manitoba is, I believe, probably—if not the best, one of the best in Canada.

Where, you know, when you go to Ottawa, you have a bill coming to committee, they, like, get maybe five experts in to present on the bill. That's it. You can't just walk in to the Parliament and say I want to speak to bill so-and-so because I don't like, you know, what it says, or I don't like its provisions. You're not—you are invited to the committee and vetted and they only take maybe five or six presenters to a committee in Ottawa.

Manitoba, we take everybody. You can have a—we're the most open province, you know, in the country probably, where anybody who wants to present to any bill—we're going to be having presentations, what, tomorrow night I think on some bills? The government has called committees for, I think, Wednesday night, for Thursday night. Well, any Manitoban can come in to those committee hearings tomorrow night. Just register, come in and say whatever they want about whatever bill it is. Well, that's the same process that, if we ever get there, we're going to follow with this bill, too.

And hopefully somebody will come here and sort out the confusion on this question as—between where—what I understand and what the minister is saying and what everybody else has been making comments on these. I have been listening to some of these comments, and I think a lot of them have nothing whatsoever to do with the bill at all. And so clearly there's got to be—there should be more—you know, there should be more explanations. And that's why I'm wondering where the spreadsheets are for this. But nevertheless, like, at committee, we will hear more about it.

The other issue is the regulations. I would sure like to see what this government plans. Whether they have some draft regulations, like, is there any—you know, is there any draft regulations around that we can actually take a look at to see what is proposed in terms of regulations? And, as I mentioned before, like, what about other provinces? Are there other provinces that have legislation like this? What do they have? What kind of regulations would they have? Just where is everything at on a national basis?

Now, corporations must maintain a—okay, the registry—corporations and co-operatives are no longer allowed to issue options or other instruments that are

convertible into bearer form. Holders of such instruments that are in bearer form can require the corporation or the co-operative that issued them to convert them into registered form.

Now, we talked a lot about co-operatives in here, and I can tell you that the—Manitoba and, of course, the Prairies, are very, very heavily invested in co-op activities. In many, many towns there are little co-op hardware stores and co-op food stores. And it's been the case of—in the history of Manitoba and other provinces in Canada, heavy, heavy involvement of the co-operative movement.

And I have to say that Red River Co-op is one of our biggest success stories. Red River Co-op revealed that members are getting back—this is just, I guess, just last year—getting back more money than ever before. They sent out 233,000 cheques totalling \$35.7 million. That's according to the CBC on February the 22nd, 2019.

And I have to tell you that I have been happily cashing cheques from them now for many years for \$500 or \$700. I get it confused with my Costco cheque, but I get one from them too, and they're not a co-op.

But anyway, members get back—get this—members got back about 9 cents per litre of gas they purchased in 2018, plus 2 per cent on food purchases and 5 per cent on the full price of pharmacy purchases. So if that isn't a big advertisement for being a co-op member, an active co-op member, I don't know what is.

And I don't know what happened to all my time, Mr. Deputy Chair, but it is all but disappeared. And I've got, like, 16 seconds left here, and I had pages more to discuss. But in any event, I'm sure we have other speakers coming up who are going to be able to flesh this whole business out a little bit more regarding this particular bill.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): This bill is very interesting, and the reason why it's very interesting, especially from the perspective of an on-the-surface reading of what it is, is that it has become the tradition of this government, over three years, to put in omnibus bills wherein they just lump together anything and everything into one sorry lump of a bill and they call it by whatever number it was assigned. But this is really an important one, except for the mixture of provisions that seem to not make sense.

The first thing that I ask myself whenever I see a proposed legislation is what is the real purpose of the proponent? And the proponent is supposed to have reacted or at least imagined something that needs to be done regarding certain issues that are current, meaning as of today that's the talk of the town.

One of the biggest problems that we have as a Legislature is that there's—some of us do not have the originality of imagination, and some of us—I won't say who—but some of us don't even think that we could see through some of the schemes that are put in.

But the reason why I say this is interesting is because the transparency provision wherein the beneficial ownership of corporations are being, well, promoted. Is it because of money laundering? I would love to think so, because it's one of the biggest problems that we're having, when people who do want to avoid taxes, they do shell games, shell games, as in, they create holding companies.

* (15:50)

And because it is available in some areas, they try to rely on the innocence of some of our public so that we don't even know who owns which ones, and I guess this addresses it a little bit.

But I wanted to see something more than just corporations being required to declare—or at least make a list of names of people who collectively or singly or individually have—control the interests—at least 25 per cent of the interests of a corporation. And it is a reaction, I think, to the requirements that maybe we should know who's making money off what.

And it is not really good if we just pretend that this will solve the problems of money laundering. It won't. One of those that I miss in this bill is the requirement on the part of, let's say, the Casinos of Winnipeg to track down those who are using the casino to launder money from illegal transactions. And there has not been any movement on that front because I don't see that as being done by anybody.

The operations of the casinos usually do not have any specific requirement to track down those who are cashing or at least putting in \$10,000 or more and then trying to cash it out. It is not tracked, I think, or if it is, then maybe we should be told that it is being done by our gambling dens, by our casinos. It is a good practice if we could enforce some of the laws that are already there instead of pretending that by proposing something like this, it will solve some

of the problems that are perceived to be prevalent in some areas of business.

The other portion of this bill, which is a hodgepodge of things that maybe the proponent of this bill just dreamt of or dreamed about, is the creation of a register—or, a registrar of co-operatives, and how the changes in the functions and duties of the registrar will help in the business side of co-ops. The Cooperatives Act, as we know it for now, has enhanced the establishment of housing co-ops, food co-ops and other types of business models that provide a way wherein our communities are given a place to go to. Those are the co-ops that we have now, and I don't know if this will help in the creation of those entities that are needed sometimes in some areas of our province in order to provide a location for socializing among members of the community besides the community centres and the playgrounds.

We—for the life of me, I cannot understand why this bill was even proposed. I don't see any real intention behind it, but I can surmise. And this is a pretend bill, meaning that the proponent of this bill does not even know what he wants to do with it.

My real concern is that maybe we are just wasting our time doing this, meaning maybe we don't need to even go through this bill, because this is a bill that has nonsense in it.

But what's interesting is that there is that sense that maybe it will comply with the necessity to be out there, meaning we have been ranked as No. 70 in transparency by some—by FINTRAC—especially in the way that we have dealing with how money is being salted away from the Canadian economy.

And it's been with us for a long time. Even the federal government knows that. And even when I was working for the Canada Revenue Agency before, I was very aware that there were people who were putting in instalment payments when—even when they were not required. And it's one of the reasons why I became very aware that there are people who are making money off some illegal activities and misappropriating funds from their corporations. And then they try to hide it and then claim a refund, meaning it's been cleaned, it is government cheque that they get.

And it's a good thing that when I was working with the Canada Revenue Agency, and the Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage who also worked there, we were very aware that some people do things that are bad, meaning they are dishonest and

they are trying to put one over everybody else by not paying their taxes.

And because I was involved with the examination of instalment payments, it was one of those where I had to engage the services of security and refund exam to determine whether the money that was from Enron, paid in cash, was really refundable to the taxpayer who was trying to steal it from that corporation. And it's a good thing because at least it is in defense of the honesty and transparency of our tax system.

This bill does not do anything of that sort. There are no practical reasons given why it's even proposed, except for transparency to comply with FINTRAC or even the anti-money laundering council.

I just hope that we could go through this and try to at least strengthen the laws that we have in order to promote honesty in the tax system and in order to better prevent so many tax avoidance schemes that are prevalent even among those who are rich and famous.

* (16:00)

Salting away and hiding their money overseas is one way that we have suspected a long time ago. When I was in the Bahamas and also in the Cayman Islands, I saw some of our banks; they have branches there and they accept deposits from Canadians. And it was one of those where my brain does not want to accept that how can we even do that to Canada when all the benefits of our health-care system is financed by the payments that we make? The benefits that we get from this government are all paid for by the law-abiding Canadians.

And it is—one of the questions was why did the minister even bring forward this bill? Who did he consult with? What is the real reason behind it? How can there be a promotion of the co-operatives model in the—in our communities if this bill were passed? And how will these changes, the changes that are proposed in this bill, how will this support the local businesses we have? And, of course, when there's a mishmash of proposals in a bill, I suspect ulterior motives, and I don't know who will benefit from it. I hope that it comes out later.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I think I heard, potentially, from the other side of the House some concerns that maybe I stood up a little too quickly

and other members wanted to rise. Is that the indication I'm getting? No. *[interjection]* No, okay, so I would like to indicate to the House I'd be happy to yield my time and allow another member from the government to stand up and speak if that is, indeed, the case and is, indeed, something that members from the government would like to do because, as we've seen over the last number of days here in the House, of course, members of the government have been fairly quiet, and, you know, I guess that's not abnormal.

Over the last three years, there's—hasn't been much coming out of the government at all in terms of new ideas or at least good ideas that benefit Manitobans. And, certainly, given this opportunity to stand up and be proud of this particular piece of legislation, Bill 22, you would imagine that members opposite would be jumping at the chance in the—just the final days of this Pallister government, probably just the final days of a few members here opposite, counting down the days that they had a chance to sit in this Chamber.

An Honourable Member: Like more than just a few.

Mr. Wiebe: Well, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) says maybe more than few; I think that's probably true. They can look back with pride on their legacy of bringing bills like Bill 22 forward, along with substantive cuts to our health-care system, our education system and pretty much everything that Manitobans care about, but they will be able to stand up and say that they had Bill 22 in front of them. And I'm sure that many of them will want to have a chance to speak before their time here in this Legislature is over and just a memory.

Conversely, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise once again, and I know members of the opposition caucus are revelling in the opportunity to rise and to speak to this particular bill, as well as any others that the government calls for debate, and ensure that we have that substantive, fulsome conversation and debate here in this Chamber and give an opportunity for all members to put on the record some words with regards to this bill.

And I did listen carefully to my colleagues and there have been some very keen observations, particularly the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey), who it sounds like maybe he didn't get quite enough time to speak because he continues to want to jump in on the conversation here. And, again, Mr. Speaker, I mean I know we can do almost

anything in this Chamber by leave, so I would, you know, offer that to him if he would like to continue to put words on the record.

But I know he did spend some time as critic responsible for this piece of legislation at the bill briefing, studying this legislation in depth and making sure that he was well-versed, and as I said, if he wants to—I think we do have unlimited time for some—at least one of our members, and, again, I'm sure members opposite would be happy to give that to the member for Flin Flon.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I do think this is an important discussion, and I do think it is important that we take the opportunity, as I said, to not just quickly move through this debate, but to make sure that every member has an opportunity to put some words on the record to really pull apart and pick apart this piece of legislation to make sure that we know, as legislators, what exactly we are dealing with. This bill, in particular, does—because it does speak to transparency with regards to business registration and supervision and ownership, it is something I think that is particularly important in these times, I would say.

You know, I spent part of my constituency week going to schools and speaking to classrooms. In fact, I believe the Deputy Speaker who—Acting Deputy Speaker's in the Chair now, will also be speaking to some of the students that I had an opportunity to speak with over the break, if he hasn't already. And one of the messages that I carry forward to all students when I speak to them now is just how important their engagement in the political process is, how important it is for them to understand what we do as legislators, what we do as politicians, what our role is, and how the system functions.

And the reason I mention this, Mr. Speaker, is because I do believe that democracy is at a crossroads around the world, and I believe we all have a role to play in this conversation, and I do believe that there is a lot that needs to be said about ensuring that not only are we coming to this place, coming to this House in an honest and forthright way, in a way that, you know, speaks to our support of Manitoba and our will that all of us as legislators want for Manitobans to, you know, to have a better life, and, again, we all have different ways of seeing that through, but that we are all genuine in our pursuit of what we're trying to accomplish here, that we are, as I said, at the end of the day, all working for the betterment of Manitobans.

And I say this because when I speak to students I, you know, I say, you know that this only works if you believe in the work that we are doing, if you believe that we are here in an honest way, and when you look—you just have to look across the border, of course—that's the most extreme example of this—to a place where, you know, the system is fundamentally broken, you could say, Mr. Speaker, at least I would say, where legislators have decided that no matter where the—what the idea is, if it's come from the other side of the political spectrum, it will not be something that they support.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

Government has ground to a halt there in many ways, and then you have a—on top of that a leader, a president, who has said that he, you know, don't trust the media; don't believe what you hear or what you see and all the rest of it. And I think that that really fundamentally damages our political system, and I believe that the way that we can move through this period in time in history is to reconnect with people and to really show them that we are, as legislators, just regular people, honest people, who are coming to this place to try, as I said, to make Manitoba better, and part of that is the move towards transparency and to accountability for us as political leaders.

* (16:10)

Now, you know, I say, you know, for myself, Madam Speaker, you know, I have nothing to hide, you know. I don't have any corporations that I'm, you know, a member of or that I'm an owner of, I guess you could say. I'm not, you know, a majority stakeholder or shareholder in any corporation. You know, there's really not much to my background. What there is I've been—I feel pretty up front about that.

But that hasn't been the case for all members here in Manitoba. And, of course, I'm speaking directly about the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his dealings in other countries, his holdings in corporations that either he's the majority stakeholder or shareholder or has other interests in.

And, again, you know, I don't think Manitobans on their face are saying, you know, that's necessarily a good thing or a bad thing, but what they're saying is they want to see—they want to be—see the transparency. They want to know what we as legislators are—where there are potential conflict of interests or where there are potential pitfalls that we

might fall into in our roles trying to, as I said, be those, you know, representatives of our communities and our constituents.

And, again, you don't have to look too far. You only have to look to the United States where I— you know, I just heard this morning the debate rages on that the President does not want to give up his tax returns. He will not divulge his conflicts of interest and he will not be up front. And, again, that is— fundamentally hurts our democracy. So I do think that any time that that is happening here in Manitoba or there's a perception that's happening here in Manitoba, I think we're going down a very dangerous road. And so I feel that any opportunity that we have to, you know, open the book, so to speak, to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to know, you know, what— you know, who owns a corporation, who the shareholders are, where that corporation is registered. That will only help strengthen, not only in the business world but, again, as we face these kind of challenges here as legislators in Manitoba. And that's certainly something that I think is important.

Now, I come from a family that— of small-business people. This is something that is in my blood, you could say, Madam Speaker. Now, I always have to be careful here because when I say small business, some of these— some of the businesses that my family owns probably don't qualify anymore as small businesses, and I sort of ask them from time to time because I know when we were— when the NDP was in government, there was a real push to make sure that the small-business tax rate was reduced, eventually reaching all the way down to zero and being completely eliminated, and then further indexed going forward. But I would always ask my— those in my close family, well, are, you know, are you still a small business, or would this now be called a— considered a medium-size or even a large business?

And they have had some real success, both here in the province— my father owned his own company. My brother-in-law owns his own company. My brother owns his own company and has expanded across Canada, so they've had some success, and so I get their perspective on a regular basis. This is, you know, the conversation around the dinner table, so to speak, whenever we have a family gathering. It usually inevitably turns to issues such as this.

And, you know, and they're always trying to make sure that we here in Manitoba are looking out for them, as I said, as small business owners or

medium-size business owners, but employers— those who are trying to build the economy and make a living for themselves. And, again, doing it, I think, it in an honest way and in a way that they want to be also transparent and forthright about the work that they do.

So when we have an opportunity to talk about corporations and that legal definition and that legal entity that is created, you know, again, for good reason— but to make sure that, you know, the average person has the opportunity to understand the nature of that business and who the owners are. I think that that's certainly an important thing. And here in Manitoba, of course, we have a number of success— you know, local success stories, and they understand that transparency is incredibly important. So, you know, one of the business models that I know has had a lot of success, of course, is the co-op model, which has had, you know, I think particular success in Manitoba. Certainly in other places in the world there have been larger examples of the co-op structure, but here in Manitoba, I think we've taken some of those good ideas and we've implemented them again. Maybe not on such a large scale, but I think we've had a particular amount of success with them.

And I would say, you know, across Canada, I think the co-op model of doing business is probably— has some of the strongest roots here, in Manitoba, and probably has some of the best examples that, you know, we can hold up to other provinces. And, you know, any time those can be compared— and I think we would show well as a province.

But those businesses in particular, they have a stake in this, and they have, you know— they are wanting to ensure that their style of business or their type of business is respected. You know, it comes to mind, Madam Speaker, is Pollock's Hardware, of course— a great local example that has been in the community, actually, for almost 100 years, in fact, which is just unbelievable. And that really is a testament to how that co-op model can really be something that we have thriving here in this province.

They all offer an alternative to the standard business model. So they are, as we know, of course, operated by and for the local communities in which they operate. We know that their structure is unique to other businesses because they are voluntary organizations, and being voluntary organizations, they're open to all people who are able to use the

services being provided, and that also, who are willing to accept the responsibility associated with the membership of that particular co-op.

They, we know, of course, facilitate more equitable working environments, as they are usually, and again, in the cases of the ones I'm thinking of here in Manitoba, actually, very democratic organizations. And, in fact, are proud of that democracy that they bring to the business model, and it is unique; it's something that's actually being talked about, you know, elsewhere in the world: the idea of bringing democracy to the workplace. And I think they are the example, at least on the small scale, of how that can be implemented and still be a successful capitalist company or organization. But, really champion those ideas when it comes to democracy and inclusion.

We know that they facilitate a more equitable working environment because they're controlled by the members who are actively participating and setting the policies of the co-op, ensuring that all members of that co-op have a say, in ensuring that there is some equality with regards to that. We know that members contribute equitably to and democratically control the capital of their co-operatives, which again, is the key, I think, to ensuring that those particular—that particular business model is held in and has some accountability by the members.

The profits, we know—and this is probably one of the better, or one of the best aspects of the co-operative type of business model—is it does enhance the amount of profit that stays within the community and is reinvested right there into that community. Again, because the owners are usually local, they are the ones who are using the business or the service and then their profits that they are earning are staying as local consumers within that community, rather than going to shareholders, potentially in other places, sometimes other provinces, sometimes other countries.

The profits, again: sometimes invested directly back into the co-operative and distributed, of course, to local owners. We believe, as the opposition caucus, that there is a way to invest in co-operatives that strengthens our local economy, and to actually look at this as a model, potentially going forward, for the larger economy.

* (16:20)

There's a lot of talk, lately, about the future of work in—of course, not just this province, but around the world, and there's no question that the way we are looking at work is changing. Sometimes this is because of automation. I have yet to see an article yet that claims that an AI or a robot can do the job of a politician, but I'm sure that article is probably being written as we speak, although I'm not sure how exactly that would happen.

But it is true that many industries are being disrupted by artificial intelligence, by automation and by robots. And, you know, I don't think this is something that we should fear. Certainly, we as Manitobans are ready for this kind of change, or we can be ready, but it does require some real forward thinking and some investment. And I do think that as we do that, start looking at what the new economy might look like, bringing democracy into the capitalist system is a good thing.

And it's been commented that in our society we have a capitalist economic system and a democratic governance structure, but there is a way that those two things can actually come together. And it simply means that there's more worker control, more ability for workers to have influence over the businesses that they participate in, and, again, the co-op model is just one of those. In other places in the world, like I said, the scale is much, much bigger, but here in Manitoba it is something that we can proud of.

And, you know, there's some concern now because with this bill the registrar is no longer required to act as an adviser to co-ops and—or to provide model forms of articles and bylaws to co-operatives. And that can influence their ability to operate and to be competitive. By eliminating the requirement of the registrar to act as an adviser could mean that new co-ops who are just getting started—they're some of the smaller co-ops and really just trying to get off the ground—they will have fewer resources available to them.

I feel this is concerning, of course, because we, as I said, need to be supporting those co-ops as best we can. We certainly don't want to be hindering the potential of their success, and we want to make it easier, quite frankly, for people to create sustainable and equitable co-operatives. So ways that we can enhance those—the co-operatives rather than making it more difficult, I think, is a positive way to go.

Because co-ops are created by and for community members they have become invaluable to the communities that they serve, and they really are a

part of those communities; they are really seen as being an important part of those communities.

So, you know, again I've sort of mentioned Pollock's Hardware just briefly, but I do want to mention a little bit more about that particular co-op because it's often held up as one of the prime examples of how a co-op can be both successful in terms of adhering to those democratic ideals, but at the same time also being successful in the sense of being a part of the community and offering a service.

So the Pollock's Hardware, which of course is in the North End, operated for 97 years, and then the board members moved to close the co-operative earlier this year. But despite facing these economic challenges, the community members actually rallied around that co-operative and managed to keep it open.

It wasn't the first time we know, of course, that the store has nearly closed. Over a decade ago it was on the brink of closing, but then again it was saved by the community, and that's when it was converted to a co-op and had some of its best success.

Pollock's Hardware has lasted twice as long as most other small businesses who are being forced to compete with retail giants in today's market. And, of course, we know in the hardware space that is certainly the case. You know, I think most people would think to run to Home Depot or to RONA or now Lowe's here in Winnipeg; for many that's not an option. And it is important to support those local businesses. I do think you get better service a lot of the time, but more importantly I think it's having something in your community that can be responsive to the needs within your community, which makes Pollock's so important.

Another example, of course, Madam Speaker, Organic Planet, which is a food co-operative in Winnipeg, has been able to survive in the economy because of the community support in ensuring that there is that support around it. It's been operating in the Wolseley neighbourhood for over 30 years. It served the community as a place to find fair trade, some organic foods, really just some really quality products there.

And, of course, within that community I know it's well respected and it's certainly seen as a real benefit to have that within the community. It is a long-running and successful model of community building, and it does have a very strong collective

labour agreement that helps to meet the needs of the community.

And, again, I mean, there is a lot of competition within that space now. Again, if I said organic foods to most people, all they would have to think of is going down to their local Sobeys, even Superstore, probably even Walmart—I don't know; I don't go into Walmart, but some people do, and they're able to potentially buy sometimes an entire aisle of organic foods. That's kind of the first thought of many people, but in some communities, it is important to have that local representation and a place that they can go locally, they can, again, have some influence over. It's not shareholders that are, then, being profitable, Madam Speaker, but it is, in fact, the whole community, which is what the idea of a co-operative is.

So, considering that the current market threatening the survival of so many local businesses is a real one, that there is a, as I said, multinational corporations who are very good at offering services and products within our communities, it is important to focus sometimes on those local business and to ensure that they are able to survive, that they are able to thrive, and they are able to meet those needs within sometimes very underserved communities.

So we need to do absolutely everything that we can to support the success and longevity of those businesses, especially as they are just beginning to start up, and they are just getting their feet underneath them. That's a difficult time for any company, but especially when using the co-op model. There are a lot of pitfalls; there's a lot of, as I said, a lot of benefits but a lot of pitfalls as they get going, and especially if they're serving underneath underserved communities, it is important to ensure their longevity and support them to ensure that they are successful.

And, again, Madam Speaker, this is why we're troubled by this bill's elimination of the registrar's requirement to act as an adviser to a co-operative. And I do see that my time is getting short. Unfortunately, I wasn't selected as the unlimited speaker for this particular bill, despite quite the discussion in caucus, I might say, that we were all, sort of clamouring to be the unlimited speaker and hoping that each of us would be chosen.

Unfortunately, it's not my turn to stand up and be the unlimited speaker at this particular time, but I will just very quickly just run through another, of course, well-known co-op in Manitoba, one that I

would actually imagine many members of this Chamber are members of, including myself, and of course that's the Red River Co-op. That's kind of known as a real success story here in Manitoba.

We know that earlier this year, Red River Co-op revealed that their members were getting back more money than ever. They sent out 233,000 cheques to Manitobans totalling \$35.7 million, and that is, of course, a profit-sharing initiative that they undertake to ensure that members see those benefits directly on a yearly basis. So they've got—a member's got about 9 cents per litre back, and it is based on the amount of gas that they purchased but also—it also applies to food and also to pharmacies and, as we know, they're expanding their services here in Winnipeg, but also across the province.

The CEO of that particular co-operative says, quote: As a co-operative, we are proud to be a different kind of business that shares our profits with our members, ensuring the money stays in our community which we serve, and enriching those communities. End quote.

And as I said, this is a real success story for Manitoba, and there isn't probably a member here who hasn't used the Co-op services whether they're a member or not, but just is really proud of that as a success story and they, of course, are adding stores across the province; just in 2018 added three new stores. These were food stores in Lorette, in Selkirk, in Stonewall, again, communities that, I think, appreciate having that level of competition and that level of commitment from a great co-op like Red River that invests back in the community.

* (16:30)

So we should be trying to foster this kind of success—these made-in-Manitoba success stories and, as I said, as a person who comes from a family of small business owners, they ensure that I'm always paying attention to the particular needs of small businesses.

You know, growing up, my dad had that small business and, you know, it wasn't always easy. It wasn't always great years, or good months, or good quarters. You know, there were certainly struggles. Not that I ever felt that as a kid growing up, but certainly, looking back it just really makes you appreciate the hard work that was put in. And as I said, as my brother-in-law, my brother, you know, and sister-in-law, as they build their businesses—my uncle—many connections to the small-business

community here in Manitoba—I'm always looking to ensure that we're being responsive to their concerns and their needs.

So in any way that we can do that, while at the same time ensuring that we're being transparent, we're being honest, we're being open about who we are as legislators—that we are here to be open and transparent; we're not hiding anything. If members, you know, own corporations or have shares in corporations, I think it's incumbent on us to open it up, to open up the books, to ensure that Manitobans know exactly who they're getting when they're electing us. And I think that's probably something that all members would agree with. We need to see that enacted more strongly in legislation and put forward, while at the same time, respecting small businesses, respecting corporations and respecting those—that the transparency that we expect from all of those entities.

So it's been a real honour and a real pleasure to rise today, and I do know there's a long list of—excuse me—members on our side that want to speak. But, we don't want to be too quick to jump up here because I think I heard members opposite say that there was at least somebody that wanted to stand up, put some words on the record, ensure that we understood exactly the bill that we're debating today. So I do hope that they will take that opportunity. I certainly know members on this side are ready to continue to debate this and make sure that we show Manitobans we want to be transparent, we want to be open, we want to be honest—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I was also hoping someone on the other side would get up and speak to their bill, like—in fact, they were the ones that are bringing this forward, so they should be telling us all the great reasons why we should be voting in favour of this, but none of them seem to want to get up. You know, they bring this bill forward and they all sit down and stay quiet. So I don't even understand, like, what's going on? Why they wouldn't want to talk about their bill and why we would want to support it?

So, Bill 22: The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act. Well, as someone who's, you know, not really grown up—I can't say that I have any family members or extended family members that have ever been in a business, or had the opportunity or the funds to start a small business. I can say that I've supported small

businesses in the community that I come from. You know, growing up in the North End, there was always little corner stores that we tried to, you know, shop at to make sure that we had some food security in our community, which is really lacking right now.

You know, as we know, Neechi Commons closed down. That was a hub for the community. People would come there and have meetings and it was almost like a Cheers kind of place, where you came in and everyone knew your name, because everyone that came there came from all across Manitoba, in fact—not just from Winnipeg, not just from the North End, but all across Manitoba—because it was such a vibrant place to be. They sold fish from local fishers, they grew locally produce and they also bought locally, so everything in that store was in fact bought right here in Manitoba and was supporting Manitobans.

But you know, unfortunately, that store is no longer there. You know, people are looking at how they can possibly open it up again and, you know, make that a hub again, and bring some food security back to the North End. You know, we don't have a lot of stores in our community and the ones that we do have are, you know, high-priced and people can't afford to shop there often. And, you know, we have lots of seniors in our community and they often can't get to these stores. So we have a group in the community called the North End renewal corporation that actually picks up people from a certain area in the North End.

So say it would Austin and Main on certain days, and they let the community know, lots of seniors come there, lots of, you know, people who are low income, people with disabilities that, you know, often can't get to the stores or shop on their own. They pick people up and they take them to, you know, Superstore where it's a little cheaper.

But they'd like to be able to support their community with these small businesses, but unfortunately, you know, everything is higher priced, and in the North End, every dollar counts, every penny counts and, you know, families are struggling to support their families.

So this bill essentially amends The Business Names Registration Act, the corporate—The Cooperatives Act and The Partnership Act, and you know, these are some of the key areas, they're extraprovincial registrations. So registers may enter into agreements with other Canadian jurisdictions respecting the extraprovincial registration of

corporations, partnerships and co-operatives. Cabinet may make regulations about these registrations. Another one is extraprovincial limited partnerships can now be registered in Manitoba.

And I don't know why they didn't want to get up on that side and talk about all of this, you know; this, in fact, Bill 22 is their bill. Again I just want to keep reiterating that; that, you know, we're getting up to talk about their bill that they're bringing forward.

Extraprovincial limited liability partnerships that have an 'attornity'—attorney for service no longer require office in Manitoba. Like, when it comes to ensuring that our local businesses thrive, you know, transparency is incredibly important in this province. Manitobans need to know what they're getting for their dollar, right. And we see that transparency isn't something that, you know, this government on the other side likes to do. You know, in fact, we keep asking when things are going to close in this province like our ERs, and they have no answers. So, you know, they can take a lesson from this in terms of transparency.

We need to be also encouraging Manitobans to participate in our local economy and build businesses. You know, the member from Concordia was talking about Pollock's Hardware. You know, when I was a kid we used to go to Pollock's Hardware. They had this horse in there, this wooden horse, and you'd put, I don't know if it was a nickel or whatever it was, maybe it could have been a penny back then, and you would put a penny in and there'd be kids lined up. And families would just go there just to visit that horse because their kids would want to come there.

And I remember as kids, like, there were wooden floors and we'd run around in there and they were always a welcoming, you know, community business that, you know, weren't chastising kids for running around in their business. It was a communal kind of place, such as I talked about with Neechi Commons being somewhere where people came, they shopped, they also had a restaurant there.

So Pollock's has been, you know, in the community for a long, long time. You know, I'm in my 40s now; I probably was about three my first—maybe four, my first recollection of visiting this place.

And we had other stores along Selkirk Avenue. I could think about, like, Oretsky's was similar to Pollock's, they had the wooden floor, they had this

wooden horse. Again, you know, was all local stuff and people would bring their stuff there to sell; in fact, you know, people would invent things and they would sell them there for them, similar to what Neechi Commons did.

They had what was called Neechi Niche and it was this store that was in the store upstairs and it was an art store, so community people from North Point Douglas, well, all over Manitoba, but they would accept art stuff from these artists and they would be on commission. So if someone would come in and buy a painting, you know, I think of Jackie Traverse; she grew up in the North End, you know, I went to William Whyte school with her, she does a lot of great work in the community. She would take her art there to sell and people would, you know, come in and buy her art and she couldn't even keep her art stocked in that store.

* (16:40)

I think about our traditional things like, you know, some of our traditional tobaccos. We don't tend to buy tobaccos that have chemicals in them, so there's this special tobacco that's called Mother Earth Tobacco and it's locally here. Tannis Bullard sells it. She's the one that is the creator of it, and she's right here from Manitoba, and she sells this all over the place. No chemicals, so when you go to ceremony, that's the kind of tobacco you buy. So when Neechi Commons and that store closed, you know, now you have to travel some way downtown to go and pick that up at the Forks, at Teekca's shop in the Forks second floor—again, another local store that brings in local stuff from people across Manitoba that want to sell their stuff on commission.

You know, we have tons of artists in my riding, particularly, in the North Point Douglas area that—they just had an art fair this weekend, and people brought pottery, they bought jewellery, like, just tons of amazing stuff. I think of Van Sewell—like, he is from my community, and I remember going to visit him and he took me into his workshop, which is right in the back of his house. Like, if you've ever been to his property, he has, like, I don't know, probably half an acre right off of Higgins, and he also grows local produce in his backyard and his, like, his produce grows so big, like, it's just—because he has so much space.

But I remember going in his workshop and he was showing me some of his work and I remember picking up this little, tiny piece, not very big, and—of his work, and it was \$1,600 and I thought, oh my

goodness, I'd better put this down because I don't want to break it, because I'll had to buy it. But, you know, I went into the children's rehabilitation centre last month; I went for a tour with the member from St. Johns, and all through the children's rehabilitation centre was Jordan Van Sewell's work. Every single corner of—quadrant that you went into there, they had certain places that were dedicated to certain things so that you could kind of identify what area you were in. So it was just amazing to see his work all over that place and to, you know, get to meet someone. I actually had—because the Leg also has some of his work in the art gallery downstairs—and I had a piece of his work on my wall in my other office, and, you know, just to look at that every day and, you know, see the beauty that comes from our own community here, and how we should continue to, you know, support locally.

So going back to Pollock's and, you know, I recently, when they had their rally to keep Pollock's open. And it was all about, you know, shopping locally, supporting locally, and it was the community members that rallied together. They came together and, in fact, I just went to a birthday party maybe a month ago where the person who was having the birthday asked for gift cards from Pollock's Hardware as a gift. So she got a lot of Pollock's Hardware gift cards, but, you know, that was her way of supporting Pollock's and, you know, getting a gift. So, you know, lots of people are doing inventive stuff in terms of supporting locally.

Going back to the North End, we used to have Clifford's. I don't know if anybody ever remembers Clifford's, or Woolworth's we also had, and Brother's Pharmacy, which is now Parkway Pharmacy. Brother's Pharmacy was there forever. They used to have this little pop shop in there; you can go in and have milkshakes or ice cream. And I remember as a little girl, like, these—the chairs being so high, but you could spin on them, and just going in there and, you know, spinning on them. But those are things that I can't share with my own kids now because, you know, Pollock's doesn't have that horse anymore, Oretsky's isn't there and now Brother's is now Parkway Pharmacy and they no longer have that restaurant in there, that pop shop, as they called it. Those things are gone now.

So, you know, it's super important that we continue to support our local businesses and that, you know, we're shopping locally, and the member from Concordia was also talking about Co-op. Well, that's where I gas up. I go to Co-op; I get a cheque every

year, and that's not really—[interjection]—yes; it's a good day. And not everybody gets their cheque the same day, so it's funny because, like, someone will say, oh, did you get your Co-op cheque, and it's like, no, I didn't get mine yet.

So it's almost like Christmas because it's like how much should I spend this year, how much am I going to get back, and it's like money in the bank, right? You're investing and you're shopping locally. Again, you know, we had a Co-op store in our community that was on Main and Luxton. Unfortunately, you know, it didn't do well. People weren't shopping there, and it ended up closing down, and now there's a Giant Tiger store there, you know.

And part of it was because we have a No Frills next to it, right, so you have two stores competing for business, but they do still have their pharmacy. They still have their pharmacy. It's still on Main. It's in an old bank right on the corner. It's not Luxton, but it's the street before Luxton, and they actually give you points when you go in to shop there, so if you do—if you get a prescription, they'll give you—let's say your prescription's \$25; they'll give you \$2 in Co-op money to spend, so you can go to a different Co-op store and use that to shop.

So, you know, lots of companies are finding—small businesses are finding ways to support the economy to get shoppers into their stores and to really support people in terms of, you know, that reciprocal relationship. I shop there; I get something back kind of thing.

Manitobans deserve to know who owns the business they frequent, so, you know, having businesses from—or people from out of Manitoba running businesses in Winnipeg, you know, we need to make sure that we're supporting our local economy, and that we're keeping that business here in Manitoba and that, you know, we know who, exactly, is the person that owns that business and that's running that business.

You know, I think about—member from Concordia said he doesn't go to Walmart. Well, Walmart's a US company, right, so, you know, lots of people shop there because it's cheap. You know, I tend to go to, you know, I go to—where do I shop—Safeway sometimes. I go to Sobeys—Sobeys, IGA, you know, smaller places. I find, you know, when you go into these big stores—although I do go to Costco. You know, I have a 28-year-old son that's like six foot six that can eat, and I have a growing

teenage daughter that's 16 that's six one, and I also have a husband and myself, so, you know—and we get the grandkids every second weekend over, so, you know, you're feeding a lot of people, so—and, you know, but I want to also make sure that things that I'm buying are, you know, from local here.

So when I go to my IGA, it always says Manitoba grown on the tomatoes I buy, and I love the tomatoes that are grown here in Manitoba. You know, they're the best tasting. I know that where they're coming from and they're a little more expensive, but I can afford it, right, but other people, you know, probably can't, but that's my way of helping and supporting locally.

And people, you know, they're becoming more conscious about where they're spending their money. Like, you know, the member was saying, I don't shop at Walmart. There's other big box stores that people aren't shopping at. I think about Garden City mall. Like, Garden City mall is filled with little, little stores. They're not big box stores. They're little businesses and, in fact, the member from Logan actually used to have a store in Garden City mall and, you know, it's local people. They're small stores. They're, you know, community-oriented. You know, they have a Dollarama in there that's probably one of the only big box stores, a Ricki's, actually, and a Canadian Tire, but the rest are really little small little boutiques where, you know, people can go in.

I think about this other store and I can't remember the name of it. It was—maybe it was SAAN store—yes, we had a SAAN store on Selkirk Avenue too, but there was this little shoe store on Selkirk and they knew your name. You would come in and they would fit your shoes and, you know, they'd talk to you and it was very personable. You felt like, you know, they knew you and you got lots of respect and you knew the owner; you knew the people that were working there, and you could see, you know, their camaraderie of everyone who would go in there and work there. And that would bring people in, you know, because they felt like they were being well taken care of. You know, they could see the owner there and talk to the owner, and often he was the one—him and his wife were the ones that were fitting your shoe.

* (16:50)

You know, and again I was just a young girl, but I remember going in as a teenager too, and it was just a tiny little store, like, they didn't have very many

shoes, but, again, you know, you're not going to get on a bus and go somewhere out of your community.

We often shopped right on Selkirk Avenue, and that was like the bustling hub of things. And I think about stores like the, or a doughnut shop, Donut House, that's still on Selkirk Avenue; that's been there forever as well. And you can go in there, you know, it's the same owners; you know, they have some of the same stuff that they had when I was a kid, and their doughnuts are like one of the sought-off-sought-after doughnuts in Winnipeg. People will go and buy big boxes of doughnuts and, you know, take them to their meetings, much like, you know, the cinnamon buns in Wolseley. You know, people want that taste that they had when they were kids, that brings them back to the memories as, you know, when you were a child.

I think about at Gunn's Bakery; you know, that store has been there forever. And, you know, the police officer that walks in the North End, you know, he used to work there, well, as a teenager, so he would help make the dough. And he's never moved out of the community. You know, everyone knows his name; everybody knows him, he's well connected, and it's the same thing when you go into Gunn's Bakery. You know, you can talk to the owner, the owner's almost always there, and, you know, always will come out and say hi to you and, you know, you feel welcomed and it's just a small-store feel where, you know, you want to be. You don't want this big-box-store feeling where, you know, you're going in and they're just go-through self-checkout. You know, you're not even talking to a person as you're going through and paying for your groceries.

That's what I like when I go to a store, like I want to have some interactions with people, I don't want to just go into a store for the fact of, like, I'm going in to support this big box store, but I actually want to support, you know, people I could see and people I know that are keeping that money in Manitoba and are living in Manitoba. They have their house here; they're paying taxes; you know, they're probably raising a family here, when the member from Concordia was talking about his family, you know, and them starting a business, right.

And I told you, you know, I've grown up in poverty most of my life, right, and I was the first one to graduate from university; my two boys were the first ones to graduate from high school. So, you

know, you carry that on. And, possibly, you know, maybe my grandkids, maybe they'll own a business some day, you know, and we want to make sure that it's staying locally and that there's opportunity for them to start a small business and not have to worry about competing with, you know, these big box stores.

Like I told you with Co-op and No Frills competing right, one had to move out. Now you have, I mean, Giant Tiger has produce and they sell some food, but they also have clothing, right, which draws people in and you can shop, you know, similar to Walmart but not as big.

So, and the Co-op, I remember when I was there too, the other thing is, like, it was the old Safeway building. So I remember growing up and going to Safeway too, although it was more expensive than, you know, shopping at another store, but sometimes you went to look for certain things, right, and when you look at a small store, sometimes they don't have something that you're looking for, especially fresh produce, right. In the North End, I think about when I meet with some of our people in the North End, especially our, when I go to some of our seniors homes, they often talk about, you know, they don't have mobility to travel, but when they go across to their corner store, you know, it's higher priced but there's also not really fresh produce.

Often, you know, the tomatoes are withered or the lettuce is, you know, starting to go bad. But they don't have the luxury of getting in a car or on a bus and, you know, travelling that long distance to go and find, you know, food, so they often will buy that and peel away, you know, the leaves, and hopefully there's some good in the middle, because you don't want to only eat processed food, right? Which is what a lot of the corner stores sell—you can't get, you know, fresh beef or fresh chicken, it's often frozen—so, you know, making sure that those are available to people.

Also, they're also an alternative to standard business models, right—operated and by and for local communities, and making sure that they're meeting the demand of the community. So often, I think about Pollock's, and, you know, people were asking, what can we bring in that people will purchase? You know, because they have things that you wouldn't normally see—you know, very eccentric, unique things. If you've ever gone in there, like, it's this—I don't know, I feel like I'm going back to the '80s

when I go in that store because there's things you wouldn't find in other stores.

So, they were asking the community, you know, if—we want to stay open, but we want to know what it is the community wants. What can we bring in that people are going to purchase? So they started, you know, canvassing the community, figuring out what it was that community would buy, and they started bringing those things in, so they really changed their business model to suit the needs of the community, because what they were doing they found wasn't working.

I think about Naleway's, which is now Perogy Planet. I don't know if people remember Naleway's, but they made, you know, perogies. So they've now changed their name to perogy palace—or Perogy Planet. Still Naleway's, they still, you know, make the same foods, but they've expanded their perogy line, so they no longer just make, you know, sauerkraut and potato and cheese, or bacon and cheese. They now make, like, blueberry pancake—or blueberry perogies and meat—all-meat perogies. They have so many things that they sell now, so they've expanded everything to meet the demands of the community. They sell rotini there, like, there's tons of stuff that they sell, so I'll often go into there.

There's another—my kids all attended Garden City Collegiate, and right across from there is Mom's Perogy Factory. And, you know, the kids at lunch—they can't keep up with the kids because they sell poutine now. So once they introduced poutine to their small business, you know, that got wind and kids were in there, no longer just buying perogies, but now, you know, buying poutine. But again, you know, teaching our next generation that we should be

supporting, you know, locally, and that's a good example of that: you know, having a store that's close to a school that is listening to the demands of what the community wants.

And Garden City has a cafeteria in there, and the only reason I know this is because I taught in the school division and I was the indigenous liaison, so I worked in all 24 schools. And when I left there, I was working in all three high schools to increase graduation rates for students, to make sure that kids were, you know, graduating—maybe not necessarily at 18, but that they had a plan to graduate, whether it was 19, 20. You know, everyone's on a different path. But the cafeteria in there—and there's all three cafeterias in all three high schools in Seven Oaks School Division—are owned by a small, local company. So again, you know, not this big, big box store that's running community stores but—and the kids as well, some of them get hired to work within, you know, the cafeterias, or work over the summer in their different restaurants or cafeterias that they have across Manitoba—well, just in Winnipeg.

But again, they were trying to compete with the poutine at mom's perogy palace, but there wasn't much of a competition because they had the best gravy, so—and the big cheese curds, from what my daughter is telling me, so they would often go there. So I just want to give a shout-out to them, as well.

*(17:00)

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 7, 2019

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