

**First Session – Forty-Third Legislature**  
**of the**  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
**and**  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**Official Report**  
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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-Third Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALTOMARE, Nello, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
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LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike	River Heights	NDP
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MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
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PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
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WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2024**

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

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

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

Please be seated.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move the routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Oxenham) can move the first reading motion for bill 208, the two-spirit and transgender day of visibility act, commemoration of days, weeks and months act amended; and for the bill to be ordered for second reading immediately following the passage and distribution of the bill.

For clarity, following passage of first reading motion, the House will revert to orders of the day, private members' business.

**The Speaker:** Move—Is there leave to temporarily move routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that the member for Kirkfield Park can move the first reading motion for bill 208, the two-spirit and transgender day of visibility act, commemoration of days, weeks and months act amended; and for the

bill to be ordered for second reading immediately following the passage and distribution of the bill?

For clarity, following passage of the first reading motion, the House will revert to orders of the day, private members' business.

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that the bill 27, the labour relations amendment act, be now read—be introduced for first reading.

**The Speaker:** It—is there leave to temporarily revert to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 27, the—if the Government House Leader could share a copy of her request, please.

Is there leave to revert to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 27, the labour relations amendment act, be read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave's been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, to introduce bill 28, the labour relations amendment act (2).

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 28, the labour relations amendment act (2), be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings,

introduction of bills, so bill 26, the residential tenancies amendment act, be now read.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 26, the residential tenancies act amendment be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so bill 29, the body armour and fortified vehicle control amendment act, be introduced for the first time.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 29, the body armour and fortified vehicle control act be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 30, the unexplained wealth act, criminal property forfeiture act and corporations act, be introduced for a first time.

**The Speaker:** Is it—is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 30, the unexplained wealth act, criminal property forfeiture act and corporations act amended, be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so bill 31, the captured carbon storage act, be introduced for a first time.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that

bill 31, the captured carbon storage act, be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so bill 32, the Manitoba Hydro amendment act, be introduced for the first time.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 32, the Manitoba Hydro amendment act, be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 33, the change of name amendment act (3), be introduced for a first time.

\* (10:10)

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 33, the change of name amendment act (3), be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

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

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 34, the liquor, gaming and cannabis control amendment act, be introduced for a first time?

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 34, the liquor, gaming and cannabis control act, be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

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

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 35, the seniors' advocate act, be introduced for a first time.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 35, the seniors' advocate act, be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House for leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introductions of bills, so bill 36, the regulated health professions amendment act, be introduced for a first time.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 36, the regulated health professions act, be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

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

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 12, the environment amendment act, be introduced for a first time.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introductions of bills, so that bill 12, the environment act, be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Could you please canvass the House to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation amendment act, be introduced for a first time.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to temporarily move to routine proceedings, introduction of bills, so that Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation act, be now read a first time?

Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**MLA Fontaine:** Is it the will of the House to call it 11 and move on to resolutions.

**The Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to call it 11 o'clock and move on to private members' resolutions?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

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

As there is no further business before the House at this time, I'm going to recess the House. There will be one minute bell ringing prior to 11 o'clock when we resume private members' resolutions.

The House is now in recess.

*The House recessed at 10:13 a.m.*

*The House resumed at 11:00 a.m.*

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

## RESOLUTIONS

### Res. 5—Calling on the Federal Government to Reduce Corporate Food Waste

**The Speaker:** The hour now being 11 o'clock, it's time for private members' resolutions.

The resolution before the House is resolution 5, put forward by the honourable member for River Heights, Calling on the Federal Government to Reduce Corporate Food Waste.

**MLA Mike Moroz (River Heights):** I'd like to present this resolution to the House, seconded by the MLA for Riel—[interjection] Oh, sorry. I am new here.

I move, seconded by the MLA for Riel, that,

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government promotes the right to food and is a leader in the fight against hunger; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government wants to collaborate (or maintain a collaborative relationship) with the Federal Government to make life more affordable for families in Manitoba; and*

*WHEREAS major grocery chains, such as Loblaws, have considered removing discounts on food nearing its sell-by date, while families across Manitoba struggle to pay for their grocery bills ; and*

*WHEREAS while one in five children experience household food insecurity, large grocery retailers continue to profit off of families who are struggling to make ends meet; and*

*WHEREAS no one in Manitoba should go hungry and everyone should be able to afford to eat; and*

*WHEREAS in 2023, Harvest Manitoba reported a 30% increase of food bank usage with more than 50 000 people accessing a food bank every month across the province; and*

*WHEREAS over 14% of Manitobans and 60% of Northern residents living on-reserve experience household food insecurity; and*

*WHEREAS there is minimal federal regulation over the amount of food wasted by major grocery chains in Canada; and*

*WHEREAS reducing food waste would mean feeding more Manitobans, and would keep surplus food out of the landfills, reducing the production of harmful greenhouse gases; and*

*WHEREAS corporate food waste should be added to the Federal Government's commitment to keeping major grocery chains accountable to rising food costs.*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial and federal governments to work together to condemn corporate food waste and support all initiatives that go towards redistributing food to families in need.

***Motion presented.***

**MLA Moroz:** Honourable Speaker, I am pleased to present this resolution this morning, which calls on this Chamber to support the Province of Manitoba in working with the Government of Canada to both condemn corporate food waste and to support initiatives that go towards redistributing that food to families and individuals in need.

Before I get to the substance of my arguments, I want to recognize the presence of some incredible

grassroots food security activists from organizations across our province, who've taken time out of their busy schedules to join us in the gallery for this debate. On behalf of the members of this Chamber, I want to thank them for their ongoing efforts on this important issue.

I want to begin, Honourable Speaker, by providing a frame of reference for our discussion to ensure our intentions are not misunderstood. We are not here to call out the food industry for wasteful practices; far from it. Our government knows the industry is taking its social responsibility seriously and has been working diligently with the non-profit sector to reduce overall food waste and to put that food in the hands of those who need it.

By way of illustration, my colleague from Waverley and I met recently with the leadership team at Harvest Manitoba. In addition to a tour of their incredible facility, we discussed this issue in some detail. And they were very clear that they count major food producers and manufacturers in our province as being amongst their most enthusiastic partners: something we knew, but were glad to have reinforced.

Instead, the focus of this resolution, Honourable Speaker, is to begin a long-overdue public conversation about food waste and food insecurity in our province and to ensure that all stakeholders at all levels understand the value the members of this Chamber see in working together and envisioning the full range of critical infrastructure and incentives that are necessary to get more surplus food onto the tables of those who need it most and the role in which we all need to play in making that happen.

I also want to be clear from the beginning that I do not view this as a partisan issue. And, frankly, shame on us if it becomes one. This is exactly the sort of issue voters in our constituencies sent us here to deal with.

While I think people are generally aware that salvageable food is lost to landfills every day, I think it's safe to say most don't realize the immense scope of the problem or its impacts on food security, the environment and what the real barriers to utilizing more of it actually are.

So let's begin with some facts. By some estimates, more food is thrown out in Canada than is actually consumed. According to Climate Change Connection, approximately 11.2 million tons of edible, nutritious food ends up in our landfills rather than on the tables of people in need.

But establishing why that occurs is complicated. In part, it's because food industry models acknowledge that somewhere between 2 and 5 per cent of their product will be lost at each stage of the production process. For members new to this discussion, there are five stages in that process: the original production itself, transportation, warehousing, distribution to retailers and then, finally, retail.

Using these models, as much as 20 per cent of all the food that's produced is lost, system-wide, before the consumer has even had a chance to access it. It's not because of neglect, not because of malice. Simply because even the best-laid plans sometimes go awry.

That said, 20 per cent is too high and efficiencies need to be found. When one factors in losses that occur as a result of weather, mechanical failure, order duplication or order cancellation, that number can climb substantially higher. Here, a lack of enough dedicated infrastructure to accept potentially donated food needs to be considered.

Let's look at just one aspect of the system. Food primarily travels across Canada by climate-controlled semi-trailer, 26 palettes at a time. So when a problem occurs on the highway, generally it's the entire 26 palettes of goods that need to be quickly found a new home, a serious challenge for even the most dedicated. Here we see infrastructure as the major barrier.

For example, Honourable Speaker, the storage capacity of the John Howard Society of Brandon facility, which allows food to be temperature-controlled for  $-25^{\circ}$  to  $+25^{\circ}$  is just 46 palettes. JHSB then, can only accept as much food as their facility can absorb at the time.

More broadly, neither food banks nor the distribution networks currently have the storage capacity to accept and then quickly redistribute large volumes of food from suppliers facing time-sensitive decisions.

So the reality is that many producers, shipping companies and distribution centres, end up disposing of perfectly usable food, not because they don't care, but because they can't find someplace with the capacity to accept it.

This resolution calls on all stakeholders to take a meaningful part in discussions to solve that problem. And it must be solved. Because at the same time as salvageable food is being taken to the landfill, more than 2 million Canadians go hungry, having to rely on an ever-expanding system of food banks. Harvest Manitoba alone reports a 30 per cent increase in food

bank usage in 2023, seeing roughly 50,000 people accessing food banks each month.

What's more, it's a well-known and shameful legacy of past governments that our province has the highest rate of child poverty anywhere in the country, with one in five children experiencing food insecurity, something our government is already hard at work correcting with the announcement of the universal school nutrition program.

But we need to find ways to work together to do more, and this resolution is the start of that process. There is no magic bullet, Honourable Speaker. It will take a wide range of initiatives, some regulatory, some infrastructure and some incentive in nature.

Take, for example, ideas like the Manitoba food rescue and emissions reduction project organized by the Climate Change Connection, which aims to put in place a network of 40-foot refrigerated containers to increase the capacity and resiliency of over 380 non-profits engaged in food redistribution, and in the process, diverting 2 million pounds of greenhouse gases, annually.

\* (11:10)

Or perhaps, a suggestion to incentivize food producers and distributors with carbon credits for food donated rather than being sent to landfills. Or perhaps, developing supports for businesses involved in a more circular economy so that—with incentives, so that businesses make use of raw product to turn it into finished product.

All options must be on the table, Honourable Speaker, as we deal with this intersection between the destruction of surplus food, poverty and food insecurity in our communities.

I want to conclude, by reminding members that the path to better is different. We need to be different in the way we discuss this issue in this Chamber today; different in the way all levels seek to work with each other on these important issues and with the food industry as a whole, to find the best solutions to what is nothing short of a crisis.

No one government or partner in the process can solve this by themselves. We must do it together. We can do better, and this resolution is the first step towards doing exactly that. I ask members opposite to join me today in supporting this resolution as a critical first step towards being better on this issue. We owe it to Manitobans.

Thank you.

### Questions

**The Speaker:** A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question asked by a member from another party; any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** To the member opposite, a question regarding this is, has there been any look at food labelling options? Like, we run into issues with milk, cottage cheese, cheese products, different products out there that do happen to be thrown out. Has there been any look into that?

Thank you.

**MLA Mike Moroz (River Heights):** I want to thank the member for that question; it's an important piece of the discussion. We've got a lot of issues around things like best before dates and so on. All of that has to be on the table, and as part of the reason I wanted this as a resolution to get all of the appropriate parties at the table having frank discussions about the ways that we move forward. And I think the suggestion of food labelling and dating is critical to the conversation.

Thank you for that.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Brandon West—oh, sorry. The proper rotation is for someone on the other side. Sorry.

**MLA Nellie Kennedy (Assiniboia):** My question to my colleague is, how would the new universal nutrition program help combat food waste?

**MLA Moroz:** I want to thank the member for that question. The universal nutrition program is something I'm incredibly proud of as part of this government. It's an important part of how we approach this problem. And, in fact, in the gallery today, is someone who does this work for us through the Winnipeg School Division. We had a great conversation in the morning break about how we might best work together on that.

This can be an important part of that process. And, again, all ideas, all concepts have to be on the table as we attempt to address this problem.

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** Honourable Speaker, my question to the member opposite on this very important bill is, have we looked at expiry dates

on products? Many products give an artificial expiry date of when it's best before, so I'm wondering if that's part of your discussions or process to look at extending those or looking at realistic expiration dates?

**MLA Moroz:** I want to thank the member for the question. Absolutely. Again, all ideas, all processes have to be on the table as we explore how best to deal with this. And you're quite right. The best before dates are, in many cases, a bit artificial, right?

Again, in the intervening period this morning, had an opportunity to talk with some of the stakeholders about that example specifically. One gave a great story of a load of yogurt that they had access to, simply because the best before date was about to expire and it was easier to move it on to someone in the community, rather than process it through their own internal systems.

Every discussion has to be open for—

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

**MLA Kennedy:** I'd like to ask the member from River Heights, what are some of the environmental impacts of food waste?

**MLA Moroz:** I know that some of my colleagues who are following up in this discussion this morning are going to speak more specifically to the environmental side of things.

But I wanted to refer back to the comment in relation to the Manitoba food rescue project. The work that they want to do in terms of creating refrigerator containers to have places to store surplus food would divert—that project alone would divert 2 million pounds of greenhouse gases annually. So the environmental impact can be huge while solving a human need.

Thank you.

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** The member from River Heights had mentioned that within this issue there are constraints on logistics and infrastructure around potential waste and needing to curb that. So my question for the member would be, who within industry has all been consulted in the drafting of this resolution, and have those considerations been made?

**MLA Moroz:** This resolution represents—thank you for the question. It's an important one. The resolution has been drafted in anticipation of an exhaustive process working with all stakeholders within this issue. There has been some casual conversations that



have gone on with industry itself. Most of my conversations, to get the appropriate lay of the land in terms of the human need, has started with the non-profits here in the community. They're the ones that are the lynchpin in terms of making sure that whatever we keep out of the landfill has some place appropriate to go. So that's where we began.

But the industry needs to be at the table during these conversations—

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

**MLA Kennedy:** I'd like to ask my colleague: How can this House ensure that we see movement on this at the federal level?

**MLA Moroz:** Thank you for that question, and it's an important one too. A lot of times we do things here in the House with an uncertain outcome, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't begin that journey. Our government has had an excellent working relationship with the federal government to this point. You look at things like what we've done around the environment, what we've done around health care to this point. All speak well to the possibility of success.

And that has to be how we approach every conceivable conversation on every issue: desiring to work together for the best possible solution.

**MLA Bereza:** Honourable member of River Heights, has there been any work that's been looked at, including the private sector individuals, that could play a leadership role in reducing the amount of food that it is wasted, including contributing and covering the costs strategies to this?

Thank you.

**MLA Moroz:** Yes, those conversations are going on. They've been started, but we need more of the stakeholders at the table, right? We need the federal government prepared to step up and support on their side of the incentive piece.

\* (11:20)

My understanding from working with members of the non-profit—or, yes, non-profit sector—that they're engaged in those conversations all the time: how do they work with industry to make more efficient use of the food that is available?

But their—they struggle because their capacities are limited. We need to get all the stakeholders at the table to make sure that the best path forward is found. But absolutely—

**The Speaker:** The time has expired.

**Mr. Balcaen:** My question is, again, around the universal food program or the food program for the schools, and the opportunity for a partnership. And I'm wondering, you spoke a little bit about it, but how many millions or hundreds of thousands do you think, in dollars, will this save this program and our taxpayers?

**MLA Moroz:** Thank you for the question. It's an important one. The calculations about potential savings haven't been done yet, largely because we haven't got, at the moment, everybody at the table to talk about how we would manage that, right? Until we've had an opportunity to sit down with all of the stakeholders—provincial, federal, industry, school divisions—there would be no way of calculating what the potential savings would be. But certainly, one would think they would be significant.

**The Speaker:** No further questions?

**Mr. Narth:** My question, again, would be to the member from River Heights on getting back to the logistics and infrastructure comment that he made around dealing with potential waste that arises from some of those risks.

And my question would be: What type of incentives? We had heard many times that different incentives could be created to offset these risks. What type of incentives, or have there have been a list of incentives that are potential, that have been brought together and created to offset food waste?

**MLA Moroz:** I want to thank the member for the question. It would be inappropriate for me to pre-determine the best incentives or the best programs for industry. That has to be a part of the conversation between industry itself and the various governmental stakeholders, to see what works for everybody. Certainly, you and I could sort out some things that we think are best, but it's industry and the government officials in the various ministries that are best suited to make those determinations.

**The Speaker:** The time for questions has expired.

### Debate

**The Speaker:** The floor is now open for debate.

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** Honourable Speaker, thanks for giving me the opportunity to speak on this idea of not wasting food we produce. In my constituency of Portage la Prairie, and as well as being the agricultural critic, I have the opportunity to

see the frustration from the grower level, as well as seeing folks not being able to buy fruit, vegetables, milk or meat.

I don't think any one of us here can say that we haven't seen somebody, whether it be young, old, somebody that's a teenager, of all different races, that is looking in dumpsters and that—to find a meal to eat, and every day that breaks my heart when I see that.

I live in a community that I think is a very good, wealthy community, and I would have never thought about this, but being at a presentation that the Portage community foundation put on, and they have people that submit grants—looking for grants. One of the grants—people that were looking for grants, was people—seniors in Portage la Prairie. And I would have never thought that the people that have come before us, that have worked so hard, would struggle to be able to afford a meal.

The Portage community foundation has been happy to provide \$10,000 in order to help seniors and to help them be able to feed themselves. But again, this is such a rich country that we live in, and to think that there's people out there that are starving every day, that are looking for the next meal every day. And we know, whether it's somebody that wakes up in the morning that's an older person, a child going to school, a person in the afternoon looking for a snack that we take for granted, a cup of coffee, whatever it may be, some people just can't afford that. And it sickens me to think about that.

It's unfortunate that when a farmer sends an animal to be slaughtered, there might be a number of things that are not being used, as it's viewed as not being a prime cut. As a child, I remember—and not enjoying, but I remember eating things like liver, kidneys. My mom used to stuff tongue and heart, pigs feet, chicken foot soup, head cheese—these are all products that we think we wouldn't eat. But there's nothing like a good head cheese sandwich out there, I believe. These cuts all have value and would supply a good source of food.

I was looking in my fridge this morning and that's where I come up with the question for the honourable speaker from River Heights. When I looked in my fridge this morning, I found a litre of milk that was dated March 11. Does that mean it's no good or it might cause me harm? I don't believe so unless I'm leaving it out on the counter or in the sun.

Today, milk producers are pouring milk above their quotas down the drain. They aren't receiving

payment for it, but it's still—it's going down the drain. And milk is such an important substance for us as we grow up for healthy bones.

But again, thinking about those seniors in Portage la Prairie, those people that have brittle bones need to be having milk, as well, too. Why are we not able to use the milk to feed someone that's not able to afford that litre of milk that we take as—for granted?

Think about the savings that we could possibly have in our health-care system if we're able to get proper servings of milk, vegetables, fruit, meat, et cetera. I've talked to different doctor friends of mine that have told me about issues with younger kids that are not getting the proper amount of vegetables and fruit out there.

I look at opportunities that we have out there with some great people, like the Keystone Vegetable Producers, the keystone potato growers association, Manitoba milk producers. There's many different opportunities that we have there.

Potato farmers. When a potato farmer raises a potato that is big and bulky, you would think that would be a benefit to them. It's not. Unfortunately, it's wrong. If it doesn't fit into that fast food container that restaurants dictate, the farmer actually gets docked in his payment. What happens to those potatoes that are discarded, that are left in the field to rot? When the frost gets to them, they're no good anymore.

What about those vegetables that we leave in gardens, whether they be cucumbers, whether they be pumpkins. There's also a part that individuals can play in this.

When a vegetable farmer is growing carrots or onions and they don't fit into that plastic bag that the consumer wants, what happens to that? First of all, the farmer must get rid of them, because, again, they will be docked in price. They will either be dumped in a field, they will go to waste, they will go to refuge sites. They will be—either be dumped or used for animal field—feed. Why are these not good enough for us to consume?

\* (11:30)

A little bruise here and there on a carrot, a little soft spot on an onion or a green pepper, doesn't mean that that whole thing is spoiled and it doesn't take away from the nutritional value of that, as well, either.

Here are a few things that are currently being done that I know of from companies like McCain's,

Simplot, Cavendish. These are all French fry companies, and I know all of them hold free fry days—not Friday—fry days where you can come and get bags and bags of French fries. They may be secondary, but, again because a French fry has a bruise on it or doesn't look good, isn't all white, doesn't mean that it's not consumable.

Vegetable farmers that are growing carrots or onions are leaving crops in the field, but they are working with local church organizations to donate these items to those that might not be able to afford.

Manitoba egg producers. Again, an egg has to be just perfect in order for it to be passed. An egg carton has a best before date on it. Does that mean that if we don't eat it before its time that a chicken will fly out of that container?

Again, there's opportunities for all of our people out there that we should be able to look at something like this. Manitoba farmers are some of the most charitable people in Canada. In fact, the southeast portion of Manitoba, I believe, was the most charitable.

The one concern that I do have with Manitoba growers that are—Manitoba growers are some of the most generous people that I know of out there when it comes to making donations for food banks, when it comes to donating for fall suppers. The other ones, too, are the Hutterite colonies that we deal with. They all grow huge gardens out there, and I know that if anybody comes to a Hutterite colony and is looking for food, they're more than happy to give it to them.

What about the waste that we see when an animal is hit on the highway? What happens to that carcass out there? Is it—not for anybody to consume, but the one concern I have with the Manitoba growers, whether they be a cattle producer, a hog farmer, a corn grower, just to give you a couple examples, is they're being forced to tighten their belts with the carbon tax that it is and going to get worse on April 1st.

Unfortunately, for those producers of these foods I have mentioned, they have very little or no alternatives that they can use but to pay the tax supported by this NDP government. There's an opportunity here for us to feed the people—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** I would like to thank the honourable member for River Heights (MLA Moroz) for bringing this very important piece

of legislation that this—forward so that we can all debate it and discuss this and the importance of this in our House here.

I'm very pleased to know, up in the gallery, we have two people from the city of Brandon. And I'm going to speak a little bit about their food rescue and what they're doing in Brandon and within my jurisdiction that is shared with the member from Brandon East and the member from Spruce Woods.

So, up in the gallery, we have Ross Robinson, who is the executive director of the John Howard Society and the operations manager for the Brandon Food Rescue Grocery store. And we also have Ted Dzogan, and he is the chair of the board for the John Howard Society, and they both support the food rescue in our city of Brandon. So, I would like to thank them for attending today and being here in the gallery to support this very important discussion.

So, I'm going to keep a lot of my comments towards food waste and food recovery as it happens within the city of Brandon, and then I'm going to move a little bit further into some of the areas that we're all responsible for and that we can all help with.

So, this morning, it was timely. Myself and the member for Portage la Prairie (MLA Bereza) went for breakfast, and this very topic came up about food waste and about what we can do to help individuals. And we talked about just what the member from Portage la Prairie brought up earlier today, is people going into dumpsters or garbage cans outside of fast food restaurants, outside of apartment buildings, residential areas, to try and find their next meal and—pardon me—Honourable Speaker, I find that deplorable. That in a country that is so rich, as was eloquently brought forward by the member from Portage la Prairie, we are such a very rich country, why do we have such a need for food and food rescue within our province, but within our country.

So with those opening remarks, I'd like to discuss a little bit about what's happening in Brandon. So, in Brandon, we have the Food Rescue Grocery store, currently located at 719 Rosser Ave. in Brandon. But the good news is they're closing down there. The even better news is they're moving to a great brand-new location that will give them tons more space, and they'll be able to use the freezers and fridges that have been donated to them over time because of the space that they're moving to.

This will allow so much more product to be brought out of the dumpsters, out of the landfills and

into the stores where consumers in Brandon can pay for them, and it's not uncommon. And, again, this thanks goes to the members that are in the gallery—the work that they do there is phenomenal—and a lot of volunteers as well that help with this food rescue store.

But what I can tell you about the food rescue store in Brandon is that often these commodities are brought in, they're saved from the landfill, and they're sold, making profit for—a slight profit for their business, but they're sold at one quarter of the retail price.

So people that are having a very hard time, that are struggling at the cost of food, the soaring prices, the additional carbon tax and prices that are put on anything from the making of food, the delivery of food, the fuel to get the food there—these folks are helping residents in Brandon and I'm sure my residents from Brandon West.

So once they move, they will now be located at 800 Rosser Ave. So they're moving across the street, but to what's known as the town centre and a bigger area. It will provide ample parking now. It will provide a mobility-device ability for people to enter the store, and it will also allow people to be out of the environments when they're waiting in line or waiting for their food at the food rescue. So very important.

Certainly, by the article that was recently in the local newspaper, the Brandon Sun, it will provide a better customer experience for those that don't necessarily have the opportunity—

**The Speaker:** Order please. I'd asked the member to please confine his remarks to the resolution before us. He's giving a member's statement at the moment.

**Mr. Balcaen:** I will get back on track here.

So, the food waste that would typically end up in the landfill. In 2022, the project for the Brandon food recovery grocery store saved two point—sorry—saved \$2.3 million worth of food from going to the landfill, which I think is very important. That's part of our diversion.

Part of our discussion here on this resolution is to talk about how we can help better corporate areas to move this forward. This food would typically end up in the landfill, but there's also saved more than 3 million pounds of greenhouse gas emissions.

\* (11:40)

So I think that's very worthy to note, is that not only are they saving food, they're saving the environment and making sure that it's done in a very palatable way for all Manitobans.

So, if I could go a little bit further with community collaboration. Another important area in our area, in southwestern Manitoba is the Community Wellness Collaborative, and it is a group of individuals that also are looking at food waste and making sure that that is top of mind for Brandonites and for people within our area. Their goal is to make sure that all people have access to food, whether it be brought from corporate waste or whether it be at a lower retail price.

So, going back a little bit further, I think some of the areas that we can look at is the great co-operation that we get within our shared regions. And one of the areas that was brought up was about potatoes.

And so, last year, the potato industry was—they had a great crop from what I understand, but there was a number of potatoes that were left over and those potatoes that were left over, a lot were left in the ground to go to waste. And a lot of these could be harvested and could be brought to local food banks, local food rescues, and keep them out of—or, sorry, help feed people that are in need.

So I know that locally, Carberry, which is very, very well known for their potato growth, offered a day—actually I believe it was two days, where people could come out to the fields, designated fields, and dig their own potatoes.

And that was offered by the corporations that run these farms. So, it is an excellent idea and another way that we can look at harvesting some of this that would be corporate food waste, and putting it into the hands of people that would need it.

And again, I thank the member for River Heights (MLA Moroz) for bringing this topic forward because it's added a lot of discussion. And I can say, again, our discussion this morning was around what we can do, as Legislature—legislators here in this Chamber, and how we can support this important resolution.

And make sure that not only the Province of Manitoba, but our federal government also is involved with this, and implore them, and lobby them, and ask them to be involved with us as a partner, here in Manitoba. And make sure that the millions of pounds of food waste end up being consumed by people that need it, and hopefully we can start ending some of the chronic shortage of food that individuals see.

And certainly for me, it hits at the heart when children and when newborns aren't getting nutrition. The elderly, the people that worked very hard for our country, to make sure that we are here today, fought for our freedoms and made sure that Canada and Manitoba is such a great province—and when they're not having the food security, it's a concern.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

### House Business

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Acting Government House Leader):** I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 10 a.m. to consider the report and recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee, dated November 21, 2023.

**The Speaker:** It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 10 a.m. to consider the report and recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee, dated November 21, 2023.

\* \* \*

**MLA Mike Moyes (Riel):** Thank you to my friend and hard-working colleague, the member from River Heights for this important resolution and his insightful words.

I am pleased to rise to speak to this resolution that calls on our government to partner with our federal counterparts and stakeholders in working together to reduce food waste and to support initiatives that will instead redistribute food to Manitobans in need.

*Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

We can all agree that food waste is simply unjust. To have such a high amount of food waste when so many Manitobans, including Manitoban children, are going hungry due to food insecurity, is a travesty.

We know we can do better. We must do better for kids and families that are struggling to put food on the table during this affordability crisis.

That's why our NDP government is implementing a universal nutrition program in our schools and it's why we're bringing forward this important resolution.

Increasing numbers of Manitobans are currently facing food insecurity. We see this anecdotally, in greater demand for the Christmas Cheer Board hampers, to the point where they shut down taking further requests, which I believe is something that has never happened before.

We also see it in what we're hearing in each of our constituencies. Just recently, I had the opportunity to visit the Youville Community Health Centre in my constituency of Riel, along with some of my NDP colleagues. And when we were there, we heard of the great demand for the community food bank, and how food insecurity and the social determinants of health were directly impacting how this great community resource centre was responding in delivering health care.

Beyond these anecdotal accounts, we have concrete numbers that back up the importance of this issue for Manitobans: numbers like one in five children experiencing food insecurity in our province; the fact that Harvest Manitoba reported a 30 per cent increase in food bank usage every month; 50—or, sorry, a 30 per cent increase in food bank usage in 2023, an increase that is staggering—50,000 people using the food bank every month. That is, in fact, around the population of the city of Brandon, our second largest city in Manitoba.

This food insecurity is compounded by the affordability crisis that Manitobans have faced over the last number of years: sky-rocketing inflation; a previous provincial government that raised the cost on renters; didn't partner with other levels of government to address affordable housing and resulted in more and more Manitobans struggling to make ends meet.

Compound this with food inflation being over 10 per cent, and wages not correspondingly increasing, and you have the perfect storm for why many Manitobans are struggling to put food on the table for their families.

We quite simply have to address food insecurity, but there's also another significant benefit and reason to support this resolution as the first step in reducing food waste. And that's because keeping food waste out of our landfills will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, emissions that are warming our atmosphere and causing the greatest crisis of our time: climate change.

When food ends up in a landfill, as opposed to being consumed or composted, it produces methane gas emissions. When we talk about greenhouse gas emissions, we often focus on carbon dioxide, which we should.

But we also need to talk about and recognize the impact of methane, and that's because methane gas is arguably an even more harmful greenhouse gas

emission—or greenhouse gas, more so than carbon dioxide when it comes to global warming.

The methane coming from our landfills is far more potent than carbon dioxide and it traps more heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide. Landfills in Manitoba produce 1.3 metric tons of carbon dioxide, or 6 per cent of Manitoba's total greenhouse gas emissions. And every ton of food and organic waste in the landfills generates approximately 400 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent.

What's concerning, and what this resolution highlights, is these emissions are largely avoidable and unnecessary. This is why the Department of Environment and Climate Change and the minister responsible, my colleague, the member for Rossmere (MLA Schmidt), has been working hard to reduce emissions from landfills.

The Department of the Environment and Climate Change has been administering the Manitoba Compost Support Payment program since 2014, which provides grants around our province—across our province, and is providing \$875,000 in 2024 to support the diversion of 84,000 tonnes of organic waste from landfills.

This support goes to places like the City of Brandon, the City of Portage la Prairie, the City of Steinbach, the City of Winnipeg, Enviroclean Landfill Solutions in Morden, Forks Renewal Corporation, Winnipeg, Green Opportunities near Winkler, the Overton Environmental in Portage la Prairie and Waste Connections of Canada in Winnipeg.

\* (11:50)

Additionally, the Department of Environment and Climate Change is providing \$46,000 to Take Pride Winnipeg! for an education and awareness campaign on waste aversion, recycling and the circular economy. Food waste reduction is an important part of the circular economy.

Honourable Speaker, I'd like to also just highlight and thank Manitobans that are diverting their own food waste by backyard composting, something that my own family is proud to participate in and something that I encourage all Manitobans to try out as an easy way to divert waste from your—from the landfill and to reduce your own emissions, which can reduce your household waste by 30 per cent.

Quite simply, we must act, Honourable Speaker—or, Honourable Deputy Speaker; 2023 was the warmest year so far in recorded history of the planet, and 2024 is on pace to be even warmer. Global warming

is here. The climate has changed and we're seeing the effects here in Manitoba with our unusually warm winter and one of the warmest and driest on record.

There is a cost for doing nothing. Droughts, floods, wildfires, extreme weather events caused by climate change have a devastating impact on the lives of Manitobans and a significant economic impact on all of us.

Under the previous PC government, Manitoba emissions actually increased by 10 per cent, giving Manitoba the embarrassing distinction of being the only province in Canada that has seen an increase as opposed to a decrease in our emissions. We must reduce our methane and carbon dioxide emissions immediately and drastically.

That's why our NDP government is working towards introducing an electric vehicle rebate and expanding geothermal heat pump uptake, something we know the—that Manitobans and even the opposition are excited about and rightly so.

And that's also why we're bringing forward this resolution today, to reduce our emissions, to make life more affordable for Manitobans.

I'd urge all members of this Legislature to unanimously support this resolution. We need to start the conversation with the federal government, with the different stakeholders, including large grocery stores, to ensure we work to make food more readily available for all those people in need.

We need to minimize the waste that's affecting our environment and contributing to increased gas emissions, and we need to start moving toward all Manitobans and families—and ensuring that all families have the food they need so that they can live healthy and fulfilling lives where everyone can live up to their full potential.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Deputy Speaker:** So, before we continue on with debate, I just want to direct all honourable members' attention to the gallery.

We have seated in the public gallery from Dr. George Johnson School, 44 grade 7 and 8 students, under the direction of Nathan Harding. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson).

\* \* \*

**The Deputy Speaker:** And with that, the honourable member for Tyndall Park.

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** I am happy to rise this morning and just put a few words on record in favour of this resolution that my colleague from River Heights has brought forward this morning, and I'll keep my remarks short because I'd like to see the resolution passed here this morning.

But, just to share a few thoughts, I think that it's important to recognize that there are a few groups who are particularly at risk: northern Manitobans, seniors, oftentimes children in our schools, international students.

You know, it was interesting for me to learn that there—35.3 per cent of survey respondents at the University of Manitoba face food insecurity. Just an interesting stat. It brings it to reality a little bit more here, Honourable Speaker.

And we know how important adequate nutrition is. We know that children, youth, us as adults, we function better, we are healthier when we get adequate nutrition. And that's why, too, this bill is—this resolution is really important to be debating here inside of the House.

And I'm encouraged when I read through the resolution to see that the member is urging both the provincial and the federal government to work together on this, because I do believe it is multi-level legislation.

We, all throughout Canada, whether that be at a federal level, provincial and I would even suggest municipal level, there is a role that we can be playing to ensure that all Manitobans in our case, but Canadians at large, have the food and have the nutrition that we need.

I think about the food programs in schools being rolled out and I just really, really want to encourage the government to make sure that they do this adequately.

And I believe that there's huge potential here, but I know I've been speaking with some schools, and we want to make sure that this is additional resources on top of what they already have and that schools don't end up having to pay more for this.

It makes me think about ensuring access to northern communities. We used to have a colleague in the House; her name was Judy Klassen. She was the MLA for Kewatinook, and she often spoke about food and ensuring that it was accessible to those up north,

and how, for example, the price of milk up north, exponentially higher than the price of milk here in the city of Winnipeg.

We need to be exploring all of these different topics, Honourable Speaker. In fact, it was this provincial government who froze the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative for multiple years, this initiative to increase food security efforts at the community level.

And we need to make sure that northern communities develop the local capacity to ensure that food prices will be stabilized as northern communities have some of the highest food prices all across the province. And, Honourable Speaker, we also need to think about seniors in our province.

Many seniors, they're on fixed incomes right now, and we all know the way cost of living has been going up, and whether that be through prices of groceries, whether that be gas prices—just all in all, Honourable Speaker, we know that seniors are struggling more than ever to be able to afford not only their groceries, but, for example, their prescription medications. How are they to balance all this while receiving the nutrition that they need?

Just in closing again, because I'd like to see the resolution here passed this morning, I want to thank those who took the time. I believe there's been a big email campaign on this resolution. I've received many emails. I suspect that my colleagues also received many emails.

So I'd like to thank those who took the time to send the emails. I'd like to thank those who have joined us today, up in the gallery, for your efforts on this resolution and for coming out and being part of the democratic process here at the Legislature.

And I'd like to just give a quick shout-out to Winnipeg Harvest, Siloam Mission, Agape Table, Oak Table, food rescue in Brandon, Manitoba just for all of their work and their continued efforts.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** I'd also like to thank the member from River Heights for bringing forward this resolution today, which calls on the federal government and also working together with the provincial government to offset food waste in Manitoba and our entire country.

I'd like to shed light on when this initiative had started, and I take great pride that it was actually under a Progressive Conservative government, that back in 1994, The Food Donations Act was created. And it

came—it saw royal assent just before Christmas in 1994.

This legislation encouraged the increased donations of healthy and nutritious food supply by removing the barriers that caused concerns for donors as a result of the liability. This was drafted in response to the need that was brought forward by Winnipeg Harvest back in 1994.

The Food Donations Act makes it clear that any Manitoban or business who makes a food donation cannot be held liable if the food causes illness or injury. I think as legislators, we need to be mindful of what incentivizes this type of behaviour within Manitoba.

And Manitoba is one of the most generous provinces in the entire country of Canada. I'm hopeful that both the provincial and federal government are able to reduce regulation for business, instead of forcing action by regulation.

I truthfully feel that that's the most important when we incentivize food donation within our province. More regulation has been seen by the Liberal government federally, and NDP government provincially.

And I'm really hopeful that as we move forward to incentivize food donation, that we're able to see a change.

I'm very proud of some initiatives that have been taking place within Manitoba and led by southern Manitoba, and many within the constituency of La Vérendrye: \$32 million in food donations last year were made as a result of the—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have eight minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 p.m., this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2024**

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