



**Third Session – Forty-Third Legislature**

**of the**

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey  
Speaker*



**Vol. LXXX No. 48 – 1:30 p.m., Monday, May 4, 2026**

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-Third Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
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
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CORBETT, Shannon	Transcona	NDP
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
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	Ind.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike, Hon.	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
ROBBINS, Colleen	Spruce Woods	PC
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	Ind.
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	The Pas-Kameesak	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 4, 2026

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

**The Speaker:** O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom, 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, Anishininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated.

### Speaker's Statement

**The Speaker:** Before we begin today, I have a statement for the House.

Before we begin, I have a statement for the House on the—on a serious matter. As you're all aware, I have been concerned with decorum in the House for many months now. The situation has not improved and, in fact, I believe decorum continues to deteriorate.

Specifically, I would note the following problematic circumstances: Members have made a number of hurtful, disrespectful and insensitive off-the-record comments in the House; members have been yelling at each other across the Chamber; there's been an increase in unparliamentary language spoken in the House, sometimes repeatedly; members have been using language that has been ruled unparliamentary in other jurisdictions.

None of this should be happening in this House, and my concern over this has been growing.

I'm not the only one who is concerned about decorum in the House. Members should be aware that

this situation has been raised in numerous media articles and columns, as well as on radio and TV news coverage.

But it goes beyond the media. Members of the public are stopping me on the street and saying: You've got to do something. They feel that what they're seeing on this—seeing going on in this Chamber is terrible, and they're begging me to do something about it. These are voters, your constituents, and this is what they think about how members are behaving.

We have also heard many comments and concerns from school groups in the public gallery, both from teachers and students. We've asked—we've had teachers ask our visitor services staff if their group could leave the gallery early because they didn't want their students to see any more of the proceedings.

Some teachers have also told the Assembly staff that they do not want to bring their students into the public gallery at all during session, because they are trying to teach their students to behave respectfully to each other and watching how members behave in here does not set a good example.

As well, students have expressed many concerning sentiments to our visitor staff—visitor services staff. This is a sampling of comments students visiting our gallery in the last year have shared during their visits: They found question period to be loud and overwhelming; students were shocked and confused after hearing disrespectful language between members; students asked what everyone was so angry about, why are they all mad, why are they shouting at each other; students asked why members are allowed to call each other names; students said that it's very disrespectful for members to yell at each other and not listen to who is talking.

Students asked: Isn't the point of these meetings to come together and talk about Manitoba? After one school group left the Chamber, our staff overheard a number of students repeating an unkind heckle that they had heard in this House.

I'd hope members will reflect on what the youth of Manitoba are learning from the behaviour they witness in this House and I would ask members to consider if they want this to be their legacy. I hope members will reflect—sorry.

These students don't want to see government and opposition, they don't want to see parties and they don't always understand politics. They just see a room full of adults—whom they are told are the leaders of our province—yelling at each other and calling each other names.

It's not surprising to me that our student visitors wonder why members are allowed to behave like this, as this is the opposite of how their teachers and parents are teaching them to behave.

If any members are listening to me right now and thinking that these comments are just about members on the opposite side of the room, you're wrong. Behaviour on both sides of this House is contributing to the problem.

It is my job as your Speaker to improve this situation, and that is what this statement is about.

I have two primary concerns: excessive and inappropriate heckling and unparliamentary language. These problems have not just emerged in this Legislature over the last two and a half years. These problems have been worsening in this place for some time. The standards for allowable language have been lowering, and the level and tone of heckling has been deteriorating.

Regarding heckling, members should recall that I've never stated that there should be no heckling in this place. I believe respectful—even witty—heckling can have a place in this Chamber. It's when heckling becomes excessive, mean, personal, persistent or loud that it becomes a problem. Such behaviour creates disorder in this Chamber and disrupts the important business of the House.

\* (13:40)

Janse and LeBlanc have several relevant notes on this topic in the fourth edition of the House of Commons Procedure and Practice. In citation 13.1 they state, and I quote: Guiding principles of parliamentary procedure require that debate and other proceedings in the House of Commons be conducted in a civil manner, and that freedom of speech, one of the most important privileges enjoyed by members of the Parliament, be respected. This right enables members to speak in the House and in its committees, to refer to any matter and express—to express any opinion and to say what they feel needs to be said without fear of punishment or reprisal. This freedom is circumscribed, however, by the necessity of maintaining order and decorum when debates are taking place.

Accordingly, the House has adopted rules of order and decorum governing the contact—conduct of members towards each other and towards the institution as a whole. Members must show respect for one another and for viewpoints differing from their own. Offensive or rude behaviour or language is not tolerated, and emotions are to be expressed verbally rather than acted out. Thus, the right to speak is tempered by the written rules of the House which, in general, impose limitations on what may be said and when, by whom and for how long.

The Speaker is responsible for maintaining order in the Chamber by ensuring that the House's rules and practices are respected. In addition, it is the duty of the Speaker to safeguard the orderly conduct of debate by curbing disorder and when it arises, either in the Chamber or in the galleries, and by ruling on points of order raised by members.

The Speaker's disciplinary powers are intended to ensure that the debate remains focused. Nonetheless, while it is the Speaker who is explicitly charged with maintaining the dignity and decorum of the House, members must take responsibility for their behaviour and conduct in the business in an appropriate fashion. End quote.

I will be guided by these principles when I hear problematic heckling in this Chamber. I am also reminding members that while they do have the essential privilege of freedom of speech in this House, they also have an immense responsibility not to abuse that privilege.

Janse and LeBlanc have several relevant 'passages' explaining the practices governing unparliamentary language and also explaining why these practices exist. In citations 13.35, 36, 37 and 38 they state, and I quote: The proceedings of the House are based on long-standing tradition of respect for the integrity of all members. Thus, the use of offensive, provocative or threatening language in the House is strictly forbidden. Personal attacks, insults, obscenities or allegations that a member has lied or deliberately misled the House are not in order.

In dealing with unparliamentary language, the Speaker takes into account the tone, manner and intention of the member speaking, the person to whom the words at issue were directed, the degree of provocation and, most important, whether or not the remarks created disorder in the Chamber. Thus, language deemed unparliamentary one day may not necessarily be deemed unparliamentary on another day. Expressions which are considered unparliamentary

when applied to an individual member have not always been considered so when applied in a generic sense or to a party.

Should the Speaker find the utterances of a particular member offensive or disorderly, that member will be requested to withdraw the unparliamentary word or phrase unequivocally. The member's apology is accepted in good faith and the matter is then considered closed.

However, if the member refuses to obey the directive of the Speaker to retract their words, the Chair may refuse to recognize the member until the words have been withdrawn. The Chair may also name the member for disregarding the authority of the Chair and order the member to withdraw for the remainder of the sitting. End quote.

In recent years in this House, there have been several words used by members in debate which have not been ruled unparliamentary or cautioned but which have been ruled unparliamentary in other Houses.

I have recently surveyed all Canadian jurisdictions on this matter, and the words I will list in a moment have been, or would be, ruled as unparliamentary in every other Canadian jurisdiction if they were used in debate from one member to another.

This list includes the following words: bigot; homophobe; misogynist; racist; transphobe.

These words would be ruled unparliamentary in other legislatures because, like the word liar, they constitute reflections on a member's character or integrity, rather than debating policy or ideas.

This approach is consistent with the long-standing principles noted in the fourth edition of the House of Commons Procedure and Practice, in citation 13.29, and I quote: "Remarks which question a member's integrity, honesty or character are not in order. A member will be requested to withdraw offensive remarks, allegations or accusations of impropriety directed towards another member." End quote.

I will remain—remind members that our rule 9(1) identifies the Speaker's duties as follows, and I quote: The Speaker shall preserve order and decorum and enforce the rules, and shall decide all questions of order without appeal. End quote.

I will also share one last quote from Janse and LeBlanc, who state on page 507 that, quote: "The Speaker has the authority to maintain order and decorum in the House. If their authority is challenged, the Chair may, among other things, refuse to recognize the member,

recognize another member, remove questions during question period or name a member and order them to withdraw for the remainder of the sitting." End quote.

With all of this information in mind, as the Speaker of this House, I have decided that some things need to change in this Legislature. I was elected to this position by all members on November 9, 2023. Every day since then I have taken my role as the Speaker of this House very seriously, and I will continue to do so as long as I hold this office.

In order to preserve order and decorum in this House, as of today, I will be enforcing the following changes in our practice:

(1) If any member engages in excessive, inappropriate or loud heckling, I will call the member to order. If the member continues to heckle in that manner, and I need to call them to order more than three times, I will advise the member that I will not be recognizing them to speak in debate the remainder of the sitting day.

If the member continues to heckle in the same manner following that intervention, I will advise them that they have disregarded the authority of the Chair, and, in accordance with rule 18, I will name the member and ask them to leave the Chamber.

If any of the following words are used in debate from one member to another, they will be ruled unparliamentary and I will order them withdrawn: bigot; homophobe; misogynist; racist; transphobe.

The fact that these words are now unparliamentary does not allow members to use language that could be interpreted as bigoted, homophobic, misogynist, racist, transphobic or offensive in nature. I will be listening very closely to language used on the record to ensure that all members are being respectful and not being offensive or disorderly in their comments. I will also be listening for members using creative variations of the words I've listed, and those comments may also warrant a caution or be ruled out of order.

\* (13:50)

These changes do not infringe on the privilege of freedom of speech enjoyed by all members. Setting this new standard for our Legislature is necessary to ensure that the people's business is conducted in a civil, orderly manner consistent with the practices of the federal Parliament and every other jurisdiction in Canada.

I thank all members for their attention to this statement.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**The Speaker:** Introduction of bills? Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Honouring the Service of Those in Uniform

**MLA David Pankratz (Waverley):** Honourable Speaker, today I rise wearing a uniform, but I want to be very clear about something: This uniform is not about me. In many ways, it asks the opposite of that. It asks the person wearing it to think less about themselves and more about the people beside them: The people they serve, the people they may someday be called upon to protect.

A dress uniform carries a certain weight. The boots, the crests, the insignias, they all represent a history larger than the person wearing them. And this uniform carries the memory of those who stood watch through blizzards and fires and floods, who missed birthdays and holidays, who walked into smoke when every instinct told them to run the other way. It carries the names of those who never came home. And it carries a quiet promise between generations: that we will look after each other and that no one serves alone.

When you put a uniform on, you become part of something older and bigger than yourself, a tradition built on duty, on compassion, on ordinary people making extraordinary sacrifices for strangers they may never meet again. And while no government can ever fully repay that sacrifice, I am proud to be part of a government that has shown through action that we will continue to stand with firefighters and front-line workers with support for safer workplaces, stronger mental health protections and respect for the work that they do every single day.

Honourable Speaker, I would ask this House to join me and our guests—whose names I ask to be added to Hansard—in a moment of silence in honour of all those who paid the ultimate sacrifice while wearing a uniform in service to others. This uniform belongs to all those who carried it before us, all those who wear it today and all those who will wear it after we are gone.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

*Cam Abrey, Nick Kasper, Brent Macdonald, Oscar Silva, Gage Wood.*

**The Speaker:** Is there leave for a moment of silence once all members have spoken to this?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave for a moment of silence right now? *[Agreed]*

*A moment of silence was observed.*

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

### Carol Hainsworth

**Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North):** Honourable Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize Carol Hainsworth. Carol is a loving wife, mom and grandma of five great-grandchildren.

Carol started her career with the Province of Manitoba in 1990 where she was employed with Agriculture, soils and the crops branch. Carol worked as a senior administrative assistant to the director. Carol continued to—working with the Department of Agriculture, relocating to the Manitoba Legislative Building and worked for Harry Enns, the minister of Agriculture, until 1994, when she was transferred to the marketing and farms business management branch of the Department of Agriculture.

Honourable Speaker, in 1998, along with her family and Gary, her husband, who joins us here today in the gallery, relocated to the town of Winnipeg Beach, where they own and operate Wildwood trailer park resort alongside their son, Craig.

Carol was successful in securing employment with the department of Conservation and Water Stewardship in Gimli, serving as senior financial officer until her retirement in 2015 after almost 25 years of service to the Province of Manitoba.

Carol's retirement was short-lived, however. Shortly after the 2016 provincial election, Carol came to work for me as my constituency assistant and continues to fulfill those great duties and serve Manitobans today.

Carol's commitment to Manitobans and her community is a true testament of her long and successful career in private and public life. Along with her current responsibilities, she's continued to volunteer in her community wherever asked and, particularly, has been a long-time member of the Winnipeg Beach lakeside Lions Club.

Honourable Speaker, I ask all my colleagues today to join me in thanking Carol Hainsworth for her commitment to Manitobans, her community and, of course, her wonderful family.

Thank you, Carol.

### Winnipeg Youth Soccer Association

**MLA Jennifer Chen (Fort Richmond):** Honourable Speaker, I rise today to recognize a remarkable organization based in Fort Richmond that has shaped youth sport in our province for over 40 years: the Winnipeg Youth Soccer Association, or WYSA.

What truly distinguishes WYSA is its leadership in governance and policy. At a time when inclusive and accountable leadership is essential, the association has adopted a new set of bylaws recognized as one of the most inclusive governance frameworks in Canadian soccer. These bylaws strengthen representation, advance equity and ensure the organization reflects the diversity of the communities it serves.

This impact is felt strongly in Fort Richmond where WYSA programming continues to serve local families by creating accessible opportunities for children and youth to stay active, build skills and friendships and feel connected within their own community.

This strong governance commitment is matched by meaningful progress in leadership. In 2026, WYSA will welcome its first female president, marking a significant step forward for gender equity in sport leadership and setting an example for organizations across the province.

Beyond governance, WYSA continues to deliver significant community impact. In the past year alone, the association supported over 10,500 athletes and hosted major tournaments that welcomed the teams from across Canada and the United States, contributing more than \$720,000 to Manitoba's economy.

From Fort Richmond to communities across Manitoba, they are building not only better athletes, but stronger, more connected futures.

I invite all my colleagues to recognize the volunteers, coaches and staff whose leadership continues to elevate both the game and our province. And I'd like to add my guests' names into Hansard.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

*Cody Baldauf, Bill Burfoot, Andy Feng, Gode Katembo, Noel Kendle, Andy Kozack, Ramona Rohringer, Sarah Schwendemann, Damian Truong.*

### 25th Annual Arden Crocus Festival

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** I am pleased to rise today to recognize an important milestone for the community of Arden. This year is the 25th anniversary of the Arden crocus festival.

For 25 years, residents and visitors have gathered to celebrate the prairie crocus, one of Manitoba's official provincial emblems and one of the earliest signs of spring. This small but resilient flower holds a special place in our province's identity and most evident in Arden.

The festival was founded by the Lansdowne heritage, recreation and tourism committee, whose vision and dedication transformed a simple idea into a signature annual event. I had the pleasure of attending just this past weekend. What began as a small, modest community celebration has grown to include a pancake breakfast, barbecue, children's activities, wagon tours, duck races and other family games. The day welcomes people from across Manitoba, all eager to witness the crocus bloom and experience the hospitality that defines Arden.

It's a small community, but its spirit is unmistakably strong. The community proudly showcases the largest metal crocus sculpture in the world, a striking landmark that welcomes visitors and reflects the community spirit. It stands as a testament to their creativity, their connection to the land and their commitment to celebrating the provincial emblem.

The success of the crocus festival over the past 25 years reflects countless volunteer hours, community support and a shared commitment to honouring local heritage.

\* (14:00)

I want to recognize the founders and past board members Rod and Doril [*phonetic*]—Doris Shuttleworth and current festival board members Terry Buechler, Desi Cameron, Craig and Kristina Pearson, Kevin Paramor, some who have joined us here, along with volunteers Pat Paramor, Marg Goodwill and Dennis Orton. Thank you.

Rural Manitoba does great work celebrating tradition and strengthening community bonds. Today, I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating the organizers, volunteers and residents of Arden on their remarkable anniversary. Arden has created a legacy that continues to bloom year after year, enriching our—

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

### Assiniboine College Cougars Athletics Program

**Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations):** Honourable Speaker, today I rise in the House to recognize an exceptional season for the Assiniboine College Cougars Athletics program.

As this House may know, this is Assiniboine College's 65th anniversary, and the Cougars Athletics program has been a staple of college life for so many student athletes since its resurrection in the year 2000, with 2026 being a year of immense success.

This past season, the Cougars women's volleyball program captured the Manitoba collegiate athletics conference championships under coach of the year Kevin Neufeld, a respected leader in the sport across this province and beyond.

They went on to compete at the Canadian Collegiate Athletics Association national championships, hosted right here in Manitoba, marking the first appearance at nationals in the program's modern history.

The season also saw player of the year and rookie of the year honours, along with several All-Canadians. While they did not ultimately take home the national title, the foundation laid by this group will be will set the program up for continued success.

Adding to that success, the Cougars women's hockey team came within a single goal of a national championship at the ACHA finals in St. Louis.

This is a program with a strong track record, including a championship in 2019 and multiple national final appearances in recent years. In their first year under head coach Charles Tweed, they continued to demonstrate excellence.

I would also like to recognize Kasey Fouillard, who is retiring this season and has roots in my hometown, St-Lazare. Her leadership and commitment have been invaluable to her team.

Honourable Speaker, I also want to acknowledge the continued rise of other Cougars programs, including men's and women's curling, both competing at nationals in Regina under coach Maureen Bonar, as well as the men's volleyball team led by coach of the year, Dan Ashfield.

The futsal and soccer programs continue to grow, with the soccer team now playing at Cougars Field in Brandon. To all the Cougars athletes—

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

#### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, there are some guests in the gallery I'd like to introduce.

I draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us today from

Assiniboia College, Larry Shannon, Shaun Cameron, Amy Doerksen, Erin Selby, Kevin Neufeld, Nathaniel Berube, Sydney Cartier-Squire [*phonetic*]—Sydney Carter-Squire, Haile Turner, Michelle Omand, Paul Friesen, who are guests of the honourable Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations (Mr. Simard).

Further, I draw attention to the public gallery where we have with us today Nick Kasper and Oscar Silva, Gage Wood, Cam Abrey, Brent Macdonald, who are guests of the honourable member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz).

We welcome you all here today.

Further, we have guests from the Winnipeg Youth Soccer Association and Manitoba Soccer Association, Bill Burfoot, Noel Kendle, Cody Baldauf, Andy Kozack, Sarah Schwendemann, Ramona Rohringer, Andy Feng, Gode Katembo, Damien Truong, who are guests of the honourable member for Fort Richmond (MLA Chen).

And we welcome you all here today.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Manitoba LNG Export Project Operational Timeline Concerns

**Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, the Premier's story keeps changing. First, he swore he had three megaprojects that were going to make Manitoba a have province in 10 years and get Manitoba off of federal transfers. Turns out there's only one, maybe, megaproject.

The Premier also promised that \$30 billion would magically appear in Manitoba's economy. Turns out the only money to appear in Manitoba's economy is federal transfers or more handouts.

And now, of the three projects, as I said, one of them might be a megaproject. But this NDP government only committed \$10 million to a megaproject. On top of all that, the Premier wants Manitobans to believe that he will export LNG in just three years on this potential megaproject.

So will the Premier tell Manitobans how he plans to build a pipeline through a permafrost in three and a half years?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Honourable Speaker, the future is bright in Manitoba. And the reason why is because we've got the best people in this province of anywhere in Canada, anywhere in North America and we are powered by a can-do attitude.



Right there, you just saw what the PC Party name stands for: probably can't. That's why they never got anything done during their time in opposition.

I'm very proud to say that right now, as we speak, we just put out the news release for a \$3-billion energy project in western Manitoba. Construction is soon to begin. More big projects on the way with megaprojects to come.

And I'll invite more friendly questions from the member opposite for the rest of the afternoon.

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

**Mr. Khan:** The Premier just proved there he has no idea what he's talking about and that his goal of exporting LNG in three years is completely fabricated, Honourable Speaker. He'll say whatever he has to say, whether it's true and false, to try to pull the wool over your eyes.

Now, under the scrutiny, these three megaprojects have all become one. The Minister of Environment doesn't even believe it—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

I would caution the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition on the language he's using. We've just gone through a statement about language and respect, and I would expect the honourable leader to withdraw that language.

**Mr. Khan:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**Mr. Khan:** The Minister of Environment was shockingly honest with media for once when he said, and I quote: All of that work on what is 'feasible' and how we do actually get this off the ground is—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Khan:** —going to be coming. End quote.

Going to be coming is what the minister says, in the sense that he hasn't even started work on the Port of Churchill.

When will the Premier be honest with Manitobans and tell them that his plan to export LNG in three years is not only unrealistic; it's not going to happen under his leadership?

**The Speaker:** Apparently, the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition wasn't listening to—that closely to what I've just ruled. Suggesting that a minister is

finally being honest is unparliamentary and the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition needs to withdraw that language.

**Mr. Khan:** Withdraw.

**Mr. Kinew:** You know, I'm going to go to the PC caucus after this and sign them up for the government news release mailing list because we just put out the announcement for a \$3-billion energy project in western Manitoba. More good news to come.

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

**Mr. Khan:** So, after months of meetings with the Prime Minister, this Premier has nothing to show but a photo op. No firm deal for the Port of Churchill, no update about a pipeline, no commitment to upgrade the rail line to get exports to the port, nothing that will actually generate a single dollar to Manitoba's economy.

\* (14:10)

But the Premier says it's going to be done in three years. His own ministers don't think it's feasible, especially on this timeline. It took nine years to build and plan the Alaska pipeline. It took 12 years to build Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion. It took 13 years to build the LNG from Dawson Creek to Kitimat in BC. But this Premier says he's going to build it in three years.

It's time for the Premier to tell Manitoba: What is his plan to build the Port of Churchill, and why has he not got a commitment from the federal government? *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** Hey, any day I get to talk about the Port of Churchill and our plan to build Manitoba's economy is a good day.

We're going to put people to work in southern Manitoba, in northern Manitoba, in the Westman, in the Eastman.

And you know what? If Alaska couldn't do it, BC couldn't do it, guess what? That still does mean it's possible for Manitoba to do it because we believe in Manitobans.

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

**Basic Personal Tax Rate—Exemption Increase  
Request for Government to Support Resolution**

**Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Families are struggling to get by, and they're barely getting by at that. They've lost their patience with this NDP government.

In the last poll done two weeks ago, it showed that two in three Manitobans have made it clear this government has fallen short when it comes to affordability. That is the reality many Manitoban families are living with.

Manitobans are seeing the costs of living increase every single day. Under this NDP government, they've removed indexation of your income. So the more you make, the more taxes you pay. Under this NDP government, they increased your education and property taxes by 20 per cent. Billions of dollars taken from your back pocket to pay for this NDP government.

It's clear the Premier does not have a plan to support Manitoba families.

So will the Premier commit to our plan to increase the basic personal exemption to \$30,000, putting \$3,000 back into the pockets of Manitoba families?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Honourable Speaker, our plan is one that Manitobans understand and believe in.

We cut the gas tax permanently. We're lowering your education property taxes and we're taking all taxes off all food and drinks from the grocery store, from the corner store, from the mom-and-pop store. And we know that the PCs know this plan too because just the other week, the member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth) kept talking about how finger-lickin' good my announcement was.

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

**Mr. Khan:** It's convenient that the Premier leaves out that he's only saving you two pennies on a litre of milk, one and a half cents on a litre of gas.

On our side of the House, we're proposing hundreds and thousands of dollars back into your pockets.

Manitobans are—50 per cent of Manitobans are living within \$200 of insolvency. Those are families that are cutting back and making the hard choices. For this Premier to stand in his place and laugh and pretend and mock Manitobans that he's actually made

significant affordable measures is not only disrespectful; it's shameful.

The Premier truly thinks that him saving you two cents is going to make—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Khan:** —your life more affordable.

But he has the opportunity to do the right thing today. He can join us and support our amendment to call an increase of basic personal tax exemption to \$30,000, putting \$3,000 back into your pocket today.

Will he do the right thing and join us in supporting it?

**Mr. Kinew:** Honourable Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for reminding me that we froze the price of milk this year. So we're saving you money on milk, we're cutting the tax off of food and drinks, we're saving you money on the mortgage payment.

Now that I'm at it, we're also giving you rent relief: direct cheques mailed out to Manitobans to save you money with the cost of housing.

More done, more to do. A lot to lose if we ever go back to them.

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

**Mr. Khan:** Manitobans are smart people. They can see through the Premier's smile when he laughs at you and says he's saving you two cents on a litre of milk and that's going to make your life more affordable.

They're seeing through all of his big announcements and empty promises. They're seeing the boutique tax cut savings by this Premier and his NDP government aren't making life better or more affordable for Manitobans today. They are in an affordability crisis and they're begging the government to do more.

So, I present the Premier with a plan because it's obvious he doesn't have one: Will he support our call to increase Manitobans' basic personal tax exemption to \$30,000, thus giving Manitoba families up to \$3,000 back in your pockets? Not pennies—thousands of dollars. The choice is clear.

Which one will the Premier make today, Honourable Speaker?

**Mr. Kinew:** I don't know where they found these phony Conservatives, but these PCs don't look like the right-wingers I know, okay, Honourable Speaker.

They always criticize our cut on food and drinks. Guess what they're going to do? They're going to bring back the sales tax on food and drinks. They always criticize our cut to the gas tax. Guess what they're going to do? They're going to bring back the gas tax at 14 cents a litre, just like every day they were in government.

We're fighting for you. We're making your life more affordable. On that side of the House, they continue to come up with terrible critiques of the positive things we're doing. We're going to keep working hard for the people of Manitoba.

### Port of Churchill Development Operational Readiness Timeline

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Honourable Speaker, last fall the Premier tried convincing Manitobans he had a plan for three pending megaprojects that would wean Manitoba off federal equalization payments within 10 years, which I'll remind the Premier, that would mean more than \$30 billion of economic activity.

At the time he could only name one of them, and that's Churchill. Now, he says only Churchill is capable of transforming the provincial economy.

Can he please share which two megaprojects he scrapped to focus on the Churchill project?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Six hundred megawatts of wind that we are contracting from Indigenous nations; that's project No. 1.

A \$3-billion energy project in western Manitoba that we just put the news release out on today; that's project No. 2.

An LNG out of Churchill by 2030 – ça, c'est projet numéro 3. Trois mégaprojets pour vous, les Manitobains. [*–that's project number 3. Three major projects for you, the people of Manitoba.*]

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for La Vérendrye, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Narth:** Honourable Speaker, let's focus on megaprojects here. Unfortunately, you wouldn't—the Premier wouldn't let the minister answer that question, but last fall I'll remind you what the Premier said about those three megaprojects, and I'll quote the Premier: One that we're almost certainly going to do, a second that we're trying to put the financing piece together, and a third which we've made very public, the Port of Churchill.

He now claims that he was talking about two of Hydro's previously announced natural gas and wind projects, which is fitting considering all that we hear from this Premier is hot air.

My question, Honourable Speaker: Which projects did he fail to deliver on, and why is it all that we get from the Premier is talk? [*interjection*]

**The Speaker:** Order.

So I'm not sure exactly what members would like the Speaker to do. I've kind of drawn a line in the sand about unparliamentary language, and yet this is the fourth time I've stood up today. The honourable member for La Vérendrye will withdraw those comments.

**Mr. Narth:** I withdraw.

**Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation):** Honourable Speaker, I'm so happy to have a chance to chat about the amazing project at the Port of Churchill, one that our government is fully behind. We're working collaboratively with the federal government, with Indigenous, First Nations and Métis partners and working with the private sector to make sure that we can actually deliver on a Port of Churchill project, something that not only did members opposite ignore during their time of office; they actually stood against during their time in office.

Now, we stand alongside Manitobans who overwhelmingly support advancement out of the Port of Churchill that they know is going to boost our economy and support economic growth right across Manitoba.

\* (14:20)

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

**Mr. Narth:** Honourable Speaker, to build our economy by \$30 billion and turn this province into a have province—which, we should be heading in that direction—expanding the Port of Churchill—[*interjection*]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Narth:** —remains in the conceptual stages, unfortunately. It requires engineering and environmental assessments, community consultations, major construction, significant maritime engineering and both federal and major private-sector investment in the tens of billions of dollars—[*interjection*]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Narth:**—before it can proceed. And that doesn't even include getting the project to Churchill.

Will he admit today his timeline and promises are not only unrealistic but reckless for our economy and disingenuous to—

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

**Mr. Kinew:** I'm just going to drop off all the press releases in the PC caucus office after this question period so they can read up on the Crown-Indigenous consultations we've been working on for more than a year, so that they can read about the national marine conservation area study that is going on to protect the environment, so that they can read about the Arctic research foundation study that is scoping the icebreakers.

Our track record is clear: We're building mega-projects. On that side of the House, they've only got one project: the MAGA project.

#### **Cost of Living and the Affordability Crisis Basic Personal Tax Rate Increase Proposal**

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** Families across Manitoba are feeling squeezed like never before. Grocery bills are up, housing costs are up and out of reach and everyday essentials keep climbing. Parents are making harder choices every month just to keep up.

Our Progressive Conservative team is offering Manitobans a clear proposal to raise the basic personal amount to \$30,000: something that would put thousands of dollars back into the pockets of Manitoba families.

When will this government offer Manitobans meaningful cost-of-living relief instead of ignoring solutions that will put real money back into the pockets of Manitobans?

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families):** We know that Manitoba families and children face poverty in Manitoba and across Canada for a variety of different reasons, including systemic racism against Indigenous people and Black people and newcomers; including misogyny—which is the hatred of women—which disadvantage women more than men.

We know that there are a variety of reasons why families are struggling, and that's why our government is so honoured to have government to be able to support families, including the universal school nutrition program, which was one of our first things under our former colleague Nello Altomare, which we also enshrined in legislation because we know—

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

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Byram:** The government has repeatedly said it understands affordability pressures, but Manitobans are not seeing results where it matters. Gasoline costs are up, food costs are up. In Agassiz, I heard it this past week, right across Manitoba, the—affordability is out of control and out of reach. The solution from this NDP government: no PST on Slurpees.

I ask the Premier (Mr. Kinew): Does he think that PST-free Slurpees or an increase in the basic personal amount will have a larger impact on the pocketbooks for Manitoba families?

**MLA Fontaine:** Those of us on this side of the House remember during a global pandemic, when they were in their failed, callous, inept government, didn't care that Manitobans were suffering some of the worst financial crises in a hundred years.

They did nothing during that crisis. In fact, they tried to do the pandemic on the cheap because they didn't care that Manitoba families were suffering. We have doubled the prenatal—healthy baby prenatal benefit. We've passed Nello's Law, we've increased funding for EIA, MSPD and Rent Assist by almost \$28 million, something that members opposite can't even fathom—

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

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

**Ms. Byram:** The fact of the matter is the cost of living is up under this NDP government, and families are in crisis mode now.

Progressive Conservatives are offering meaningful solutions like raising the basic personal amount to \$30,000. That puts more money into the pockets of Manitoba families. This gives every family hundreds of dollars extra a month, this money that they can use to buy healthy groceries, put their kids in sports, finally get a little bit of relief at the end of the month.

Will the NDP stop playing political games and adapt a plan that makes life more affordable for all Manitoba families across our province?

**MLA Fontaine:** We froze the price of milk. We've strengthened disability supports. We've ensured that the new Canada Disability Benefit isn't clawed back.

If members opposite really cared about Manitobans struggling right now, why haven't they gotten up and disabused Donald Trump? This is about Donald Trump's irrational, hysterical, emotional decisions that he's made on the world stage that we're now—the whole global economy is suffering for.

The Leader of the Opposition thanked Donald Trump. If they really care about Manitoba families, where is their commentary on President Donald Trump and the absolute chaos and mess that he's creating in the lives of Manitoba families, but in the lives of—

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

### **Manitoba's Hospitality and Tourism Sector Impact of the Loss of RRC Training Programs**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** Honourable Speaker, for years Red River College has been a key pipeline for training workers in Manitoba's hospitality and tourism sector. This industry supports roughly 25,000 jobs and nearly \$2 billion in visitor spending. Now we are seeing 11 programs, such as the hospitality business management diploma, being cut, along with others that are being scaled back. At the same time, the NDP government is shutting down institutions like MITT.

Can the minister explain how these cuts are part of her failed plan and how she can justify taking opportunities away from Manitoba students?

**Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training):** Honourable Speaker, I'd like to begin by thanking Red River College for the tremendous partnership that we have with them.

They are delivering training all across the province, along with Assiniboine College, UCN, U of W, U of M. Each and every one of our post-secondary institutions is doing the heavy lifting on ensuring that the next generation of workers is ready and capable of taking on the challenges.

Honourable Speaker, under the previous administration, all of our institutions saw year-over-year cuts. The member opposite well knows that the federal government made a decision to cut back international students. These decisions from Red River College are specifically linked to that reduction in international students. We continue to work to strengthen the sector. I'll take no advice from that member.

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

**Mrs. Hiebert:** Honourable Speaker, at a time when Manitoba's tourism and hospitality sector is desperate for skilled workers, particularly in rural areas, industry leaders are warning that these cuts are a monumental loss. Yet this minister is allowing vital training programs to vanish.

How can the NDP government justify—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Hiebert:** How can they justify cutting off pathways to good jobs for young Manitobans while making education less accessible and driving students to other provinces for their education?

**MLA Cable:** Honourable Speaker, I will remind the member as many times as I need to that the federal government made a unilateral decision to cut international student allotments here. Where did we see those effects? We saw it in classrooms across our province.

But I want to assure members of the hospitality and tourism sector here that we will continue to offer programs that are needed for our local economy. Where we have local needs and local Manitobans looking for training, 100 per cent we will ensure that those opportunities are there. We continue to work with this sector. We continue to work with each and every institution to deliver the best possible training possible.

And, Honourable Speaker, as somebody that spent many years in hospitality, I just want to send a shout-out to everybody who is working in the service industry—

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

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

**Mrs. Hiebert:** This minister is responsible for advanced education, has had two and a half years to administer something, and we have not seen a plan. What is the most concerning is the lack of—the growing lack of co-ordination in Manitoba's post-secondary system by this minister.

\* (14:30)

In recent months, we have seen the programs cut at Red River College, closure of MITT and the cut of Campus Manitoba, as well as defunding of private institutions, all without a clear, long-term workforce strategy.

Students, educators and industry partners are left with the unsure knowledge of what the sector has to look forward to when it needs—desperately needs skilled—the skilled workforce.

**MLA Cable:** Honourable Speaker, I just want to run the member down on how I spent my past week and who I saw last week.

Today, I saw folks from Assiniboine College. I saw representation from MITT, from Red River College Polytechnic. I spent time at UCN last week, meeting with everyone.

So, I would ask the member opposite to maybe check in with the institutions and the leadership across the province because what she will find is that they have a partner at the table that's willing to work with them, that there's a co-ordinated effort and that there are more students enrolling in Manitoba post-secondaries than ever before. So come with your facts.

#### **Manitoba's Apprenticeship Ratios Barrier to Federal Skills Training for Youth**

**Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition):** The federal government plans to allocate \$6 billion nationwide to recruit, train and hire up to 100,000 new trade workers over the next five years. This should be an unprecedented opportunity for Manitoba youth that want a rewarding career, literally building our province from the ground up and growing our economy. This will help youth get trained, get jobs and, like I said, grow our economy.

Simple enough for everyone to understand, but not this NDP government. Under this government, the number of new apprentices have dropped 15 per cent, according to Apprenticeship Manitoba. I will table that for the minister so he can read the words from Winnipeg Construction Association himself.

So why has the Premier done everything he can to make it harder for youth to get jobs, for youth to be trained, for Manitoba's youth to be robbed of \$6 billion of investments from this federal government? Why is the Premier destroying our economy?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Honourable Speaker, we're working hard to build Manitoba's economy and to make sure that there's great jobs for young people in every single part of this province.

The documents that the member opposite tabled show the following: There are more concrete finisher apprentices, more construction craft worker apprentices, more construction electrician apprentices, more gas fitter apprentices, more millwright apprentices,

more iron worker apprentices, more plumber apprentices, more power electrician apprentices, more sheet metal worker apprentices, more sprinkler fitter apprentices, more steam fighter—pipefitter apprentices, more tower crane operator apprentices.

The only thing that there's less of are PC caucus members sitting with that leader.

**Mr. Khan:** Honourable Speaker, the numbers the Premier is referencing, maybe he should give it a read-over again because I'm going to quote from that, and this is from Ron Hambley, president of Winnipeg Construction Association.

He says, quote: The numbers don't lie. This policy is reducing opportunity for Manitobans who want to work in the skilled trades.

Honourable Speaker, young Manitobans should be seeing a increase in apprenticeship, and under this NDP government and their loss ideology of reducing the ratio from two-to-one to one-to-one has reduced the number of—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Khan:**—apprentices being trained in this province.

The federal government is handing out \$6 billion to grow our workforce, and this NDP government is shutting that door.

So I'll ask the Premier: When will he give up his loss ideology and get back to an apprenticeship ratio that will grow Manitoba's economy, create more jobs and help the youth, or will he continue on the path of closing schools like MITT and Red River College, Honourable Speaker?

**Mr. Kinew:** I made a solemn vow to Cindy Skanderberg leading up to the last election that we'd bring in one-to-one because she lost her son when he was apprenticing to be an electrician, which reminds all of us parents whose kids want to work in the trades just how important health and safety is.

Heather Stefanson tried to make this an election issue. I debated her, and we won. If they want to rehash this argument, let's go for it.

Again, electrician apprentices, up; gas fitter apprentices, up; millwright apprentices, up. All the construction trade apprentices are up. I'll even show the following.

Well, perhaps I'll save a few more for the next question, but I'll just point out the members opposite are on the side of the rich; we're on the side of everyone else, including you.

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

**Mr. Khan:** Once again, the Premier refuses to listen to experts and wants to just ramble off his ideology.

And I'll quote Shawn Wood, the president of the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba, says, there's no evidence that the two-to-one ratio compromised safety or training quality, Honourable Speaker.

It is clear that the apprenticeship numbers have decreased in this province under this NDP government. It is clear that their changing of the apprenticeship ratio of two-to-one to one-to-one has reduced the number of apprenticeships in this province. And now, under this NDP government, they have closed MITT and programs at Red River College; that was under this NDP government, Honourable Speaker.

So, I'll ask the Premier again: When is he going to abandon his loss ideology and get back to working for Manitobans, supporting Manitobans, supporting the youth and growing our economy?

**Mr. Kinew:** So, again, Honourable Speaker, I was talking about a mother who lost her son to a workplace accident when he was apprenticing to be an electrician. If that's what the PCs think is an ideology, yes, that's my ideology. I stand with moms out there who want their kids to come home safe at the end of a shift.

Now, I went through the list of apprentices and named for the member how all the building trades are increasing the number of apprentices. But now I think I might know why the PCs object so much.

You see, in the past year, the number of self-identified Indigenous apprentices went up 12 per cent in Manitoba. And what's this? Well, the certifications issued to women across all trades went up 35 per cent here in Manitoba.

Now, I'm not able to comment on the motivations, but I think we all know the track record of the members opposite. We're for women—

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

The honourable member for Transcona (MLA Corbett)—the honourable member for Tuxedo.

### Provincial Finances Manitoba's Deficit-to-GDP Ratio

**MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo):** Honourable Speaker, after seven long, painful years of fiscal mismanagement under the previous failed PC government, Manitobans chose a new direction, one focused on restoring fiscal responsibility while rebuilding the services that were cut under that same failed administration.

Can the best Finance Minister in all of Canada please update the House on the amazing work that he is doing to put Manitoba back on the path to balance?

**Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance):** Thank you to my amazing colleague from Tuxedo for the question.

Honourable Speaker, Manitoba now officially has the lowest deficit to GDP in the entire country. That's right, the lowest deficit number anywhere in Canada. We're doing the work of cleaning up the mess and destruction left behind by the dark days of the failed PCs.

From day one, we made a clear commitment to manage the public books responsibly while investing in what matters to Manitobans. And that's exactly what we're doing. We're doing it while we grow the economy with strategic investments, including in the Port of Churchill and in skilled trades training, creating opportunities for Manitobans today and long into the future.

This is a pragmatic plan. It's a sustainable plan. And we will stay the course as we move Manitoba back to balance.

### Median ER Wait Times Increase Concerns

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** Month after month, under this NDP government, ER wait times climb to new highs. And it's interesting, because where the NDP used to publicly report over 10 years' worth of WRHA wait times on their website, now, suddenly, the records only go back to 2019. That's probably because the records show that under the previous PC government, the maximum median wait time, averaged over all seven years, was 2.3 hours.

\* (14:40)

Under the NDP, that wait time has doubled, and it keeps getting higher every month. No wonder they took that information off the website.

Why is it that under the NDP, ER wait times are getting so much worse?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I think it's interesting that the member for Roblin takes us back to 2019. She was advising the previous government to close emergency departments and fire nurses.

So, let's go back to 2019. That's when the PCs were closing our three largest emergency departments. And as a result of those closures, we lost up to 25 per cent of our staff at those sites.

So, while we do the work of fixing the damage that they did to health care, while we do the work of bringing health-care workers together, the member opposite could look at her own caucus and ask the questions to her colleagues as to when they were around the Cabinet table, why did they create the mess that we're cleaning up today?

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

**Mrs. Cook:** Honourable Speaker, the facts speak for themselves: 2.3 hours under the previous PC government, 4.3 hours under the NDP.

And you don't have to take my word for it. The Winnipeg Free Press analyzed these facts last week and wrote, quote: Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the median ER wait time in Winnipeg hovered just above two hours. It has since doubled: not spiked temporarily, not fluctuated wildly. Doubled—and stayed there, with a steady upward trajectory. Unquote.

This NDP government made so many meaningless promises, and they have utterly failed to deliver on their biggest campaign commitment. Why is it that the longer the NDP are in power, the worse ER wait times get?

**MLA Asagwara:** Honourable Speaker, I noticed that the member for Roblin was yelling at me when I was answering the last question, saying, I was working—I think she said something along—she was working for the City, 2019.

So I do have the document, the order-in-council, what—from 2020, February, of when she joined officially and started advising the PCs. So that would have been during the time that, instead of walking back their decisions to close emergency departments, they actually started firing hundreds of health-care workers. That would have been the time where we lost 25 per cent of the health-care staff working at those former sites.

And it tells us that she had years—years before they lost government to do the right thing and advise Heather Stefanson to invest in staffing the front lines, re-open those closed emergency departments.

So maybe she can explain to Manitobans why she chose to do the opposite and keep—

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

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

### Grace Hospital Wait Times and Safety of Staff

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** Wait times at the Grace Hospital have been particularly bad. The median monthly wait time there is now 6.3 hours. And, just this morning, the posted wait time at the Grace was 15 hours.

This has real and devastating impacts on people in west Winnipeg. Just last week, an 87-year-old woman with dementia and a brain bleed spent more than five days in the hallway of the Grace ER. Staff at the Grace are suffering too, with three health-care workers being sexually assaulted or threatened there just last week.

What on earth is going on at the Grace? And when is this minister or anyone in this Kinew government going to make the Grace Hospital a priority?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** Honourable Speaker, I want to take this moment to acknowledge the incredible direct staff workers, the nurses, the front-line providers, the leaders at the Grace Hospital who are doing a phenomenal job. Really and truly, these folks are some of the best of the best.

And I want to acknowledge the nurses who endured what is entirely unacceptable. They endured abuse that should never, ever be faced anywhere in our province, but certainly never in our health-care system.

I want to thank the nurses who I've had the opportunity to speak with for their leadership in addressing that concern. I want to reassure them that we're going to continue to do what needs to be done to keep them safer in their workplace, including taking steps that should have been taken for seven and a half years under the previous government and for three and a half years when she was around the PC caucus and Cabinet table—

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



### Port of Churchill Development Public Support of Project

**MLA Eric Redhead (Thompson):** Honourable Speaker, Manitobans have always believed in the potential of the Port of Churchill as a driver of good jobs, a gateway to global markets and a cornerstone to our province's economic future. Now we're seeing that confidence backed up by strong public support across the country and right here at home.

Can the Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation tell the House what the latest polling shows about Manitoba's support for the Port of Churchill and how our government is delivering on that opportunity?

**Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation):** I want to thank my colleague from Thompson for that amazing question about the Port of Churchill which is an amazing economic opportunity for us right here in Manitoba.

The new study shows that eight out of 10 Manitobans support this amazing idea. Apparently, the only ones who don't support it are the members opposite, but we can ignore their naysaying ways and actually get the rest of Manitoba and the rest of Canada on board with the Port of Churchill.

We're going to work with the federal government, with private sector, with Indigenous nations to make sure we build the port project the right way. That's how we grow an economy for the North. That's how we grow an economy for all Manitoba.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

I do have a ruling for the House, but before I get to that, if I could ask the honourable First Minister if he could clarify what document he was quoting from in his answers.

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Yes, Honourable Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition said that he was tabling a document of Apprenticeship Manitoba's public numbers. I was quoting from the document that the member said he was going to table. It's the same document that I've tabled in response to questions from the member from Borderland. I'm happy to bring it in again and table it for the members opposite if they want to see the building trade apprentices numbers higher this year than last.

**The Speaker:** I thank the honourable First Minister for clarifying that. If it's already been tabled, it does not need to be tabled again.

### Speaker's Ruling

**The Speaker:** Now I have a ruling for the House.

So, following the delivery of a Speaker's ruling on April 15, 2026, the honourable Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) rose on a matter of privilege alleging that, during oral questions, the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) made disparaging, racist remarks directed at the honourable First Minister. The honourable Government House Leader concluded her remarks by moving that this be referred to a committee of the House.

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Johnson) spoke to the matter before I took it under advisement.

In order for a matter of privilege to be ruled as *prima facie*, a member must demonstrate that the issue has been raised at the earliest opportunity while also providing sufficient evidence to support the claim that a *prima facie* case of privilege has been established.

On the condition of timeliness, the honourable Government House Leader raised the matter immediately following a ruling that I delivered after oral questions on the day the remarks were allegedly spoken. Accordingly, I would rule that the matter was raised at the earliest opportunity.

Regarding the second condition of whether a *prima facie* case was demonstrated in her submission, the honourable Government House Leader alleged that during oral questions that day, the member for Lac du Bonnet yelled across the Chamber to the Premier: You're drunk, you're drunk. I thought you quit drinking.

The honourable Government House Leader stated that this demonstrated anti-Indigenous racism, and that the comment amounted to a personal attack that I—and I quote, contributes to a toxic and unsafe working environment for the Premier, Deputy Premier (MLA Asagwara) and every member of our NDP caucus.

Janse and LeBlanc state in citation 3.78 of the fourth edition of House of Commons Procedure and Practice that: "Attempting to obstruct members' parliamentary work by threatening or intimidating them is a situation that the Speaker always takes very seriously."

\* (14:50)

As I've mentioned to members before, there are many times when I cannot hear comments such as

these that are heckled across the room. The noise in this Chamber often prevents me from even hearing the member holding the floor.

Past Manitoba Speakers used to consistently state that they could not rule on comments made off the record. However, due to mounting problems with decorum and with advances in technology, recent Speakers have been obligated to consider other sources of information regarding incidents in the House, such as isolated audio and video feeds. As a result, Manitoba Speakers in the last 15 years have been addressing off-the-record language in rulings.

In preparing this ruling, I listened to the audio from our House broadcast. However, I was unable to hear the alleged offending words.

I then listened to the isolated audio feed from the interject mics positioned at the clerks' table. On this recording, I can hear the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) say, and I quote: Hey, quit drinking, followed by the honourable First Minister's name.

As I detailed in the ruling I delivered on April 7, 2026, Joseph Maingot established that unparliamentary language constitutes a breach of order, not privilege.

Once again, it is up to me as Speaker to determine if the comment was a threat. While I'm frankly troubled to hear that comments are being hurled across the floor of the Chamber, based on the procedural authorities and the precedents set in the ruling I delivered on April 7, 2026, I do not believe that this constitutes a threat to the honourable First Minister.

I have to point out that I am struggling to put into words how disappointed I am to be ruling on this issue just a few weeks after I delivered a similar ruling directing members to govern their behaviour in a way that upholds the dignity of the Assembly. I'd finished that ruling by stating that I strongly believe members should be setting a better example for Manitobans in this place. This was not a better example.

I'm tired of pointing out to members that we all share the privilege of freedom of speech, and it is a privilege that even I as Speaker cannot overrule. Members should know by now that this essential privilege should never be abused. The continued abuse of this privilege is disheartening and reflects poorly on members of this Assembly. It must stop.

I must rule that this is not a prima facie case of privilege, but members need to understand that the problems with decorum in this place are becoming a distraction from the hard work that members do here. By that, I mean not just this comment in particular, but also the yelling I hear most days in this chair.

A lot of important matters are discussed in this room, but the behaviour of members is overshadowing that work. Much of the recent media coverage featuring the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba has been focused on the bad conduct of members.

I feel that I should share with the House that members of the public have been approaching me about the behaviour and comments that are being thrown around in this House. Manitobans are not happy with what has been happening in the House. They've been begging and pleading with me, as Speaker, that I must find a way to stop this.

So, as your Speaker, what should I do? What must I do? And what can I do?

As I mentioned in my statement on May 4, 2026, I'm setting a new standard for decorum in this House. In accordance with that new standard, comments like this that are made off the record could be ruled as causing disorder in the House. I could intervene and call a member to order, and if they do not comply with my direction, it could lead to a member being named.

We are meant to be role models. We are meant to inspire the next generation of leaders in our province. We are meant to show that everyone deserves to be treated with respect and feel safe in their place of work.

In accordance with the established policy of the Office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, I will provide this audio clip upon request.

And now we will—oh, the honourable Government House Leader.

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** And while I tread very carefully in response to your ruling, because you've set new guidelines on what we can and cannot say in this Chamber, I do just want to point out that not being able to say certain words—that seems to be your concern and the Clerk's concern, rather than the behaviours that fuel it—makes a pretty unsafe workspace in this Chamber.

And so here is a prime example, in your ruling, that confirmed what we said: that the member for Lac du Bonnet issued anti-Indigenous racism at the Premier (Mr. Kinew). Not once have we ever heard

the member for Lac du Bonnet say it to any of my white colleagues. Not once have we ever heard that type of language come out from any member opposite towards any of our white colleagues. It was saved for an Indigenous, First Nations premier. Other comments that were saved for the first Black, queer, gender non-conforming—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I just have to ask the honourable Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine): Are you raising a point of order or commenting on the ruling of the Speaker?

**MLA Fontaine:** I am commenting on the ruling. And so, as I said, I tread very carefully because now we have a new regime in this Chamber that we can't point out very harmful behaviours.

So I would ask that the member for Lac du Bonnet—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

I would just point out to the honourable Government House Leader that commenting on the ruling of the Speaker is not allowed. If the honourable Government House Leader raises a point of order, that's a different matter.

**MLA Fontaine:** Again, treading very carefully because now we can't seem to do anything in this Chamber—

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

**MLA Fontaine:** I am asking that the member for Lac du Bonnet apologize to the Premier for his comments.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** Yes, that's not a point of order, Honourable Speaker. There's been many of—things said here, even just today. The colleague to the Government House Leader, just to the right, commenting on when you're doing your ruling: What a horrible legacy you're leaving.

And that's how they govern. They have a bad day and then they try and distract with a point of order. This is not a point of order.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**The Speaker:** I thank the members for their comments. As there was no point of order raised, there's really nothing for me as Speaker to comment on.

So we will move on to petitions.

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

### Point of Order

**The Speaker:** The honourable First Minister, on a point of order.

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Honourable Speaker, so you just ruled that comments made off the mic are a violation of the rules and therefore can be subject of a point of order. So I want to raise something in response to the off-mic comments that we've just heard are subject to the rules.

I want to say to young neechies [*friends*] out there, young Native kids, kids from the rez, kids from whichever background: Forgive, move past, don't worry about it.

When it comes to people being racist, I've always looked at it this way: You had to do that to try and compete with me, because if you had to compete on a level playing field, you'd never have a chance. That's what works for me.

So I encourage you young people out there: find out what works to—with you, don't let it hold you back, stand up against injustice and discrimination wherever you see it. You're going to be able to do everything you want in your life.

\* (15:00)

**The Speaker:** Well, this was raised as a point of order. It's not a point of order, but I think the decent thing to do would be for the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) to apologize.

The honourable—[*interjection*]

And I guess we're at a new place, a new low in this Chamber, where people are basically refusing to follow the direction of the Speaker. It's shameful that we are where we are now.

So, once again, I would ask the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet to apologize for his comments.

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Honourable Speaker, I accept your ruling, and I—as many of my colleagues and, I'm hoping, many of the colleagues on the government bench—will do better moving into the future as well.

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I did ask the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet to apologize for his comments. The words he just put on the record were not an apology. So will the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet apologize?

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, much like the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) stood in their place and put on various different comments reflecting on your ruling, I, as a member who've been here for quite a few years, have accepted your ruling.

If what I said and what you repeated today offended the Premier in any way—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —I apologize to the Premier. But in no way, shape or form, Honourable Speaker, was this meant as a racist comment whatsoever. It was talking about—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please. Order, please.

I have asked the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet to apologize three times. He's completely disregarding the direction that he's been given from the Chair. If the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet does not immediately withdraw the words complained of—unequivocally apologize—I will have no alternative but to name that member.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, in my last statement, I had apologized to the Premier, but, again, I will apologize to the Premier. He took offence to what I had mentioned off the record and was totally different than what the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) had put on the record, Honourable Speaker. *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

So I've requested, directed, instructed the member to withdraw his comment and unequivocally apologize. As the member has refused to do that, I have no alternative but to name Wayne Ewasko, the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, pursuant to our rules for disregarding the authority of the Chair and to direct that they withdraw from the Chamber for the remainder of the day. *[interjection]*

Order.

So, I'd like to congratulate us on meeting a new low.

## PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** So now, we will move on to petitions.

### Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all of the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

This petition was signed by Megan Delaney and many, many other fine Manitobans.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Prior to recognizing any other members to speak, there are some guests in the public gallery I'd like to introduce. We have seated in the public gallery, from Prairie View School, 22 grade 7 students under the direction of Rolando Penner.

And this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Midland (Mrs. Stone).

We welcome you here today.

\* (15:10)

### **Arlington Bridge**

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) On November 21, 2023, the City of Winnipeg—City—closed the Arlington Bridge to all traffic indefinitely.

(2) Over 13,000 vehicles per day cross the Arlington Bridge, which serves as a vital link for vehicular and pedestrian traffic between north Winnipeg and the downtown.

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

(3) The current structure has been declared unsafe as it has deteriorated extensively, is now functionally obsolete and is therefore no longer suitable for further life-extending repair.

(4) In 2020, 16—in 2016, sorry—the City initiated a study to explore options to replace the Arlington Bridge, and in 2019, the better bridge for Arlington study presented two options for a replacement structure.

(5) In 2019, the City placed the Arlington Bridge replacement project on its list of unfunded capital projects.

(6) The results of a \$850,000 study 'exploring' the feasibility of a comprehensive rehabilitation of the bridge are expected to be presented to the City in November of 2024.

(7) The City undertook extensive public consultation regarding the fate of the Arlington Bridge and found that the communities on both sides of the bridge were supportive of a replacement structure being built.

(8) Approximately 13,000 vehicles per day are forced to use alternate routes to travel from north Winnipeg to downtown.

(9) The Main Street underpass, the Slaw Rebchuk Bridge and the McPhillips Street underpass are overstressed by the increased traffic from the Arlington Bridge closure.

(10) A replacement structure is estimated to cost over \$300 million. This, combined with the unfunded \$912-million waste water biosolids removable project and the \$2.2 billion combined sewer overflow replacement project, is leaving the City with a massive infrastructure funding deficit.

(11) The Premier has a duty to direct the provincial government to provide financial assistance to the City so it can complete this long overdue vital transportation link.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier to allocate funding financially—to financially assist the City of Winnipeg in building a new structure to replace the Arlington Bridge.

(2) To urge the provincial government to recommend that the City of Winnipeg keep the old bridge fully open to traffic while the new bridge is under construction.

This petition was signed by many, many Manitobans.

### **Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** I wish to present the following petition.

The background is—of this petition is as follows:

Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Our provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat

violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

This is signed by Grant Voesenek, Tim Davey, Simon Bueckert and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Speaker. Thank you.

### **Provincial Road 352**

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** I wish to present the following petition.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Provincial Road 352, PR 352, is an 87.5 kilometre–54.4 mile–route where it begins at Provincial Trunk Highway 5, PTH 5, near Birnie, Manitoba, and terminates at PTH 34 near Arizona, Manitoba, intersecting with the Trans-Canada Highway.

(2) The route is gravel for most of its length, with two paved sections: one from PTH 5 to Birnie; and the other from PTH 16 to Arden.

(3) PR 352 has had concertable–considerable amount of deterioration over the years with little to no regular road maintenance and has seen ruts and damage to the gravel sections, those of which are featured online at CAA's worst roads.

\* (15:20)

(4) The promotion of PR 352 weight restriction to an RTAC classification of 140,000 pounds weight restriction has caused further damage, as the route was only built to accommodate the original 80,000 pounds

and has not seen upgrades to accommodate the increase. The 1.5-mile stretch on PR 352 from the community of Birnie is at the main access off P-T—is the main access off PTH 5 to the community.

(5) Residents in the area were advised these weight increases to PR 352 were due to commerce movement, although there is no commerce in Birnie.

(6) Within this stretch, there is a bridge that is damaged structurally and rests only five feet above the creek, causing it to sit in the water and deteriorate. With increased agriculture traffic, such as heavier trucks hauling grain and livestock, the bridge may not have the capacity to sustain further neglect.

(7) Community members have reached out and have spoken to civil servants. The issue must be resolved before it becomes a bigger problem, someone gets injured or an accident happens.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to meet RTAC road designation by providing upgrades and regular road maintenance to Provincial Road 352 in Manitoba, specifically the 1.5-mile stretch from Birnie to Provincial Trunk Highway 5, and ensure the road remains paved with asphalt and not reduced to gravel.

(2) To urge the provincial government to reduce load weights on PR 352 until the upgrades can be completed.

(3) To urge the provincial government to replace or repair the bridge located on the 1.5-mile stretch from Birnie to PTH 5 and to provide an integrity assessment.

This petition has been signed by KayAnn McKay, Rodney Drader, Ed Caumartin [*phonetic*] and many, many more fine Manitobans.

### **Intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The intersection of Provincial Trunk Highway 75 and Provincial Road 305 at Ste. Agathe has become increasingly dangerous for motorists and pedestrians.

Over the past seven years there have been at least 20 accidents at this location resulting in injuries and fatalities.

This intersection is heavily used by community members, commuters and commercial traffic, making safety improvements critical.

Immediate action is needed to mitigate accidents and prevent further loss of life.

An in-service road safety review was completed in 2022, which included recommended improvements but no action plan.

Immediate action and implementation on the maintenance issues and short-term strategies identified in the 2022 study are needed.

Development of an action plan with timelines for the medium-term strategies identified in the 2022 study is required.

Installation of traffic lights or a controlled signal system will make the intersection safer.

Additional strategies, such as reduced speed limits approaching the intersection and the addition of rumble strips to alert drivers of the upcoming intersection, will save lives.

Construction of dedicated turning lanes to reduce collision risk and other traffic calming designs will help reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities at the intersection.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to undertake safety improvements at the intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305 at Ste. Agathe; and

To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to prioritize measures that will reduce accidents and fatalities, including but not limited to those outlined in the 2022 in-service road safety review.

And this petition has been signed by Karl Falk, Rheyenne Vermette, Thérèse Musafiri and many, many other Manitobans.

**Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The intersection of Provincial Trunk Highway 75 and Provincial Road 305 at Ste. Agathe has become increasingly dangerous for motorists and pedestrians.

(2) Over the past seven years there have been at least 20 accidents at this location resulting in injuries and fatalities.

(3) This intersection is heavily used by community members, commuters and commercial traffic, making safety improvements critical.

(4) Immediate action is needed to mitigate accidents and prevent further loss of life.

(5) An in-service road safety review was completed in 2022, which included recommended improvements but no action plan.

(6) Immediate action and implementation on the maintenance issues and short-term strategies identified in the 2022 study are needed.

(7) Development of an action plan with timelines for the medium-term strategies identified in the 2022 study is required; and

(8) Installation of traffic lights or a controlled signal system will make the intersection safer.

(9) Additional strategies, such as reduced speed limits approaching the intersection and the addition of rumble strips to alert drivers of the upcoming intersection, will save lives.

(10) Construction of dedicated turning lanes to reduce collision risk and other traffic calming designs will help reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities at the intersection.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to undertake safety improvements at the intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305 at Ste. Agathe; and

(2) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to prioritize measures that will reduce accidents and fatalities, including but not limited to those outlined in the 2022 in-service road safety review.

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

### Medical Assistance in Dying

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for my—for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

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

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

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

\* (15:30)

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

This petition was signed by Richard Feist, Mara Loverniro [*phonetic*] and Ken Keith and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you.

### Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the



continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

This petition has been signed by Pat Ransome, Kevin Gates, Garry Jones and many, many Manitobans.

Thank you.

### **Intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305**

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The intersection of Provincial Trunk Highway 75, PTH 75 and Provincial Road 305, PR 305, at Ste. Agathe, has become increasingly dangerous for motorists and pedestrians.

(2) Over the past seven years, there have been at least 20 accidents at this location resulting in injuries and fatalities.

(3) This intersection is heavily used by community members, commuters and commercial traffic, making safety improvements critical.

(4) Immediate action is needed to mitigate accidents and prevent further loss of life.

(5) An in-service road safety review was completed in 2022, which included recommended improvements but no action plan.

(6) Immediate action and implementation on the maintenance issues and short-term strategies identified in the 2022 study are needed.

(7) Development of an action plan with timelines for the medium-term strategies identified in the 2022 study is required.

(8) Installation of traffic lights or a controlled signal system will make the intersection safer.

(9) Additional strategies, such as reduced speed limits approaching the intersection and the addition of rumble strips to alert drivers of the upcoming intersection, will save lives.

(10) Construction of dedicated turning lanes to reduce collision risk and other traffic calming designs will help reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities at the intersection.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to undertake safety improvements at the intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305 at Ste. Agathe; and

(2) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to prioritize measures that will reduce accidents and fatalities, including but not limited to those outlined in the 2022 in-service road safety review.

This petition has been signed by Kiara Brewster, Denis Richard, J. Richard and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Provincial Road 482**

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

\* (15:40)

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Upgrading Provincial Road 482 will accelerate economic development, as it will enhance connectivity, facilitate efficient transportation and promote economic growth in the region.

(2) Economic development will be further enhanced as improved road infrastructure attracts businesses, encourages investment and creates job opportunities.

(3) Roads meeting the Roads and Transportation Association of Canada, RTAC, standards improve both safety and efficiency, as they can handle heavier loads, reducing the number of trips required for goods transportation.

(4) Safer roads further benefit both commuters and commercial vehicles, minimizing accidents and damage.

(5) Upgrading to RTAC standards ensures resilience to challenges caused by climate change, such as thawing and flooding, which negatively impact road conditions.

(6) Efficient transportation networks contribute to Manitoba's economic competitiveness, as upgraded roads support interprovincial and international goods movement, benefiting both trade and commerce.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to take the necessary steps to upgrade Provincial Road 482 to meet RTAC standards.

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

Thank you.

#### **MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility**

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is follows:

Thanks to the investment that was made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction of a new Portage regional health facility is well—was well underway and is completed. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically an additional of an MRI machine.

(2) An MRI machine is a non-invasive medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and computer-generated radioactive to create detailed imaging in organs and tissues in human body. It is used for the disease detection, diagnosis and treatment monitoring.

(3) Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on No. 1 Highway in south health/Santé Sud Health Authority. Currently there is only one MRI machine in that RHA.

(4) An MRI machine located at Portage regional health facility will reduce transportation costs for patients, as well as reduce the burden on stretcher service and ambulance use. It will bring care closer to home and reduce wait times for MRI scans across the province.

(5) Located around Portage la Prairie are the Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay and Long Plain First Nations reserves. Indigenous people in Canada 'disproportionally' face barriers in access to service and medical care. An MRI machine located in Portage regional health facility will bring care closer to their home communities and provide greater access to diagnostic testing.

(6) Located in close proximity of the new Portage regional health facility in this—is the Southport airport.

This aerodrome was an runway length that is more adequate to support medical air ambulance services. This would provide an opportunity to transport patients by air from remote communities to access MRI imaging services.

(7) The average wait times for Manitobans to receive an MRI scan is currently six to eight months. Having an MRI machine in the Portage regional health facility will help reduce these wait times for patients and provide better care sooner.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and replacement of an MRI machine in Portage la Prairie health facility in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

This has been signed by Dixie Crease [*phonetic*], Elizabeth Beth Bernard [*phonetic*] and John Jackson and many other Manitobans.

#### **Provincial Trunk Highway 34**

**Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, I wish to represent the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Provincial Trunk Highway 34, PTH 34, is a two-lane provincial primary highway that runs from the US border where it meets with ND 20 to PTH 16 at the town of Gladstone.

(2) PTH 34 runs north-south in the south-central region of the province. It's the main highway for the towns of Crystal City, Pilot Mound and Holland, serving as a main corridor for the semi-trailers, farm equipment, daily drivers and a local school bus route.

(3) A new bridge is currently being constructed over the Assiniboine River at PTH 34, north of Holland, in the RM of Victoria. The bridge serves as an important north-south link over the Assiniboine River between the Trans-Canada Highway and PTH 2.

(4) The deterioration of PTH 34 has raised major concerns due to its narrow shoulders and numerous deep potholes that pose serious safety risks, considering farmers often need to use the highway to transport heavy equipment.

(5) Construction of a new bridge in the accordance current design codes and the RTAC standard, located on PTH 34 crossing the Assiniboine River, will support trade and commerce and improve public

safety in the area and also accommodate flood events on the Assiniboine River.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to address the conditions of Provincial Trunk Highway 34, making the necessary upgrades to RTAC standard and to resurface the road once the new bridge has been completed.

This petition has been signed by Ray Huggart, Dallas Weicker, Murray Vilgar [*phonetic*] and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

### **Intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305**

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The intersection of Provincial Trunk Highway 75, PTH 75, and Provincial Road 305, PR 305, at Ste. Agathe, has become increasingly dangerous for motorists and pedestrians.

(2) Over the past seven years there have been at least 20 accidents at this location resulting in injuries and fatalities.

(3) This intersection is heavily used by community members, commuters and commercial traffic, making safety improvements critical.

(4) Immediate action is needed to mitigate accidents and prevent further loss of life.

(5) An in-service road safety review was completed in 2022, which included recommended improvements but no action plan.

(6) Immediate action and implementation on the maintenance issues and short-term strategies identified in the 2022 study are needed.

(7) Development of an action plan with timelines for the medium-term strategies identified in the 2022 study is required.

(8) Installation of traffic lights or a controlled signal system will make the intersection safer.

\* (15:50)

(9) Additional strategies, such as reduced speed limits approaching the intersection and the addition of

a rumble strip to alert drivers of the upcoming intersection, will save lives.

(10) Construction of dedicated turning lanes to reduce the collision risk and other traffic calming designs will help reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities at the intersection.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to undertake safety improvements at the intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305 at Ste. Agathe.

(2) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to prioritize measures that will reduce accidents and fatalities, included but not limited to those outlined in the 2022 in-service road safety review.

This is signed by Diane Ritchot, Yvette Lecuyer, Erika Rempel and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Teaching Certification**

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Ensuring that teachers have a robust background in the subjects they teach is essential for maintaining high-quality education and fostering well-rounded learning experiences for all Manitoba students.

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teacher certification.

(3) These amendments eliminated all subject-area requirements for teacher certification, including major and minor teachable subjects and subject-specific requirements for early/middle years streams.

(4) Specifically, the amendments removed: senior years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; early/middle years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; and early/middle years credit requirements for specific subjects, including: math; physical or biological science; English or French; and history and/or geography.

(5) Key stakeholders, such as parents, post-secondary educators outside the faculties of education

and business partners were not consulted about the changes.

(6) The removal of subject-specific requirements undermines the educational quality in Manitoba schools by permitting teachers to enter the classroom without sufficient training in core academic areas, thereby compromising the education that Manitoba students receive.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early/middle years requirements which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas.

(2) To urge the provincial government to address teacher shortages through alternative measures that uphold rigorous subject-area standards, which are critical for providing quality education to all Manitoba students.

This is signed by Lisa Malcolm, Arthur Malcolm, Adam Malcolm and many, many more Manitobans.

#### **MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility**

**Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction of the new Portage regional health facility is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

(2) An MRI machine is a non-invasive medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and a computer-generated radio wave to create detailed images of organs and tissues in the human body. It is used for disease detection, diagnosis and treatment monitoring.

(3) Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on the No. 1 Highway in the Southern Health/Santé Sud Health Authority. Currently there is only one MRI machine in the RHA.

(4) An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will reduce transportation costs for patients as well as reduce the burden on stretcher services and ambulance use. It will bring care closer to home and reduce wait times for MRI scans across the province.

(5) Located around Portage la Prairie are the Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay and Long Plain First Nations reserves. Indigenous peoples in Canada disproportionately—pardon me—disproportionately face barriers in access to services in medical care. An MRI machine located in Portage regional health facility will bring care closer to their communities and provide greater access to diagnostic testing.

(6) Located in close proximity to the new regional—Portage regional health facility—is the Southport airport. This aerodrome has a runway length that is more than adequate to support medical air ambulance services. This would provide the opportunity to transport patients by air from more remote communities to access MRI imaging services.

(7) The average wait times for Manitobans to receive an MRI scan is currently six to eight months. Having an MRI machine in the Portage regional health facility will help reduce these wait times for patients and provide bare—better care sooner.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and placement of an MRI machine in the Portage regional health facility in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

This petition is signed by Ross Macdonald, Bernadette Sampson, Roger St. Louis and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

#### **Placement Vetting for Elderly Persons Housing**

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Manitoba Housing will be placing homeless people and people with multi-layered mental illnesses and addictions into what has always been known as seniors housing.

(2) Manitoba Housing is placing people in elderly persons 'houthing'—housing buildings without vetting them.

\* (16:00)

(3) There is no minimum age limit stated on the Manitoba Housing information page for EPH buildings, which is elderly persons housing.

(4) The tenant service co-ordinator and/or building manager of elderly persons housing buildings should be given the right to deny applicants based on their first-hand knowledge of the applicant being homeless, having multi-layered mental illnesses and/or addictions or any other reason that they are aware of that could potentially harm the residents.

(5) Proper vetting should include a criminal record check, a vulnerable persons record check and the consent of the tenant service co-ordinator and/or the building manager of the elderly persons housing building.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness to use seniors housing for what it was intended: the seniors.

(2) To urge the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness to require a minimum age of 55 years for residents in all elderly persons housing buildings; and

(3) To urge the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness to engage in proper vetting of all applications of people desiring to live in elderly persons housing buildings.

This petition's been signed by Roger Penner, Mark Morris, Kayla Lumax and many, many other Manitobans.

\* \* \*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Acting Government House Leader):** Can you please call the start of third reading of Bill 2 and Bill 30.

## CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS— AMENDED BILLS

### Bill 2—The Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Amendment Act

**The Deputy Speaker:** We will now move on to concurrence and third reading of Bill 2 and Bill 30.

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Environment and Climate Change (MLA Moyes), that Bill 2, The Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Amendment Act, be—as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Justice, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Wiebe:** I'm pleased to rise at third reading to put words on the record in support of Bill 2, the intimate images protection amendment act. This is an incredibly important tool, and it's one that's designed to protect Manitobans from having their intimate images shared without their knowledge or consent.

Unlike members opposite who cut supports for Manitobans affected by gender-based violence, our government is committed to protecting children and survivors of gender-based violence and holding people who perpetrate this violence to account.

This bill updates the definition of intimate images so that it reflects today's reality. It ensures that images created or altered using modern technologies like AI, machine learning or other digital tools are now treated the same way as real images when they are shared without consent.

In practical terms, that means if someone creates or spreads a fake intimate image of another person without their permission, the victim will have the same access to legal remedies as if the image were real. This legislation is about fairness, it's about accountability and, ultimately, it's about keeping survivors at the centre of our justice system.

These changes are strongly endorsed by experts in the field who supported this bill at committee, including the Canadian Centre for Child Protection and the Uniform Law Conference of Canada. I want to thank these valued stakeholders for their continued advocacy and for the amendments that they brought to this bill at committee.

At its core, Bill 2 is about making sure the law keeps up with technology and stands clearly on the

side of survivors. I urge all members to support this incredibly important and common sense legislation.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** Standing here today to speak on Bill 2, The Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Amendment Act, gives me—provides another opportunity to acknowledge the foundation work of the PC government, as well as the contributions of colleagues who advanced this issue before it finally got to this stage. It's important to recognize that legislation such as this does not emerge overnight. It's built over time through the efforts of many. While there's been movement by the current government, the groundwork laid previously, including proposed amendments and earlier bills, also deserves recognition.

I want to take a moment to thank and recognize those individuals working on the front lines: Those in law enforcement, the counsellors, the child protection professionals, who deal directly with consequences related to crimes that are brought forward by AI, for example. Those individuals are exposed to deeply disturbing material and hear stories that most people could hardly imagine. The emotional toll of the work alone is significant, and their continued commitment to protecting vulnerable individuals deserves recognition, acknowledgement and much gratitude.

As technology evolves, our laws must evolve alongside it. We are no longer dealing with the same risks that existed even five years ago. Today, rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, digital platforms, online 'anonymity' and—have fundamentally changed how harm can occur. This legislation reflects an attempt to respond to that changing reality. We can see the harms done every day from what technology can do if not managed properly.

Bill true-2, addressing the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, is necessary. This issue goes beyond legal definitions; it directly affects people's dignity, privacy and mental health. The impact is especially severe for our youth and many vulnerable individuals, who are often the targets of exploitation.

The proposed amendments aim to strengthen protections and expand the rights of those affected. One significant change is the expanded definition of intimate image, which now includes situations where a person may be nearly nude or not identifiable. This recognizes that harm is not limited to explicit imagery alone. Even images that may appear less severe can still cause lasting psychological damage, reputational harm and, of course, emotional distress.

At the same time, it's important to acknowledge that cultural perspectives may influence how terms like nearly nude are understood. Sensitivity to those differences must remain part of how this legislation is interpreted and also applied.

Another key advancement is the creation of a legal avenue, a tort, for threatening to distribute intimate images, and this is another critical component. In today's digital environment, the threat alone is often used as a tool of control. Individuals, particularly our youth, are manipulated or coerced into actions out of fear that images will be shared. By recognizing this behaviour as actionable harm, the legislation takes an important step toward prevention, as well as accountability.

\* (16:10)

The bill also clarifies situations where distribution may be considered in the public interest, helping establish boundaries and prevent misuse of that justification. In addition, it ensures that the views of the person depicted are considered when courts decide on publication bans. This is essential in preventing revictimization and giving individuals a voice in how their images are handled with legal proceedings.

Another important provision expands the authority of courts to order Internet service providers and platforms to remove harmful content. In theory, this allows for quicker action to limit ongoing damage.

However, a challenge remains. Many of these platforms operate internationally, and enforcing provincial legislation across global companies can be very complex, and this is an area where further work is clearly needed.

Overall, the amendments build upon earlier legislation introduced in 2022 and subsequent efforts such as Bill 24. This continuity demonstrates that addressing digital exploitation is an ongoing process. It requires constant refinement as we see our technology evolve.

Support for victims must also remain at the centre of this discussion. Those that are affected by the non-consensual sharing of images or by deepfake technology often face intense emotional distress, isolation and, of course, stigma. It takes significant courage to come forward, particularly for young people. They need to know that the system supports them and that there are real consequences for those who harm them.

Strong penalties for offenders are essential. Individuals who exploit others, threaten them or profit

from non-consensual content must face meaningful consequences. At the same time, law enforcement of the courts must have those tools necessary to act effectively, including enforcing removal orders and publication bans.

What makes this issue even more urgent today is the rapid rise of artificial intelligence. AI, and we all are aware of this, has introduced new forms of harm that we were previously—or we couldn't even imagine prior to today. Deepfake technology, for example, allows individuals to create realistic but entirely fabricated images or videos, and these can be extremely harmful and can be used to humiliate, extort or manipulate victims without any original image ever being shared.

We're already seeing the consequences in our young people. Cases have emerged where students have used AI to generate fake images of classmates and distribute them online. There've been criminal cases, including individuals using AI to produce illegal content. Perhaps most concerning are the stories—some public, many not—of young people experiencing severe mental health crisis and, in tragic cases, taking their own lives after being targeted.

This is the reality we are all facing here. The barrier to creating harmful 'content'—content has been drastically lowered. What once required technical expertise can now be done with widely available tools. This increases both the scale and the speed at which harm can really occur. At the same time, many victims suffer in silence, living in fear, shame and stigma, all of which prevent them from speaking out.

This underscores the importance of not only legislation, but also education and awareness. People need to understand the risks, and victims need to know that support is available. The issue of exploitation is central. While anyone can be affected, youth are particularly vulnerable. Online relationships, peer pressure and manipulation create situations where individuals are coerced into sharing images which are used against them later on. And, again, these are not isolated incidents; they reflect a broader pattern of 'behaviour'—behaviour by bad actors who exploit trust and vulnerability.

Organizations such as the Canadian Centre for Child Protection play a critical role in addressing this issue. Their work in supporting victims and informing policy is invaluable, particularly given the complexity and scale of online exploitation. As legislators, there is a responsibility to ensure that the legal system keeps up with the pace of these challenges. The digital world

is constantly changing, constantly evolving and so must the framework that governs it. Courts, law enforcement and the legal professionals need clear tools and authority to respond effectively.

At the same time, there's a role for the federal government. Criminal law, online regulation and cross-border enforcement require a national co-ordination. Provinces can act within their jurisdiction, but broader protections will depend on federal leadership to strengthen the Criminal Code and address gaps related to digital crimes, coercion and exploitation. Governments at all levels have, in many ways, been playing catch-up. Technology has advanced faster than legislation and particularly in areas such as AI, deepfakes and the dark web. This gap creates opportunities for exploitation, and closing the gap must be a priority for all of us.

It's important to recognize that harm often occurs within personal relationships: individuals sharing images in trust only to have that trust broken. In other cases, images are used as tools of control in abusive relationships. This legislation acknowledges those realities and seeks to provide recourse.

Bill 2 represents an evolution of existing laws; however, it is not the final step. Technology will continue to evolve, and new forms of harm will emerge. Ongoing review and adaptation will be necessary to ensure that protections remain effective.

In closing, this legislation represents a meaningful step toward addressing a serious and growing issue. It reinforces the importance of protecting dignity, privacy and safety in a digital world that presents both opportunities as well as risks. We must continue listening to those who've been affected, learning from their experiences and adapting our approach accordingly. The rise of AI and advanced technologies has increased both the potential for harm and, of course, the urgency for our action.

Ultimately, the goal is clear: to create a safer environment for all Manitobans, particularly our children, youth and vulnerable individuals. Achieving that goal will require co-operation across governments with ongoing vigilance and a willingness to evolve as the world around us changes.

I hope all members can work together toward the shared objective of creating a safer place for all Manitobans.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Seeing no further debate, is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 2, The Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Amendment Act.

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

\* (16:20)

This motion is accordingly passed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Justice.

**Mr. Wiebe:** No. Ready for the next bill. That's all.

### CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

#### Bill 30—The Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Committee Act

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I move, seconded by the Minister for Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism, that Bill 30, the intimate partner violence death review committee, reported from the Standing Committee on Justice, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Justice, seconded by the honourable Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism (MLA Kennedy), that Bill 30, The Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Committee Act; Loi sur le Comité d'examen des décès causés par de la violence de la part d'un partenaire intime, reported from the Standing Committee on Justice, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

**Mr. Wiebe:** I'm so incredibly proud to be rising today on third reading of Bill 30, The Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Committee Act. This is an incredibly important piece of legislation and one that is sorely needed, and I'm proud to be the minister bringing this legislation forward.

We know, honourable Speaker, that too many Manitobans, most often women, have lost their lives due to intimate partner violence. And, again, unlike members opposite, who cut the supports that were needed for Manitobans who are affected by gender-based violence, our government is committed to taking action and supporting those survivors and preventing future intimate partner violence acts.

Bill 30 brings back an intimate partner violence death review committee so that we can do exactly that work. The committee will take a hard look at selecting intimate partner violence deaths and understanding what the warning signs are, how the system gaps contributed to those tragedies. The legislation is about learning: learning from the past so that we can do better and that we can make a difference in the lives of Manitobans.

Bill 30 aligns with our safer neighbourhoods and safer downtowns strategy, of course with Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag, the All Women Doing Well strategy introduced by the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine), and also fits with the national efforts to address gender-based violence in the country. I'm also pleased to report that at committee, the bill received the support of Latinas Manitoba and other Manitoba citizens who came and talked about the impacts in community and how the death review committee can make a difference.

Put simply, again, common sense legislation that prevents deaths and creates opportunities for serious review. We owe it to victims, we owe it to survivors, we owe it to all Manitobans to act on what we learn, and that's what we're committing to with this important bill.

I urge all members to join us in passing this bill this afternoon and moving this into the law here in Manitoba.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** Gives me great honour to talk to this bill for a little bit and, you know, really support the victims of domestic violence or intimate partner violence, the families and everybody else that actually suffers because of these senseless crimes—but, again, preventable crimes if people undertook the responsibility to ensure that they weren't committing domestic violence or intimate partner violence.

I have a few concerns with this bill, and the main one is around the committee timelines and the structures that are put into place by the Minister of Justice. And I believe he's erred, and erred quite significantly in some of this legislation, because it's going to be very impactful for the victims when what he's asking to be done does not come to fruition.

And so, during his opening remarks, the minister stated the committee will take a hard look at these cases. The issue that I take with this and that our caucus takes with this, honourable Deputy Speaker,



is the fact that taking a hard look is vastly different than taking a look that can happen on a timely manner. And you need them to both coincide with each other. You can't take a hard look at a case that's five years old, but you can take a hard look at something that's fresh and give meaningful input at that time.

*The Speaker in the Chair*

I've said it in the House before and I'll repeat it here, is that justice delayed is justice denied. And I believe that in this particular bill, that is the case for the victims of intimate partner violence, for domestic assault, the families that are involved.

And the data—the analytical data that will be retrieved from this committee—will be so dated that it will not be impactful for the victims. And I say that because investigations take time. And we're talking about a death investigation, so homicides are the most significant investigations undertaken by law enforcement, and they provide a vast array of investigative techniques to be employed, and it may take quite a while to catch the individual that is involved in this, or have enough evidence to go forward with this. And the law itself as it's written does not allow this committee to look at the cases until it is completely finished in the courts.

We also know that completely finished in the courts can mean an appeal, and then it can also mean further follow-up by the medical examiner's office, which can take a significant amount of time. Honourable Speaker, it can actually take six or seven years if we look at the longitudinal process of this from the crime being committed to the investigational stages to the prosecutorial stages, to the appellant's rights, to a medical examiner's examination and then subsequent ruling.

Something that is six or seven years old is not going to provide significant information to law enforcement or to the groups that are providing information to victims, that are wanting to help victims, that are advocating for victims and survivors of this. It's not serving that purpose, and it's actually quite unfair to these individuals to have that sort of length of delay.

Each of these individuals waiting that length of time, or even four years, three years—that's dated information and does not close the gaps in the system that are needed to be closed.

Having timely information and having that vetted through the committee and having that work published and available to the courts and to law enforcement and

to the advocacy groups is extremely important to make sure that they understand the issues that are at the forefront. To look at the significant gaps in the system. To look at where resources can be better deployed, whether it be by police, by the courts, by Victim Services or by any of these areas. It's very important that this has some sort of significance to that process.

\* (16:30)

And I don't believe the way this bill is presented that that is there for the victims. And it's mainly for the victims. I would love to see law enforcement and the courts and the advocacy groups get this timely information.

But, again, let's talk about who it really impacts, and that's the victims—present and future—that will be involved in domestic violence or intimate partner violence or family violence or however it is put in place.

The courts have done some work on this, and if—and if the people in our Chamber look at *R. v. Jordan*, a Supreme Court decision that was significant for law enforcement; and in *R. v. Jordan* the courts have compelled police officers and prosecutions to have cases done within 18 months, or the more complicated cases such as this, within 30 months.

So, that's a starting point. That helps out significantly for date-stamping these sort of processes. But that's from the time of arrest until the time of the trial. You cannot speed up the investigational processes that law enforcement takes because these are significant cases to look into. Homicides are the most severe cases, and, of course, when we're talking about intimate partner violence, something that plagues Manitoba—we're No. 2, I believe, in the province of Canada. Only Saskatchewan has more cases per capita than what Manitoba does, and it's become an epidemic.

But we need to make sure that these cases are not rushed, that the investigators are given the tools that they need to do the job and the work that they can do to bring charges forward, but not only to bring them forward, but to meet the thresholds of the courts for a conviction and not have any room for appeals and not have any room for the perpetrators to get off because of a technicality or some sort of error in law or error in the work.

So, that can't be rushed, and sometimes that can take years. And, again, if we take 30 months going through the prosecutorial process, we could be at four and a half years, and then any of the other inquests or

what have you. So, again, I say this so that Manitoba public can understand that they will not be getting timely reports from this committee.

So that is the first piece of this, Honourable Speaker, that I have some reservation with. The second part is in regards to the committee makeup, and the committee makeup for this committee establishes six people that must be on the committee and it can be a committee of six to 12. So it has a director of Victim Services or designate, a police officer with at least 10 years of experience—and I will come back to that one—a Crown prosecutor from the Department of Justice, a Manitoba university academic with experience in intimate partner violence, a representative from a victim support organization and a medical examiner.

It doesn't talk about victims and survivors of domestic violence, which, when you're bringing a bill forward to study the effects of intimate partner violence, I find it quite profound that they do not mention in their bill to have a survivor or victim of domestic or intimate partner violence as part of the committee and legislated into law. They would have lived experience and real purpose on this committee to bring their ideas forward and to talk about some of the gaps in the process that they experience as individuals. They are the de facto subject matter experts in this field because they've lived it and they've been part of the domestic process and the intimate partner violence.

I'm going to go back again, when I said I would come back and talk about police officers on this committee. And I say this because my experience is in the policing world. And it may be true for many of the other positions but a police officer with 10 years of experience can be vastly different than a police officer with 10 years of dedicated intimate partner violence investigative experience. Making sure that you have the proper officer or the proper police in place would be paramount to this legislation. Leaving it open to an officer with 10 years of experience can muddy the waters somewhat and allow somebody with the experience of patrol or non-investigative areas to be part of this committee for—I believe it says the appointment is up to a three-year period.

I don't think that serves well, so I really believe that this legislation should point out that the police officer should have 10 years or a majority of that 10 years as an investigator investigating intimate partner violence or homicide so that they understand the important of their role on this committee and of reviewing these case files.

And it's also important to note that, you know, the purpose of this bill—and I believe in all of these—the purpose of the bill, I believe, is to establish a multi-disciplinary committee to review intimate partner violence deaths—that's at the forefront—to identify trends and patterns and risk factors associated with those deaths.

And, of course, we want to make sure that we see that, but that goes back to my opening statements, Honourable Speaker, about making sure that it's timely because justice delayed is justice denied. And some of these cases, they can stretch out for seven years before they would even land in the laps of the death—or the review committee—are already been studied through the courts; they've already been studied through coroner's inquests or medical examiner's inquests, so it's almost redundant to have that same information going to this committee when it's already been reviewed.

And when we also look at the makeup of the committee, it talks about the chair of the committee having the responsibility for selecting cases for review. Now, they can consult with other members of the committee, but the chair has the ultimate say in which cases will be reviewed. And, again, I take some exception to this because what the chair feels is an important case may not reflect what Manitobans feel, what victims feel or what law enforcement feel or anybody else on this committee.

And it's important to make sure that we're reviewing the proper cases and making sure that these cases are brought forward in an effective manner so that the proper scenarios can be presented and we can look at making sure individuals that suffer from intimate partner violence or domestic assaults are kept protected.

There's also an area of this confidentiality process built into this, and it says information gathered must be safeguarded. But there is no legislation built into that to say what those safeguards will be, and a lot of information, when you're in a committee and you may be a layperson or you may not all be connected with a private network, emails and different ways of communication can often be intercepted or can fall prey to attacks. And it doesn't talk about how information gathered will be safeguarded, whether it will only remain within the confines of one person; whether it will stay in a committee, distributed and recollected; whether it will not be subject to electronic dissemination. There's so many questions that are here.

Now, again, we believe in the intent of this committee because we want to make sure that people don't fall in harm's way because of this, but we have to look at the facts that sometimes there needs to be some improvements on bills.

\* (16:40)

Unfortunately, I found, in this position, that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) never takes any advice unless it's his own, and so I don't see this bill changing for the better, even if we bring forward these recommendations, because, again, it's been offered many times and the minister just refuses to take any sort of advice from people that are experts in the systems. Once he has his mind set on something, it doesn't seem to move.

So, again, I talked about one of the ways would be to maybe add a survivor or Indigenous representation, and it's not spoken to in this bill about Indigenous representation. And we can look at the disproportionate effects that intimate partner violence has on Indigenous people and we can see that our northern policing models are dealing with a great deal of intimate partner violence involving Indigenous people. So it would be incumbent on this government to have another person on there bringing that Indigenous lens and how the system gaps can be improved to help individuals that may fall subject to intimate partner violence.

The other area we could look at is requiring tracking of the recommendations that this committee comes forward with, and that's something that's very important. Any time that I've been involved in an inquest or information from the courts, the police service or the agency that takes that must provide a report on what they've done with those recommendations. And reading through this, I don't see anywhere where it says that there must be a report on these recommendations brought forward.

So, if the recommendations are mainly to the courts, it's just that—recommendations—unless the court takes those and implements them into their system, the same as investigational processes for the police services and the same for Victim Services areas. They're just words wrote on a report unless they're implemented, and there's nothing in this bill that says that they must be implemented.

I spoke earlier about Manitoba having very high and disproportionate rates of intimate partner violence, and, unfortunately, that has not improved over the years.

It continues to be an issue for Manitobans and it's not a banner that we should wear proudly, that we have some of the highest number of cases of intimate partner violence. It's not something that we should take lightly, and having an intimate partner death review committee such as this that doesn't drill down into timely cases and into timely matters does not serve our victims well and will not serve to help lower these rates.

And I know that I want to look at one other thing, one other area that was brought forward, and I think we need to talk about the law that was brought forward by the Progressive Conservative Party when they were in government and Clare's Law.

When we talk about Clare's Law, it was a disclosure to protect people against intimate partner violence and those violent acts. One of the most significant intimate partner violence initiatives that was introduced by the PC government was the Clare's Law, and that was introduced in 2022 under bill 43 to protect against intimate partner violence.

And the act, commonly known as Clare's Law, came into legislation and it aimed to provide risk assessments, safety planning and connection to services of those concerned about intimate partner violence. And although it passed in 2022 under the PCs, the full implementation did not happen until 2026 under this NDP government, which was shameful when this law could have been passed and saved many lives as we moved forward on this.

So, with those words, Honourable Speaker, I will let this come to a vote.

**The Speaker:** If there are no other speakers, is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**The Speaker:** So the question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 30, The Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Committee Act.

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

**MLA David Pankratz (Deputy Government House Leader):** Is it the will of the House to call it 5 o'clock?

**The Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to call it 5 o'clock? [Agreed]

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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Monday, May 4, 2026**

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