



**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*



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**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.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, March 18, 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, Anishinewuk, 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.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 217—The Celebration of Philippine Independence Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)**

**MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson):** I move, seconded by the member for Burrows (Mr. Brar) that Bill 217, The Celebration of Philippine Independence Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended); Loi sur la Journée de la célébration de l'indépendance des Philippines (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs), be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**MLA Dela Cruz:** Kapwa means self in Tagalog. It's also used for friends, colleagues, neighbours—even strangers. Kapwa means that we are all connected. And during a time when anti-immigrant rhetoric is on its rise and the freedom of our kapwa abroad is

threatened, I am proud to introduce Bill 217, the Philippine Independence Day act.

Sa Manitoba, kami ay may isang daang libong katao. *[In Manitoba, there are a hundred thousand of us.]* In English: We are 100,000-strong here in Manitoba. This bill will ensure that our history is seen, our freedoms are preserved, at ang aming katotohanan *[and our truth]*—and our truth is told.

Mga kapwa dito sa Manitoba, malaya tayo. *[My fellow persons in Manitoba, we are free.]* Here in Manitoba, we are free.

Sa pamamagitan namin, mabubuhay ang aming mga ninuno at ang aming kultura. *[Through us, our ancestors and our culture will live on.]* It's through us that our ancestors and our culture, our way of life will live on.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker, and I'd like to ensure that the names of my guests, Ronald Mervin Sison, Remy Amoyo, Dante Aviso and Allen Pineda, are included in Hansard as well.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

The motion is accordingly passed.

**Bill 233—The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act**

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** I move, seconded by the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), that Bill 233, the municipal amendment act, be now read a first time.

**The Speaker:** Moved by the honourable member for Roblin, seconded by the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli, that Bill 233, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

**Mrs. Cook:** Bill 233 amends The Municipal Assessment Act to increase the school tax exemption for property used to provide residential care, housing or support services for seniors and other persons from 0.81 hectares to 5 hectares. This square footage hasn't been amended since 1989, and a lot of personal-care homes, modern personal-care homes, exist on a much larger footprint.

I've spoken with a number of non-profit personal-care homes who have noted that they are facing significant financial constraints, and increasing their

property tax exemption will help them direct more—direct funding to resident care.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

The motion is accordingly passed.

No further introduction of bills? Committee reports?

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to table the 2024-2025 annual reports for the Manitoba Watershed Districts Program and the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** No further tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Alex Lytwyn

**Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture):** Honourable Speaker, I rise to recognize Alex Lytwyn of Winnipegosis. Alex is an inspiring advocate. He is a writer and an entrepreneur. He continues to break barriers.

Alex lives with cerebral palsy. He uses a power-chair, and he has always never allowed that to be defines his limits. Alex is an accomplished writer and works as a freelance contributor. Alex is committed to a lifelong learning.

Alex loves hockey. He serves on three seasons with the video coach of our local AAA team. Alex sent a strong message: people of all abilities can contribute and be an important part of the team.

Alex has proudly served as an ambassador for Manitoba Possible and now sits on its board. He has taken part in remarkable experiences such as taking the rope down the Manitoba Hydro building—which is a challenge, I would suspect—building in support of Manitoba Possible and Easter Seals Canada.

Alex is the founder of Willpower Media, which shares stories and encouragement with people to push beyond perceived limits.

I also recognize Karen as a valuable friend, health-care professional who has supported Alex for many years, as well as Alex's family for their ongoing support.

I would like to recognize those with Alex today: Karen Huhtala; mother, Sherry Lytwyn; Mark Gabrielle, friend; and Lindsey Cooke, who works for Manitoba Possible.

Alex reminds us that determination and support, barriers can be broken. Please join me in recognizing Alex Lytwyn.

\* (13:40)

### The Kumps Family

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Honourable Speaker, I rise today to recognize a proud Interlake family who recently stepped onto the national stage and made their community proud.

The Kumps family of Gimli—Brittanny Isfeld, Julie Kumps, Lisa Bardal, Vicki Kasupski and Samantha Gregotski—appeared on Family Feud Canada, where they showcased their quick thinking, teamwork and strong family bond for audiences across the country.

Competing on a national televised program is no small feat. It takes confidence, composure and a willingness to embrace the moment, and this group did just that. Their energy and enthusiasm were evident in every round, and they represented their hometown with pride and spirit.

The Kumps family delivered an impressive performance, winning three consecutive games and advancing to the Fast Money round, just falling short of the final jackpot.

Their success is remarkable—a remarkable achievement and a testament to their teamwork and determination. Their performance was a source of pride not only for their family but for the entire community of Gimli and the Interlake region.

What stood out most was not just how well they played the game but how they represented Manitoba: with warmth, humour and humility.

Honourable Speaker, moments like these bring communities together and shine a positive light on our province.

I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating the Kumps family and thanking them for being outstanding ambassadors for Manitoba. They join us online today.

Thank you.

### The Autism Strategy Act

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Yesterday, we debated Bill 232, The Autism Strategy Act, that was developed with direct consultation from stakeholders, including families and over 17 different organizations.

During debate, members of this government—for example, the MLA for Tuxedo said: Parents and caregivers often become advocates, co-ordinators and educators all at once, and they should not have to fight for the supports that their children need. Honourable Speaker, this highlights that government members know that the necessary supports are not currently in place.

Further, the MLA for Transcona said: Autism affects thousands of Manitobans and their families, and discussions like this give us the opportunity to deepen public understanding and strengthen the supports that families rely on every day.

Both of these quotes can be found in Hansard. So, with comments like that, we question why the government bench chose not to support this legislation moving forward to committee.

Fortunately, there was still support from enough members to call for a recorded vote, which will happen tomorrow at 11:55 a.m.

Honourable Speaker, I have been conversing with hundreds of people over the last 24 hours, and I am incredibly thankful for the initiative they have taken.

I'd like to table an online petition that they have created and circulated about sending The Autism Strategy Act to committee; nearly 700 people have already signed. Organizations advocating for those with ASD and their families have also started sending letters to their MLAs.

And, lastly, I am also tabling a Winnipeg Free Press article from today's paper highlighting the long wait times for diagnosis and how this is causing children to miss key developmental windows.

Honourable Speaker, it is abundantly clear that this bill should move on to committee. The PCs are fully behind it, and I know that there are members in the NDP caucus who personally want to see it move forward.

My hope is that the government will do right by democracy and allow for the stakeholders who want to present at committee to do so.

Thank you.

### Agriculture in the Classroom

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** March is Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month, a time when volunteers from across Manitoba step into classrooms to help students better understand where their food comes from and the people who produce it.

Agriculture is one of the most important industries in our province, supporting tens of thousands of jobs and contributing billions of dollars to the Manitoba economy. But more than that, it is also a cherished family tradition and way of life.

Through Agriculture in the Classroom-Manitoba, farmers and other agriculture professionals are visiting schools across our province to share their experiences and bring agriculture to life for thousands of students. This year alone, 159 volunteers will deliver more than 430 classroom presentations, reaching over 7,400 students and 363 classrooms across Manitoba. These visits are especially important because, today, fewer and fewer Manitobans have a direct connection to the farm. Programs like Agriculture in the Classroom help bridge that gap, giving young people a better understanding of food production, sustainability and the many careers that exist within the agriculture sector.

I would like to recognize Katharine Cherewyk, executive director of Agriculture in the Classroom-Manitoba, who is a constituent of mine and who would've liked to join us in the gallery today, but instead joining us online.

Under her leadership, Agriculture in the Classroom continues to do an outstanding job connecting Manitoba students with the farmers and innovators who help feed our province and the world. Their will—their work is helping to inspire the next generation understand and perhaps one day be part of Manitoba's proud agriculture tradition.

Please join me in recognizing Katharine along with all the others that help to make Ag in the Classroom possible for all Manitoba students.

### Data on Chronically Absent Students

**Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry):** Education got us into this mess, and education will get us out of it. Those are the words of the late Justice Murray Sinclair. He believed in the transformative power of education and its critical role for reconciliation.

When it comes to education, Manitobans must remember the tragic life of Tina Fontaine. When she was in elementary school, her father was murdered.

She was deeply affected by this. She never received any counselling to deal with her loss.

By grade 7, she began to miss school and become chronically absent. By grade 8, she had missed 47 and a half out of 64 school days. The school didn't mobilize any additional supports or provide any services for the family. Eventually she stopped attending at all. There is no record that the school made any attempt to re-engage her.

Once out of school, she melted into Winnipeg street life, drugs, alcohol and sexual exploitation. She was murdered at 15 years old.

School is one of the only trusted institutions in children's lives. Sometimes schools are the only positive supports in a person's life. Sometimes it's the only social service they will ever access. It matters that young people stay connected to schools. It can literally be a lifeline.

The office of the children's advocate noted that school absenteeism is a key early warning sign that a student requires additional support and signals a serious risk of academic dropout. They recommended, in 2019, a data-informed plan to address chronic absenteeism.

In 2024, Kinew government was aware that over 15,000 Manitoba students, disproportionately Indigenous, were chronically absent from schools. They did nothing. In fact, they attempted to hide this information from Manitobans. They lied about having it, buried the report with the data in it.

When confronted, the Minister of Education has learned nothing. She refused to commit to publicly disclosing this information. That's not reconciliation; that's racism.

This government owes a duty to Tina Fontaine and all of the other children struggling to attend school. Refusing—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired. *[interjection]*

The member's time has expired.

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave for the member to finish?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** No. I hear a no.

Leave has been denied. *[interjection]*

Order.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition):**

Life is more expensive for families today than it was in 2023 when this NDP government took office. Food prices are up year over year to a 6.1 per cent inflation rate, the second highest in Canada.

Rents are up year over year. Property taxes are up year over year to the extent of 43 per cent in some areas. You name it and it's more expensive under this NDP government than it was under the previous PC government.

\* (13:50)

The Premier is out of touch with reality and out of touch with Manitobans when they are facing this affordability crisis. He falsely promises affordability, but the best he could come up with is two cents on a litre of milk and one and a half cents on gas.

Why is the Premier opposed to a plan that will let low-income Manitobans keep more of their paycheque?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** We're working hard. We're making life more affordable. We froze the price of milk. They said that was a bad idea because they don't know what it's like. We made gas cheaper. They opposed it because they don't know what it's like to try and make a paycheque last until your next payday.

So we're making life more affordable. They're proposing a plan that would not help the lowest income Manitobans at all and would only benefit rich people. Sounds like the PCs of old are going to be running on the same tired platform.

But when we're talking about a plan for the future and youthful vim and vigor, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway). Today is the 40th anniversary of the day he was first elected to the Manitoba Legislature. Congratulations. We're going to keep making life more affordable and we hope that you'll be there to see all those measures pass in the coming budget.

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

**Mr. Khan:** Sometimes we can agree and—

**The Speaker:** Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

**Mr. Khan:** Sometimes we can agree and celebrate moments here. I want to congratulate the member from Elmwood on his 40 years of serving.

Let's—but unfortunately, we can't agree on the simple fact that we, on this side of the House, believe that more money should be left in the pockets and bank accounts of Manitobans.

Where this Premier wants to reach into your wallet and your paycheque and continue to tax you on the first \$30,000 you make, on this side of the House we believe that's wrong. We've introduced a resolution that will allow Manitobans to keep up to \$1,500 and families up to \$3,000 by basic—by increasing your basic personal tax exemption.

The Premier is opposed to this. Why is the Premier opposed to letting Manitobans keep more of their hard-earned money?

**Mr. Kinew:** We know what's fair is fair. You, the hard-working middle class, need more help. That's what we're delivering for you at the pump, at the grocery store, and we're letting you keep more of your paycheque than you ever saw under the PCs.

On the other hand, they want tax cuts for billionaires and millionaires. That's where we draw the line and say, why don't we reinvest that in helping you and your family?

But when we talk about the member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway) and we talk about him being here for 40 years, well, we want to hear that chant ringing throughout the halls of the Manitoba Legislature: 40 more years, 40 more years, 40 more years, and we'll excuse you, non-partisan arbiter that you are, if you don't join in on that chant, Honourable Speaker.

So life is good in Manitoba, but we're working hard to make it better. More affordability measures for you coming next Tuesday in the greatest budget in the history of the member for Elmwood's career here in this great province.

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

**Mr. Khan:** You heard it right there. The Premier stands up and calls you a millionaire. You, the Manitoban making \$30,000 a year, \$40,000 a year, he thinks you're a millionaire. *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Khan:** Our resolution will increase your basic personal tax exemption to \$30,000, meaning you keep all of the money in your paycheque from the \$30,000 that you earn. This Premier wants to reach into your wallet, call you a millionaire and take that money out of your bank account.

We believe that's wrong, Honourable Speaker. The Premier—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Khan:**—doesn't care about who he's hurting with his NDP ideology. He thinks he knows how to spend the money better than you do.

On this side of the House, we believe you'll do the right thing. You'll spend it on your family, on groceries, and reinvest in growing Manitoba's economy.

Why is the Premier convinced that he knows how to spend your money better than you do?

**Mr. Kinew:** I'm for the thousandaires; they're for the millionaires; they're for the billionaires. I'm trying to put more money in your pocket with your paycheque, with your visit to the pump, but also, when you go to the grocery store and you make your decisions about what to buy, I want that to be cheaper too. And that's why we're working with the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) and everybody in our whole team to make life more affordable in this province.

But here's the thing: when we bring forward our budget each and every year, there's a page there that says, tax measures. I guarantee you, when you come and see the tax measures page in next week's budget, you'll see that there's more money going back to Manitobans.

But today is a great day, not just for the member for Elmwood; it's also the MLAnniversary of the member for Transcona (MLA Corbett), who is one year into her illustrious legislative career. So not only do we celebrate the longest serving MLA, we're also here to celebrate one of the newest MLAs—

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

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

### **Cost of Living for Manitobans Property Taxes and Grocery Prices**

**Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Here's another clear difference from that side of the House and this side of the House. Our plan is for all Manitobans. When this Premier introduces phony gas tax, it'll only benefit people that had cars. What about the Manitobans that didn't have cars? Had to take public transit? The ones that walk to work?

This Premier is picking winners and losers in this province. On this side of the House, we want to pick you, the Manitobans making \$30,000, \$40,000.

We want to help you keep more money in your pocket, where this Premier simply wants to reach into your wallets and take more money out, like he's doing with the education property taxes, like he's doing right now by not supporting the increase of your basic personal tax exemption.

We know Manitobans will spend that money here in Manitoba. They're going to invest in local businesses, they're going to invest in attractions and they're going to spend some money on their family, buy the right groceries and enjoy a little bit of freedom that they've earned with their hard work.

Now, Honourable Speaker, will the Premier—*[interjection]*—as the Premier laughs at this—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Khan:** —he laughs at your freedom.

I'd say, will the Premier simply state why he's okay with not—

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

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** When it comes to people out there across the province, we're helping you when you go to the grocery store, and there's going to be more help to come next week. We're helping you when you go to the gas station, which is what everybody in the entire province has to do to earn a living. He talks about people taking transit. Guess what? More help coming next week for people who use transit.

For every single Manitoban out there, there's a way for you to participate in our plan. And if you are lucky enough to call yourself a millionaire and a billionaire, well, the ask of you is to repay some of the benefit and the luck that you've had in our society by helping lower class, lower income, low 'siosource'—socioeconomic standing Manitobans to get a hand up as well, too.

We're all in this thing together. They want class warfare; we just want a classy province, something they'll never understand.

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

**Mr. Khan:** The Premier stands up and says two cents of savings on milk is a huge win for him. He says saving one and a half cents on a litre of gas is making life better for Manitobans, when not everyone drives. *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Khan:** Maybe the Premier needs a reality check. Not everyone gets driven around in two black Suburbans with RCMP details, wasting taxpayer dollars.

Letting families keep more of their paycheque will help families in this time of affordability crisis. Manitobans are struggling, and this Premier is saving you two cents on a litre of milk. Now the Premier wants to do a study on groceries. He says that this study will all of a sudden lower the magical price of groceries.

How will this study lower the price of groceries? When will this study be done? Or will the Premier tell Manitobans, how many Richard Madan salaries will this study actually cost Manitobans?

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, this study is going to cost way less than even one GoodLocal subsidy from the Heather Stefanson government. And the member now wants to stand up and ask a friendly question today. He wants to know, when are you going to make life more affordable?

Come back on Tuesday and hear all the good news in Budget 2026. There's going to be good news for Manitobans who want to see better prices at the grocery store. There's going to be good news for Manitobans who are struggling with the high cost of living. There's going to be good news for renters, good news for those paying a mortgage, good news for those who are using public transit.

\* (14:00)

There's so much good news here in this budget, I know that the day after there will be no amendment from the opposition. They'll simply shuffle in here and say, can we vote for the budget now, government? We think you've done a great job all around.

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

**Mr. Khan:** It is the Premier's job to make life more affordable for Manitobans, and he has completely failed every single Manitoban. He wants to stand up, laugh, make jokes and mockery of the questions he's being asked when Manitobans are struggling to pay their bills. When they're struggling to put food on the table, he wants to stand up, laugh and mock you, Manitobans.

On this side of the House, we've introduced a resolution that will allow you to keep up to \$3,000 in your bank accounts; not two pennies on a litre of milk, like this Premier says. Up to \$3,000.

Now the Premier has increased your education property taxes to historical levels, as high as 43 per cent in some ridings. Manitoba has seen an increase of

20 per cent, on average, across the entire province, and that is under StatsCan.

Why is the Premier okay with having the province with the most outrageous, highest education property taxes in Canada while Manitobans are struggling to pay their bills?

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, why don't we go to the people and have a vote about it? Why don't we ask Manitobans, do you want milk to be cheaper or more expensive? Do you want gas to be cheaper, like it is under us, or more expensive, as it was under them? Do you want your property tax credit to be higher as it is under us, or do you want it to be lower as it was under them? I think you should be the one to have the final say.

And I do have to point out that the member opposite didn't have the courage of his convictions to address that comment he made yesterday: Whatever you are.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. *[interjection]* Order, please.

That matter is not allowed to be talked about because I've taken it under advisement.

**Mr. Kinew:** To the Minister of Health, whatever they are, they are a person of integrity. They are a high performer. They are an elite athlete who's actually won something in their career. They are somebody that I am in awe of each and every single day.

The member opposite has people leaving his caucus. He can't keep a question period sustained—

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

The honourable member for—*[interjection]*

Order. Order.

#### **Interlake School Division Funding Levels Impact on Residential and Commercial Property Taxes**

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** Honourable Speaker, the Interlake School Division has increased its property tax 'levly' by nearly 30 per cent since 2023. That is not a sign of a system that is working. It's a sign of a government that has failed to provide adequate and predictable funding for education.

Can the minister explain why Manitoba families are being forced to pay the price for the NDP's under-funding of school divisions?

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** It—thank you for—to the member opposite for that very energetic question.

I'm very glad to stand up again today and get some questions about education here in Manitoba.

Unfortunately, Honourable Speaker, the PCs are showing their hand again when it comes to educating students, kids, the future of our province. All that is to them is dollars and cents.

So I ask the member from Lakeside where he would like us to put the education property cuts because we know that—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

All questions must be addressed through the Chair.

**MLA Schmidt:** Thank you very much for your advice, Honourable Speaker, and I apologize.

The fact of the matter is, here in Manitoba, Manitobans finally have a government that understands that there is a great investment to be made here in Manitoba when we're talking about the investment—

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

The honourable member for Lakeside, on a supplementary question.

#### **Residential and Commercial Property Tax Increases**

**Mr. King:** Honourable Speaker, the Interlake School Division includes parts of CentrePort, an area this government claims is critical to economic development, yet businesses and residents in that region are now facing massive tax increases, near 30 per cent, because of education funding cuts by this NDP.

How does the minister reconcile their stated support for economic development with policies that are clearly driving up costs and discouraging investment?

**Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance):** Again, for years, Manitobans had a government that cut education year over year over year, creating a huge amount of harm within our educational system. And, finally, Manitobans have a government that's actually funding education above the rate of inflation for three years in a row.

They created an enormous amount of harm, and now they're bringing in proposals that they haven't even costed that we know are going to do huge amount of damage while they give huge benefits disproportionately to those who really don't need those supports in our province.

So I ask the members opposite with their proposal: What are they going to cut? Hospitals? The nurses that we're hiring? The schools we're building?

What are they going to cut? They need to answer for their ridiculous proposal.

On this side of the House, we're doing the work of making life more affordable, and we're going to keep doing that work—

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

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

**Mr. King:** Honourable Speaker, municipalities are the ones collecting these taxes and fielding the frustration from residents, even though they have no control over school division funding decisions.

Will the minister stand up today and commit to taking real, tangible action to stabilize education funding and stop these massive property tax increases, instead of continuing to download the consequences onto our local community?

**MLA Sala:** Honourable Speaker, again, the absurdity of them asking these types of questions when for years they took a chainsaw to education funding. That's their record. They need to be accountable for their decisions. Every single member on that side of the House has a role in cutting education for years.

When will they stand up and be accountable for those decisions? And they come in here and pretend that they didn't do that for seven and a half years. They should stand up and celebrate the fact that finally Manitobans have a government that's investing in education, investing in our kids—again, beyond the rate of inflation for three years in a row.

They did a ton of damage. We're cleaning up the mess, and we're funding education as it needs to be funded.

#### **Safe Consumption Site Location Community Safety Concerns**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** The Premier (Mr. Kinew) now says it could take weeks or months to get this right. If that's the case, the Premier must have known earlier that the plan for the drug consumption site was flawed and harmful.

We heard it through many consultations. We heard it from the Winnipeg Police Service.

Why move ahead with something that could put Manitobans, families and communities at risk?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** The members opposite heard it from the Peachey report that a supervised

consumption site was needed in this province. For seven and a half years, that failed PC government ignored that report.

On this side of the House, we're going to listen to Manitobans. We're going to make sure that Manitobans get the supports and services that they need so they can get onto a path of recovery. No longer are we going to allow people to use in bathrooms and die in businesses.

We've—we're listening to the business community. We're listening to front-line services, and certainly we're listening to medical experts. We're not listening to the failed PC government on that side.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Portage la Prairie, on a supplementary question.

#### **Safe Consumption Site Operating Expenses Resources Rerouted for Addiction Treatment Services**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** Well, this drug consumption site has been delayed, reworked multiple times. Significant public resources have already been committed in planning, applications, administration. Also, security sitting on that site at roughly \$2,000 a day since December 5.

And families want to know how much has been spent to date or—on detox support and treatment spaces could have been created—how many more could have been created with those same dollars instead of funding a plan that still has no opening date?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** What I can tell that member is we take safety and security very seriously. And we're going to continue to make sure that the community is safe and secure. We're going to continue to work with the community. We're going to continue to listen to the businesses, something the members opposite never did in their seven and a half years.

\* (14:10)

We've hired over 50 mental health workers. We're going to continue to work and continue to hire more. We've increased adult primary treatment, both in Winnipeg, in Brandon, Ste. Rose, Thompson, The Pas. We've increased Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine, both in Winnipeg, Brandon, Selkirk, Portage la Prairie, Thompson. We've actually in—added—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Smith:** —virtual services so anybody—

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

**MLA Bereza:** At a time when families are desperate to get loved ones into treatment, they've been told to wait. I'm hearing this from my own constituents, while this project continues to consume time, money, without delivering a single thing.

Can the Premier (Mr. Kinew) tell Manitobans how many people could have already been on a road to recovery if those resources had been directed into treatment capacity instead of a delayed and uncertain site?

**Ms. Smith:** We actually take a four-pillared approach. And we have not been waiting, unlike members opposite who didn't take a harm-reduction approach. We've been doing the work. We've been putting service in-services into the system and we're going to make sure that people are getting directed to the supports through a harm-reduction lens, unlike members opposite who allowed people to die in the streets.

It went from 174 people overdosing and losing their lives—these are people's loved ones—to well over 700 people under their watch. We're not going to allow that. We're going to lead people to the services and supports that they need through a medical-led model led by experts, unlike members opposite who put their heads in the sand, refused to—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

Member's time expired.

#### **Addiction Treatment Services Recovery Focused Service Model**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** Honourable Speaker, this government had the chance to adopt a focus recover—recovery-focused model from day one. Instead, Manitoba families are left desperate, waiting for loved ones to get help and come home. Manitobans need real recovery supports now.

While—why would—has this government failed to expand services that help those in addiction recover and reunite with their families?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** Like I said, we're not waiting. We are listening. We are working with doctors. We're working with community leaders who have told us that it's necessary to open up a supervised consumption site. This is going to prevent deaths.

Unlike members opposite who did not listen, we are working with health experts. We are getting people into treatment and recovery. We opened up the first Indigenous-led treatment centre. We opened up mobile

withdraw services. We've opened up bed-based services, and we're going to continue—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Smith:** —to put more services into the system, under—unlike members opposite, who did nothing to help anybody and let people die in the streets.

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

#### **Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine Request to Expand Clinic Services**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** Honourable Speaker, people are waiting months and months to get into the RAAM clinics. Every RAAM clinic operating today was set up by the—under by the—under the PC government. RAAM clinics were created because accessibility to recovery matters. Today, families are still pleading for help as loved ones wait for care. Recovery should not be out of reach for anyone.

Why has this minister failed to expand RAAM services to the growing—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Hiebert:** —need that we have?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** I want to lift up and really honour Aboriginal health and wellness for the work that they've done. They've actually opened up the first Indigenous RAAM clinic. They've done so much work in leading people to treatment and recovery. They've supported people on to getting them housed. Your Way Home actually helps support people and lead them onto a path of recovery as well.

That is part of the work that this government is doing that that government failed to do. Under that government, they were selling off housing and putting people into encampments, into homelessness—shame on them—deeper into their addictions, including seniors.

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

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

#### **Addiction Treatment Services Recovery Focused Service Model**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** Honourable Speaker, our front-line workers need more support. This minister could have added beds, expanded hours and opened recovery clinics, but hasn't. All this

government focuses on is the consumption sites. Families—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mrs. Hiebert:** —are growing more desperate as loved ones ask for help and can't get it. When that moment comes, support must be there.

Why has this minister failed to provide the resources Manitobans need today?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** We've increased adult primary treatment. We've increased beds in Winnipeg, in Brandon, Ste. Rose, Thompson, The Pas. We've increased access—Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine here in Winnipeg, Selkirk, Portage la Prairie, Thompson. We've increased it—Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine digital front doors, so anybody can get access to that anywhere in our province, something that they never did.

We've increased mobile withdrawal management services here in Winnipeg, Brandon, Selkirk, Portage la Prairie and Thompson; bed-based community withdrawal management services in Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson.

We're going to continue to do that great work, something that that government never did. They should be ashamed of themselves. We're going to save lives here in Manitoba, and we're going to continue to—

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

#### **Brandon Regional Health Centre Suspension of Surgical Procedures**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** Last year, under this NDP government, the Brandon Regional Health Centre was unable to offer basic surgeries for a period of time. The second largest city in Manitoba, the hub of Westman, was left vacant and empty by this NDP government. This has never, ever happened before, because no government has had such indifference to our city or to our region.

What has the Minister of Health—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Balcaen:** —done to ensure this never happens again? *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

The Honourable Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) needs to come to order. *[interjection]*

Order.

The honourable member for Brandon West—The honourable Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** Honourable Speaker, the member for Brandon West is patently wrong. Our government has made substantial investments in Brandon. Our government has been out to Brandon more times to visit health-care workers, front-line providers, experts in surrounding communities, those affected by health care. We've been there for announcements, to partner on research opportunities, to look at the ways in which we can not only fix the damage that that failed PC government did over seven and a half years, but build a brighter health care future for everyone living in the Westman.

We've done a lot of work, more to do, more to see in the budget.

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

#### **Physician and Nurse Vacancies**

**Mr. Balcaen:** Unfortunately, Honourable Speaker, this minister's speaking points that she reads from are inaccurate.

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

At this point in time, I really shouldn't have to keep reminding people that proper pronouns are important, so please use them.

**Mr. Balcaen:** My apologies for that mistake.

FIPPA results from Prairie Mountain Health show that Brandon Regional Health Centre, Brandon regional hospital, has 36 physician vacancies at the present time.

How has this minister allowed things to get so 'brad' in Brandon?

**MLA Asagwara:** I don't know who Brad is, but I can tell you, Honourable Speaker, that for seven and a half years, two terms of a failed PC government, they cut the funding that was used and required to retain and recruit doctors in Brandon. They cut the over \$2-million, at one point, almost \$4-million pot of dollars that was dedicated to rural communities to retain, train and recruit doctors.

Honourable Speaker, the damage that was done in rural Manitoba is being repaired by our government. We are successfully—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Asagwara:** –recruiting and retaining record numbers of doctors.

And guess what? Dozens of them are in rural Manitoba, including in the Westman. That member should ask his own caucus members why they cut services over eight years of his previous government.

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

The honourable member for Brandon West, on a final supplementary question.

\* (14:20)

**Mr. Balcaen:** While this government talks about hiring staff, no one can find them. Perhaps they're in the lost and found. The only new doctors in our region were recruited by local committees directly, often overcoming all kinds of hurdles that this minister put in front of them. Our nurses don't see any reinforcements.

When will this minister stop repeating fiction and start addressing the reality of these vacancies? According to the health authority, we are short over 68 doctors and 482 nurses under their watch.

**MLA Asagwara:** Honourable Speaker, our government is standing up for the first time ever rural medicine training seats for doctors in Brandon. We're doing that work; they never did it.

Our government is recruiting record numbers of doctors across Manitoba, dozens and dozens and dozens in rural Manitoba, including in Brandon. Our government is returning back to Brandon ICUs nurses who left under the previous government who were forced out of their profession. We just announced two days ago six nurses who have successfully trained for the ICU program who are joining the front lines in Brandon.

They never did it. We're doing the work. They tried to break health care; we're fixing it. We care about Westman. He should sit down and take some lessons from us.

### **Autism Strategy Act Committee Consideration Request**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Honourable Speaker, yesterday, Bill 232, The Autism Strategy Act, was up for second reading. Families, advocates and experts had spent time, effort and resources to help develop this bill, many of whom came to yesterday's debate.

According to the Winnipeg Free Press article I tabled during my member's statement, the Minister of Families said: We don't need legislation for what we're already doing.

But, Honourable Speaker, this is effectively telling families that their calls for action don't even deserve a discussion.

This government claims to be a listening government, so why block Bill 232 from going to committee where Manitobans could finally be heard?

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families):** As I stated yesterday, I've had the incredible honour and privilege of meeting with so many Manitoba families with children, adult children, with autism, since I became minister responsible. It is something that is very near and dear to me as minister responsible.

We are a listening government, and I maintain that. We are doing a lot of the work that folks that we've met with have requested of us. It probably would have been good for the member to actually reach out to me personally before getting her bill—[*interjection*]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Fontaine:** –at least we could have had a discussion and worked together at bringing forward potential legislation.

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

If I could get the clock stopped for a minute.

### **Introduction of Guests**

**The Speaker:** So we have some guests seated in the public gallery that need to leave right away, so before recognizing the next question, we have seated in the public gallery from Teulon Collegiate 20 grade 9 students under the direction of Lori Wutke, and they're located in the constituency of the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. King).

We welcome you here today.

\* \* \*

**MLA Lamoureux:** Honourable Speaker, during the debate on Bill 232, members from all sides spoke about the importance of supporting Manitobans with autism, many sharing personal stories that show the need for meaningful co-ordinated support.

Yet, despite many of the words put on record, the government voted no to sending the bill to committee. Sending the bill to committee can only benefit us as legislators. Hearing directly from those who are the real backbone to this legislation will better educate us and contribute towards an autism strategy.

So why is the government preventing the bill from going to committee?

**MLA Fontaine:** Again, it would have been nice to have the member reach out to me personally or to my team so that we could work together.

What I will share with the House is that, if the member is willing to do things a little bit differently now and actually work together, we are more than happy to support the bill to go to committee. So I would hope that the member is amenable to having some discussions on her bill. I've already had one of my colleagues reach out to her to say that I'd like to chat.

Again, there's a—there's ways to work together in this Chamber and I hope that the member is amenable to us working together on a bill that really, truly listens to Manitobans.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a final supplementary question.

**MLA Lamoureux:** I'm more than happy and more than amenable to talk about the legislation. My hope is the minister would like to chat directly with me herself, but I'm more than happy to speak with one of her colleagues, as well.

I've yet to hear from—hear from the colleague, but I'm very excited and hopeful that, tomorrow at 11:55, this government will support Bill 232 moving on to committee.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**MLA Fontaine:** And as I just—*[interjection]*—as I just—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Fontaine:** And as I just said to the member in my previous response, I asked if she would be willing to meet and actually do work differently than she has been doing and trying to work together with us on this side of the House.

So I'm more than willing to chat with her in respect to that bill and how we can strengthen it so that it serves the needs of Manitobans and Manitoba families and Manitobans with autism.

#### **ICU Nurse Training Program Graduates Improvements in Overtime and Patient Ratios**

**Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park):** Honourable Speaker, after years of cuts, closures, being disrespected, wage freezes, chaos—I could go on and on—under the PC government, we're now rebuilding our health-care system.

We're hiring and training more front-line staff. Earlier this week, I was honoured to be part of an

announcement in my constituency at the amazing Grace Hospital. This hospital is incredibly important to our families and to west Winnipeg.

Can the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care please tell Manitobans a bit more about this exciting announcement?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** For nurses—for years, rather, Honourable Speaker, nurses were asked to do more with less in our hospitals and they didn't have the capacity in the ICU to meet patients' needs.

That's why we are so proud that a record number 45 nurses are graduating from our ICU training program. These highly skilled professionals will care for some of our sickest patients in our system and ensure that ICU beds are full and fully staffed.

This means that improved nurse-to-patient ratios are happening here in Manitoba. This means that we're going to have a reduced reliance on overtime and lower wait times across the board for Manitobans.

When it comes to fixing health care, Honourable Speaker, more done—sorry—much done, much more to do for Manitobans.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Springfield-Ritchot.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

#### **Official Time Amendment Act Committee Consideration Request**

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot):** A year ago, this NDP 'premer' supported the end to time change. A month ago, this NDP Premier stood against the end to time change. And now a week ago, this same NDP Premier said he supported the end to time change.

This NDP Premier has more positions on time change than a pickerel on a dock.

Will he now allow Bill 214 to move on to committee so we can hear from Manitobans?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Well, as I've told Manitobans who've been really happy to hear it, I'll say, we're coming to the end of the time of changing clocks here in Manitoba, just like the member is coming to the end of his time here in the Legislature and just like the PCs are coming to the end of their time of holding on to Springfield-Ritchot.

### Health Care in the Westman Region Inquiry into the Number of Nurses Needed

**Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods):** Manitobans are suffering and this government is ignoring it. In Westman, the health authority recognizes what this government refuses to. Our region needs almost 500 nurses, and while this minister and Premier (Mr. Kinew) make up numbers on the ground, Manitobans are suffering with delayed care and impacted service.

Why has this minister refused to release the real numbers?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** Honourable Speaker, we are, for the first time in many years, recruiting net numbers of nurses in the Westman region. They were driven out of the system in droves by the previous failed government and we're fixing their damage and making health care stronger.

\* (14:30)

But I want to take a moment to thank our Premier. I want to thank our team yesterday. The Leader of the Opposition said something that was rooted in hate and division, and members on this side of the House stood up not only for me, but more importantly stood up for Manitobans.

So I want to thank the Premier and I want to thank this incredible team that represents Manitoba in such a good way, and I want to remind all Manitobans, especially kids, that this Premier and this government is here for you.

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition—

**Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Petitions?

**The Speaker:** —on petitions. *[interjection]*

Order.

**Mr. Khan:** Point of order. *[interjection]*

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

**Mr. Khan:** Honourable Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

**The Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a point of order.

**Mr. Khan:** Honourable Speaker, the conduct in this House is not good. It's not been good for years. Been here for four years and it's been going down ever since.

Under my leadership, I promised to try to change things around in the House and I have tried. Members opposite don't like me for whatever reason; that's fine. But here, clear as day, you can hear members heckling me non-stop. It's non-stop since I've been a leader.

And, today, members opposite want to reference conduct in the Chamber yesterday. Well, today, members on this side clearly hear the Health Minister refer to me as a bigot—as a racist bigot, the Minister of Health calls me today in the Chamber. Mic's not on. Everyone knows the mic's not on, but yet on this side of the House, we can clearly hear the Minister of Health call me that.

Yesterday, the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) says, cry me a river, you poor immigrant, when I relate to stories of the Premier talking about how millionaires are benefiting from a policy that will support Manitobans. The family of minister—the Minister of Families says, oh, poor you; oh, poor you, you immigrant, when I say my family couldn't afford—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Khan:** —groceries.

The hubris on this side of the House, but today's point of order is specific. *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

Members need to sit quietly so I can hear what's being said during a point of order.

**Mr. Khan:** And here, yet again, on a point of order, the members are continuing to heckle me.

The member this point of order is referenced to, the Minister of Health, who today, clear as day, everyone on this side of the House could hear them refer to me as a racist bigot.

I move that it's a point of order, and I bring it for the Speaker to rule—under advisement.

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** Here we are on day two, but really, not day two because the Leader of the Opposition continues to display really quite grotesque and immature, childish bullying behaviours in this Chamber.

The so-called Leader of the Opposition had an opportunity to get up today and apologize to the Deputy Premier (MLA Asagwara). He had an opportunity to apologize to the Deputy Premier for what was such harmful, bigoted, racist—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I would remind the honourable minister that things that are under advisement cannot be discussed.

**MLA Fontaine:** Bigoted, racist language coming from the so-called Leader of the Opposition.

And, again, he rises today to bring forward erroneous narratives in this Chamber, waste time—all of our time—and really continues to show Manitobans what leaders should not be. He is literally the quintessential example of everything that a leader should not be.

I want to remind the so-called Leader of the Opposition that if he doesn't want to be called a racist bigot, then he should maybe apologize for his attack on children, on trans children in Manitoba, of which he has not apologized.

I'll also remind the so-called Leader of the Opposition that if he doesn't want to be called a bigoted racist, he might want to request a meeting with the families, MMIWG2S families, that he also stood in the last political campaign on the side of Heather, on the backs of women that were murdered. He may want to consider apologizing for that as well.

He may want to consider apologizing for his really—bullying and childish behaviour that we see day in and day out in this Chamber. The member can't seem to help himself. He does not have the emotional intelligence and maturity to help himself and just to be calm in this Chamber when QP is going on, to keep his mouth and his comments to himself.

If he chooses to continue down that path, then he will be continued to be called a racist bigot, if that indeed happened.

**The Speaker:** I thank everyone for their comments on the point of order. I'm just going to confer with the Clerk for a sec.

I thank everyone for their comments. I believe it is not a point of order; it's a dispute of the facts. Therefore, there is no point of order.

\* \* \*

**The Speaker:** But while I've—have everyone's attention, I've repeatedly asked people that in order for me to be able to hear things that are being said, the level of carrying on that takes place in this Chamber every day prevents me from being able to do the job of Speaker properly.

So I'm, once again, imploring all members to keep the level of heckling to a minimum, to try harder to be respectful of each other and of your Speaker.

Thank you.

Petitions?

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** On a matter of privilege.

#### MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Interlake-Gimli, on a matter of privilege.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** The comments that are being directed at the leader in this Chamber don't allow him to do his job. I encourage the members to repeat those comments outside this Chamber so then there is potential for libel.

And this is not how this House can continue going on with yelling comments back and forth like it has. And I would—comments like racist bigot that have been used in this Chamber by members opposite—so I would like to encourage people to get together and discuss this from all parties.

So I move, seconded by the MLA for Fort Whyte, that this matter be moved to an all-party committee of this House.

**The Speaker:** The honourable Government House Leader, on the same matter of privilege.

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** My gosh. I'm honestly so tired of getting up at the—as the Government House Leader trying to account for men's behaviour in this Chamber. A lot of the work that I do as Government House Leader is trying to ensure that the men behave themselves in this Chamber.

What I will—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Fontaine:** —say, Honourable Speaker—you know, I'm sorry if members opposite don't like that the men in their caucus don't know how to regulate themselves and don't know how to get control of their emotions. That's not our fault. It's not anybody on this side's fault that they're so emotional that they can't rein themselves in and do the job that they're elected to do.

\* (14:40)

And, quite honestly, as I said, I'm so tired, as an Indigenous woman, as a woman, and as the Government House Leader to constantly get up in this Chamber,

waste time responding to men's poor behaviour, whether it's things that—disgusting, damaging, harmful things that they say, whether it's the behaviours that they have, whether it's the bills and the resolutions that they bring forward or the bills and regulations that they choose to vote against—human rights. I'm so tired of the men's behaviour in this Chamber.

So what I will say, Honourable Speaker: this isn't a matter of privilege. The reality is that there are consequences for people's behaviour. If the so-called Leader of the Opposition does not want to be called what he—what, you know, his actions are showing him to be, not only in this Chamber, but to all Manitobans, then once again, for the love of Baby Yoda, I would beg him to get control over his emotions, learn to regulate himself and do the job that he's elected to do and the money that he's paid to do.

Miigwech.

**The Speaker:** I thank everyone. Now I'll confer with the Clerk for a minute.

I've heard enough from both parties to make a ruling on the matter of privilege, and I would ask members to please be respectful of the Speaker when he's standing; that he's supposed to be heard in silence.

So, on the matter of privilege raised by the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson), I would like to inform the House that Joseph Maingot advises on page 254 of the second edition of *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, that language that impugns the integrity of members could be unparliamentary and a breach of order, contrary to the standing orders, but is not a breach of privilege.

And while I have everyone's attention yet again, I would say that both sides are guilty of hollering back and forth insults and both sides need to stop it.

And that concludes that matter of privilege.

Petitions?

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** Respectfully, I challenge that ruling.

**The Speaker:** The ruling of the Speaker has been challenged.

#### Voice Vote

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of supporting the ruling, please say aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** I believe the Nays have it.

\* \* \*

**The Speaker:** So after consulting with the clerks, there is confusion on my part as to what the will of the House really was.

So what I'm going to do is start that process over again and ask the House: Is it the will of the House to sustain the ruling of the Chair?

#### Voice Vote

**The Speaker:** All those in favour, please say aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

#### Recorded Vote

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** A recorded vote, please.

**The Speaker:** I didn't hear the honourable Opposition House Leader because too many people otherwise were talking.

**Mr. Johnson:** Recorded vote, please.

**The Speaker:** A recorded vote has been requested. Please call in the members.

\* (15:40)

Order, please.

The one hour provided for the ringing of the bells has expired. Therefore, I'm asking that the division bells be turned off and the House proceed to the vote.

So the question before the House is: Shall the ruling of the Speaker be sustained?

#### Division

*A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:*

#### Ayes

*Blashko, Brar, Bushie, Cable, Chen, Compton, Corbett, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Fontaine, Kennedy, Kostyshyn, Maloway, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Naylor, Oxenham, Pankratz, Redhead, Sala, Sandhu, Schmidt, Schott, Simard, Smith, Wiebe.*

### Nays

*Balcaen, Bereza, Byram, Cook, Ewasko, Goertzen, Guenter, Hiebert, Johnson, Khan, King, Narth, Nesbitt, Robbins, Schuler, Stone, Wharton, Wowchuk.*

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Ayes 29, Nays 18.

**The Speaker:** The ruling of the Chair is accordingly sustained.

### PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** We will now move on to petitions.

#### Intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305

**Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, 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, also referred to as PTH 75, and Provincial Road 305, also referred to as 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) As an active 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 a rumble stripe 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:

\* (16:00)

(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 including but not limited to those outlined in the 2022 in-service road safety review.

Honourable Speaker, this petition has been signed by Taylor Warkentin, Amber Warkentin and David Montizambert and many, many other Manitobans.

**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 months–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.

(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 is signed by Joel Lemoine, Alain Robert, Claude Gagnon and many other Manitobans.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And 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.

And this petition is signed by Ted Stadner [*phonetic*], Morgahn Bosko, Aerial [*phonetic*] Bosko and many other fine Manitobans.

**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.

*Mr. Diljeet Brar, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

(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.

\* (16:10)

(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 or 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.

And this petition has been signed by Daniel Dorge, Sara Mathwig, Diane Lauzon and many, many other Manitobans.

**Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland):** Honourable Speaker, 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.

(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 upcoming—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 Julie Nolette, Denis Nolette, Brittany Champagne and many, many Manitobans.

### **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) 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 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 Krista Walker, Lin Clements, Dan Brown and many, many, many Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable deputy Speaker.

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

**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) 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.

\* (16:20)

(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.

And, honourable assistant deputy Speaker, this petition was signed by Alain Ouimet, Alek Ouimet, Sarah Gauthier and many, many other fine Manitobans.

**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) 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.

(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 is signed by Patrick Hupe, Tavish Magne, Matt Wilson and many, many more Manitobans.

### **Medical Assistance in Dying**

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

These are the reasons 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 to 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 to those suffering from mental illness.

\* (16:30)

(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 for 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 a 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's signed by Nela Novis [*phonetic*] Loewen, Jonathan Enns and Russell McCausland and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Teaching Certification**

**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) 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 Manitobans—for all Manitoba students.

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba—thank you—to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Educational Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required by—or 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 years streams.

(4) Specifically, the amendments removed senior years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor; early- to middle-year credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor and early- to middle-year 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 facilities of—or 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:

(1) 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 petition is signed by Nicholas Harland, Xinli Wang, Andriy Prymak and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Provincial Trunk Highway 34**

**Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods):** I wish to present 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 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 is the main highway for the towns of Crystal City, Pilot Mound and Holland, serving as a main corridor for semi-trailers, farm equipment, daily drivers and local school bus routes.

(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.

\* (16:40)

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

(5) Construction of a new bridge in 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 to the Assiniboine River.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Marilyn Shields, Nancy MacAulay, Justin Lee and many, many, many more Manitobans.

### Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Honourable deputy Speaker, 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 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.

Honourable deputy Speaker, this petition has been signed by Beverly Strong, Pam Stinson, Rosa Rawlings and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable deputy Speaker.

### 911 Services in Rural Manitoba

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Thank you, honourable acting deputy Speaker. I think I got that right.

I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) Reliable access to emergency services, including 911, is a fundamental public safety necessity and can mean the difference between life and death.

(2) On March 23, 2025, a resident in the rural municipality of Fisher tragically passed away after family and friends were one-unable to reach 911, despite making numerous attempts, due to an internal 911 routing malfunction at a major cellular provider.

(3) During the emergency, loved ones attempted to provide CPR while frantically trying to connect with emergency medical services, EMS, ultimately only reaching help by contacting a local RCMP officer directly. Thank you.

(4) The March—excuse me—(4) The March 2025 tragedy is not an isolated incident, as there have been other reports of failed 911 cellular calls in neighbouring rural municipalities.

(5) In April of 2024, the provincial government indicated that it was undertaking a review of 911 services, with a final report expected in the following months.

\* (16:50)

(6) In August of 2024, following another 911 service failure, a provincial representative repeated the same assurances previously made, but as of March 2025, no report has been released.

(7) Rural Manitobans continue to face challenges accessing emergency services due to unreliable cell service and gaps in the ability of some providers to connect to emergency telecommunications infrastructure, particularly in regions like the Interlake.

(8) The 911 'dishpat'—dispatch centre serving rural and northern Manitoba, located in Brandon, was not made aware of the March 2025 service interruption, raising concerns about the lack of real-time monitoring and co-ordination between telecommunications providers and emergency response systems.

(9) Local officials, including representatives of the RM of Fisher, have previously raised concerns with the Province and the RCMP regarding the reliability

of 911 services in rural areas, calling for immediate action.

(10) The public has a right to expect that 911 service will be accessible during an emergency, regardless of location or mobile service provider.

(11) The provincial government must ensure that emergency communication systems are adequately staffed and resourced, particularly for rural and northern regions.

(12) Access to 911 must not be compromised by infrastructure failures or—of private service providers.

*The Speaker in the Chair*

(13) Timely and transparent communication between telecommunication companies and emergency service providers is essential to protect public safety.

(14) Effective government oversight and accountability are necessary to ensure public confidence in emergency response systems.

(15) Failure to invest in resilient, province-wide emergency response systems and telecommunications infrastructure puts rural lives at risk and undermines public trust in essential services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to investigate the 911 network failures that contribute to the March—that contributed to the March—I'll start that one over: (1) To urge the provincial government to investigate the 911 network failures that contributed to the March 2025 tragedy in the Interlake region and publicize those findings.

(2) To urge the provincial government to work with municipalities, telecommunication providers and first responders to strengthen 911 reliability and ensure uninterrupted access to emergency services for all Manitobans, especially those living in rural and northern communities.

This petition has been signed by Peter Yuzwa, Mika Hackling [*phonetic*] and Alexa Pauls and many, many more fine Manitobans.

**Programs for Adolescents with Disabilities**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Children with disabilities often require child care beyond the age of 12. Children with disabilities

aged 12 to 17 face a gap in publicly available care programs.

(2) The current adolescent-care service model creates undue hardship on caregivers.

(3) While developing children may be entering into extracurricular activities, school clubs or spending time with friends independently, children with disabilities have reduced opportunities for such social and recreational opportunities due to the lack of spaces.

(4) The current self-managed adolescent-care models place additional workloads onto already stressed families, requiring parents to seek all alternative options and prove their need for care.

(5) The current adolescent-care system, as part of overall respite and support available to families, is failing families of children with disabilities, as identified in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's Bridging the Gaps report.

(6) To date, none of the nine recommendations it contains have been completed beyond 50 per cent.

(7) The recommendations in this report touch on many of the issues facing families, with adolescent care being but a small component of their overall needs.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to fully implement recommendations in the Bridging the Gaps report.

(2) To urge the provincial government to immediately implement official policies and procedures that are more respectful and collaborative, which also minimize harm faced by families seeking help from Children's disABILITY Services.

(3) To urge the Minister of Families to arrange for a full review of employment supports provided by Children's disABILITY Services for children with disabilities aged 12 to 17, including direct consultation with impacted families and to explore a full spectrum of options to support families, empowering them to choose—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

As the hour being 5 o'clock, as the member was unable to complete their petition, they will need to restart that petition tomorrow.

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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026**

**CONTENTS**

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>			
<b>Introduction of Bills</b>		Addiction Treatment Services	
		Hiebert	835
		Smith	835
Bill 217–The Celebration of Philippine Independence Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)		Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine	
Dela Cruz	827	Hiebert	835
		Smith	835
Bill 233–The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act		Addiction Treatment Services	
Cook	827	Hiebert	835
		Smith	836
<b>Tabling of Reports</b>		Brandon Regional Health Centre	
Moyes	828	Balcaen	836
		Asagwara	836
<b>Members' Statements</b>		Autism Strategy Act	
Alex Lytwyn		Lamoureux	837
Kostyshyn	828	Fontaine	837
The Kumps Family		ICU Nurse Training Program Graduates	
Johnson	828	Oxenham	838
		Asagwara	838
The Autism Strategy Act		Official Time Amendment Act	
Lamoureux	829	Schuler	838
Agriculture in the Classroom		Kinew	838
Narth	829	Health Care in the Westman Region	
Data on Chronically Absent Students		Robbins	839
Wasyliw	829	Asagwara	839
<b>Oral Questions</b>		<b>Matter of Privilege</b>	
Basic Personal Tax Rate–Exemption Increase		Johnson	840
Khan	830	Fontaine	840
Kinew	830	<b>Petitions</b>	
Cost of Living for Manitobans		Intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305	
Khan	831	Khan	842
Kinew	832	Schuler	842
Interlake School Division Funding Levels		Goertzen	843
King	833	Narth	843
Schmidt	833	Guenter	844
Sala	833	Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders	
Safe Consumption Site Location		King	844
Bereza	834	Intersection of PTH 75 and PR 305	
Smith	834	Balcaen	845
Safe Consumption Site Operating Expenses		Stone	845
Bereza	834	Medical Assistance in Dying	
Smith	834	Hiebert	846

Teaching Certification Wowchuk	846
Provincial Trunk Highway 34 Robbins	847
Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders Nesbitt	848
911 Services in Rural Manitoba Johnson	848
Programs for Adolescents with Disabilities Byram	849

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings  
are also available on the Internet at the following address:

**<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>**