



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS No. 47

THIRD SESSION, FORTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

PRAYER

1:30 O'CLOCK P.M.

Pursuant to Rule 27(1), Hon. Mr. FIELDING, Mrs. SMITH (Point Douglas), Hon. Mr. FRIESEN, Messrs. SANDHU and WOWCHUK made Members' Statements.

Following Oral Questions, Madam Speaker made the following ruling:

During Members' Statements on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, the Honourable Member for St. James raised a Matter of Privilege, contending that the failure of the government to call a meeting of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations to consider the annual reports of Manitoba Hydro affected his abilities to perform his job and breached his parliamentary privileges as an MLA. At the conclusion of his remarks, the Honourable Member moved "*THAT the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations be immediately called to discuss the current state of Manitoba Hydro.*"

The Honourable Government House Leader and the Honourable Member for River Heights also contributed advice to the Chair. I then took the matter under advisement in order to consult the procedural authorities.

I thank all Honourable Members for their advice to the Chair on this matter.

For the information of all Honourable Members, in order for a matter to be ruled in order as a *prima facie* case of privilege, Members must demonstrate both that the issue has been raised at the earliest opportunity, and that sufficient evidence was provided to support the Member's claim that their privileges, or the privileges of the House were breached.

The Honourable Member for St. James indicated that the issue had been raised in the media on the previous day, and that he was therefore raising the matter at the earliest opportunity. I will note for the Honourable Member that the issue could have been raised a little earlier in the sitting day, such as immediately after the Prayer instead of interrupting a category of Routine Proceedings to raise the matter. I will not make a determination of no *prima facie* case of privilege due to the issue of timeliness, but I will encourage the Member that the issue could have been raised a little earlier in the sitting day.

In terms of the second test issue, of whether sufficient evidence was provided to persuade the Speaker that a *prima facie* breach of privilege had occurred, the issue raised does indeed fall short.

The Honourable Member for St. James quite correctly noted that subsection 10(3) of *The Crown Corporations Governance and Accountability Act* directs that when an Annual Report is laid before the Legislative Assembly, the Annual Report, subject to any other Act, then stands permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations unless the Assembly otherwise orders. The Annual Report of Manitoba Hydro is captured by this provision. Similarly, subsection 46(2) of *The Manitoba Hydro Act* states that “Upon being laid before the Legislative Assembly, the report of the Board stands permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations of the Legislative Assembly.”

However, where the Honourable Member’s contention of a breach of parliamentary privilege falls short comes from a lack of a legal requirement in both *The Crown Corporations Governance and Accountability Act* and *The Manitoba Hydro Act* to outline or define a deadline or time frame for when the annual reports of the Corporation must be referred to the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations for consideration.

I would also note that this is not the first time the Honourable Member for St. James has raised this issue, as he raised a Matter of Privilege on March 12, 2020 regarding the lack of a Standing Committee meeting to consider the annual reports of Manitoba Hydro. I had ruled on November 2, 2020 that the issue fell into the category of a complaint against the government and was not a breach of parliamentary privilege.

I have not changed my mind on this issue. Given that there is not a legal requirement or reference for mandating when the Manitoba Hydro annual reports must be referred to the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations, I would once again find that the matter raised does not fulfill the criteria of a *prima facie* case of privilege.

---

The following petitions were presented and read to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba:

Ms. ADAMS – To urge the Provincial Government to reverse changes to the nursery school grants and to end the freeze on childcares operating grants while committing to keeping public childcare affordable and accessible for all Manitoban Families.

Mr. BUSHIE – To urge the Provincial Government to reverse changes to the nursery school grants and to end the freeze on childcares operating grants while committing to keeping public childcare affordable and accessible for all Manitoban Families.

Hon. Mr. GERRARD – To urge the Provincial Government to provide financing for upgrades to the cochlear implant covered under Medicare, or provide funding assistance through the Cochlear Implant Speech Processor Replacement Program, to assist with the replacement costs associated with a device upgrade.

Mr. MALOWAY – To urge the Provincial Government to immediately demand Dynacare maintain all the phlebotomy (blood sample) sites existing prior to the Covid-19 public health emergency, and allow all Manitobans to get their blood and urine tests done when visiting their doctor, thereby facilitating local access to blood testing services.

Mr. MOSES – To urge the Minister of Justice to immediately reverse the decision to close the DCC and proceed with the previous plan to build a new correctional and healing centre with an expanded courthouse in Dauphin.

Mr. SANDHU – To urge the Minister of Justice to immediately reverse the decision to close the DCC and proceed with the previous plan to build a new correctional and healing centre with an expanded courthouse in Dauphin.

Mr. WASYLIW – To urge the Minister of Justice to immediately reverse the decision to close the DCC and proceed with the previous plan to build a new correctional and healing centre with an expanded courthouse in Dauphin.

---

The House resumed the Debate on the Proposed Motion of Hon. Mr. FIELDING:

THAT this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government.

And the proposed amendment moved by Mr. KINEW as follows:

*THAT the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after “House” and substituting:* therefore regrets that this budget neglects the priorities of Manitobans by:

- a) refusing to learn the lessons of the pandemic by further reducing healthcare funding and holding it to below the inflation rate, compromising bedside care and failing to prepare for a potential third wave; and
- b) cutting emergency acute care funding while spending millions on the Health Transformation Office to cut nurses and other front line health care workers and close rural ERs; and
- c) failing to invest in rural and northern healthcare to ensure all Manitobans have access to the care they need close to home by freezing doctor and nurse recruitment efforts; and
- d) cutting the health capital budget, which means less investments in services, such as a seizure clinic, and new technology and refusing to invest in training for frontline health professionals, such as nurses to help Manitobans get quality care; and
- e) failing to improve long term care and home care for seniors after the Maples and Parkview Place tragedies by cutting long term care funding; and
- f) failing to provide any funding or details on addressing the failing vaccine rollout, while freezing funding for the Emergency Measures Office which assists with logistics and planning; and
- g) compromising the Crown Corporation, Manitoba Hydro, by trying to influence Manitoba Hydro operations and continuing their unconstitutional wage freezes, by refusing to repeal Bill 28, which has caused a strike for members of IBEW; and

- h) failing to be transparent with Manitobans with its plans to increase hydro rates this year after raising their rates in last year's budget; and
- i) failing to be transparent with its plan to privatize Manitoba Hydro; and
- j) providing millions in funds for insurance brokers but refusing to pay a fair wage to employees of Manitoba Public Insurance; and
- k) jeopardizing access to rural broadband by pursuing privatization and failing to provide investments to ensure rural and northern communities can get connected to highspeed internet; and
- l) continuing to reduce education funding, cutting literacy and learning supports and supports for children with exceptional needs, compromising children's success and their ability to catch up after the pandemic; and
- m) requiring educators to pay out of pocket to meet the educational needs of children because of inadequate educational funding; and
- n) failing to implement a universal school breakfast program and cutting supports for food security in the north, to ensure every child succeeds in the classroom; and
- o) refusing to provide menstrual products in schools, to make sure no student is subjected to period poverty; and
- p) continuing to cut funding for post-secondary institutions which will raise tuition, making education less affordable and accessible, cutting supports for apprentices and adult literacy, hindering Manitoba's economic recovery; and
- q) failing to provide any additional aid for small businesses or communities suffering job losses to ensure their success and economic recovery during and after the pandemic; and
- r) failing to adequately fund public childcare after five years of funding freezes and opening up public dollars to for-profit centers, all while cutting subsidies for families; and
- s) refusing to invest in local mental health supports and ignoring the addictions and homelessness crisis, while refusing to invest in supports such as a safe consumption site or building new social and affordable housing units; and
- t) failing to address climate change by continuing a court challenge on carbon pricing, while cutting its own Climate and Green Plan Implementation Office; and
- u) charging people more fees for government services, such as Park Passes, during a pandemic when more Manitobans are trying to get outside; and

- v) refusing to fund improvements for the North End Sewage Treatment Plant to help save Lake Winnipeg; and
- w) cutting funding to municipalities compromising their ability to fund services and priorities such as transit; and
- x) failing to support agricultural producers during what is anticipated to be a year of drought, by cutting risk management and support programs and cutting funding for Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation; and
- y) failing to provide support for women, BIPOC, newcomers and low-income Manitobans to fully assist in a social and economic recovery from the pandemic, including training and credential recognition; and
- z) failing to provide targeted supports with racialized, workplace and geographic data in mind while refusing to implement a living wage for Manitobans; and
- aa) cutting Indigenous and Northern Relations budget by millions, compromising consultation and reconciliation efforts and freezing supports from Community Economic Development Fund and refusing to include representatives of the Métis nation in its pandemic response; and
- bb) cutting the Sports, Culture and Heritage budget by millions, including the Status of Women, which further jeopardizes economic recovery for women and recreation opportunities for children; and
- cc) failing to match the commitment of Manitobans who have worked together heroically and sacrificed collectively to fight COVID-19; and
- dd) failing to have any Members of the Provincial Government caucus stand up against this budget.

As a consequence, the Provincial Government has thereby lost the confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

And the proposed sub-amendment moved by Hon. Mr. GERRARD as follows:

*THAT the amendment be amended by adding after clause (dd) the following clauses:*

- ee) failing to adhere to the most basic standards of honesty, competence and human decency, with a budget that gaslights Manitobans with empty promises while denying the basic necessities of life of housing, food, clean water and lifesaving and enabling medications and devices; and
- ff) failing utterly to learn from its own catastrophic failures and incompetence in mishandling the second wave of COVID-19, business supports and the vaccine rollout, and choosing to plow ahead with radical right-wing policies that will eviscerate public services and the families and communities who depend on them; and

**Monday, April 12, 2021**

---

gg) failing the basic obligations of every government in a crisis, to place the common good ahead of blind partisanship and ideology, choosing instead to present a budget that steals from the poor and gives to the rich, loots the public treasury while running up billions in debt in order to cut cheques that enriches itself and its political cronies.

And the debate continuing on the sub-amendment,

And Hon. Mrs. GUILLEMARD, Messrs. LAMONT, BUSHIE and LAGIMODIERE, Ms. LATHLIN, Hon. Mr. EICHLER, Ms. LAMOUREUX and Hon. Mrs. COX having spoken.

And Ms. NAYLOR speaking at 5:00 p.m. The debate was allowed to remain in their name.

---

The House then adjourned at 5:00 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 13, 2021.

Hon. Myrna DRIEDGER,  
Speaker.