

**Fourth Session – Forty-First Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	Man.
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	Ind.
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen, Hon.	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 13, 2019

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

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

Please be seated.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### Speaker's Statement

**Madam Speaker:** I have a statement for the House. Yesterday, May 12th, 2019, marked the 149th anniversary of Manitoba joining Confederation as a province. In honour of this historic occasion, in today's Speaker's parade our Sergeant-at-Arms carried our original Manitoba mace.

Carved from the hub of a Red River cart wheel by a soldier with the Wolseley Expedition in 1870, this mace made its first formal appearance on March 15, 1871, at the first session of the first Manitoba Legislature, held in the home of A.G.B. Bannatyne in Winnipeg.

Included in the designs carved into our original mace are the rose, thistle, harp and fleur-de-lis. The Bannatyne home was destroyed by fire in April—pardon me, in December 1873, but thankfully, the mace survived.

This mace was retired in 1884 after 13 years of service when our current mace was first used. The original mace has a permanent home on display in the Speaker's Office. I brought it out of retirement in 2017, after it had been retired for 133 years. It came out of retirement for the third time, today, for this celebration.

This important historical artifact was used in today's Speaker's parade to pay tribute to the rich history of our province.

The original mace, as well as the Assembly's current mace, will be on display in the Chamber in their respective cases during the Doors Open event

on May 25th and 26th. Manitobans are encouraged to visit the Assembly Chamber on those days to see the maces firsthand.

In addition to the original mace, the star-blanket mace cushion and the beautiful beaded mace runner—gifted to the Assembly by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in 2010—are also on display today to help celebrate Manitoba Day, and to honour Manitoba's indigenous heritage.

These artifacts also serve as a reminder that this Assembly Chamber and Legislative Building are on Treaty One territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinabe and the homeland of the Metis people.

I am pleased that we were able to include our original mace in the celebration of Manitoba Day, and I hope this tradition continues.

Introduction of bills?

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Standing Committee on Justice Second Report

**Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Chairperson):** Madam Speaker, I wish to present the second reading of the Standing Committee on Justice.

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Justice presents—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

*Your Standing Committee on JUSTICE presents the following as its Second Report.*

#### Meetings

*Your Committee met on May 9, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.*

#### Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 5) – The Mental Health Amendment and Personal Health Information Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale et la Loi sur les renseignements médicaux personnels**
- **Bill (No. 6) – The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2018 / Loi corrective de 2018**

- **Bill (No. 8)** – *The Referendum Act / Loi sur les référendums*
- **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Family Law Modernization Act / Loi sur la modernisation du droit de la famille*
- **Bill (No. 20)** – *The Courts Modernization Act (Various Acts Amended) / Loi modifiant diverses lois en matière de modernisation des tribunaux*

#### **Committee Membership**

- HON. MR. CULLEN
- MS. FONTAINE
- HON. MR. FRIESEN
- MR. ISLEIFSON (VICE-CHAIRPERSON)
- MR. JOHNSTON (ST. JAMES)
- MS. LAMOUREUX
- MS. LATHLIN
- MS. MORLEY-LECOMTE
- MR. PIWNIUK (CHAIRPERSON)
- MRS. SMITH (POINT DOUGLAS)
- MR. TEITSMA

#### **Public Presentations**

Your Committee heard the following four presentations on **Bill (No. 5)** – *The Mental Health Amendment and Personal Health Information Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale et la Loi sur les renseignements médicaux personnels*:

Keith Kovacs, Private Citizen  
Bonnie Bricker, Private Citizen  
Kristen Valeri, Health Sciences Centre, Winnipeg  
Cassidy Allison, Private Citizen

Your Committee heard the following six presentations on **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Family Law Modernization Act / Loi sur la modernisation du droit de la famille*:

Ronald Bewski, Family Mediation Manitoba  
Jason Bekiaris, Private Citizen  
Robynne Kazina, Manitoba Bar Association (Family Law Section)  
Lawrence Pinsky, FAMLI Mediation and Arbitration  
Allan Fineblit, Private Citizen  
Christine Ens, Mediation Services

Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 20)** – *The Courts Modernization Act (Various Acts Amended) / Loi modifiant diverses lois en matière de modernisation des tribunaux*:

Susan Dawes, Provincial Judges Association of Manitoba

Mark Toews, Manitoba Bar Association

#### **Written Submissions**

Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 5)** – *The Mental Health Amendment and Personal Health Information Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale et la Loi sur les renseignements médicaux personnels*:

Anna Ziomek, The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba

#### **Bills Considered and Reported**

- **Bill (No. 5)** – *The Mental Health Amendment and Personal Health Information Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale et la Loi sur les renseignements médicaux personnels*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 6)** – *The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2018 / Loi corrective de 2018*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 8)** – *The Referendum Act / Loi sur les référendums*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Family Law Modernization Act / Loi sur la modernisation du droit de la famille*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 20)** – *The Courts Modernization Act (Various Acts Amended) / Loi modifiant diverses lois en matière de modernisation des tribunaux*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill with the following amendment:

THAT Clause 42 of the Bill be replaced with the following:

Coming into force

42 This Act comes into force on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

**Mr. Piwniuk:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Seine River (Ms. Morley-Lecomte), that the report of the committee be received.

*Motion agreed to.*

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Madam Speaker:** I'm pleased to table the annual report of the Legislative Assembly Management Commission for the year ending March 31st, 2019. Copies of the report have been placed on members' desks.

Ministerial statements?

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Ab McDonald

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance):** Today I wish to recognize the legacy of Ab McDonald, a long-time resident of Winnipeg west where he made his home with his family from 1967 to 2018.

Ab, short for Alvin Brian, may be best known for some of his remarkable hockey career, resulting in four Stanley Cups, where he played on the Montreal Canadiens, Chicago Blackhawks, Boston Bruins, Detroit Red Wings and St. Louis Blues. He was the first captain of the Pittsburgh Penguins as well as the inaugural captain of the Winnipeg Jets.

Ab was also a great leader in the community and a community champion. He often lent his name to important fundraising causes like—things like the Special Olympics, which was close to his heart.

His family, some of who are in the crowd here today, started the Ab McDonald Foundation in his honour, an organization that supports health, wellness and recreation, empowering youth and adults in the community to achieve.

The foundation recently awarded its first grant this past January to the Weston Memorial Community Centre, carrying out Ab's legacy, where everything started for him, for his love of support and the community.

Ab's legacy, through the Ab McDonald Foundation, will continue to support the community he loves, and I want to recognize Ab and his role in helping create a vibrant community.

Ab's legacy doesn't end there. A motion has recently been passed by the Winnipeg City Council—

or debated by Winnipeg City Council—for a rink at the St. James Civic Centre named in Ab McDonald's honour, a fitting recognition as Ab was an active citizen both on and off the ice and a champion in the community.

Madam Speaker, I ask for leave for the members of the McDonald family who are here to be added to Hansard, Madam Speaker.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to include those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

*Cindy East, Kristina Gottfried, Kurt Gottfried, Rachel Gottfried, Ryan Gottfried, Lori Koke, Pat McDonald.*

#### Sinclair Park Community Centre

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Sinclair Park Community Center has been a hub of connecting St. Johns families and communities since 2012. Sinclair Park offers a variety of programming, including soccer, Canada Day celebrations, Breakfast with Santa, movie nights, open gym, summer day camp and dance programs but to name a few.

Madam Speaker, both the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) and myself have hosted two joint community barbecues at Sinclair Park, bringing out well over 1,000 people each year. Last year, the member for—or last weekend, the member for Point Douglas and myself hosted a women's cabaret fundraiser highlighting local artists.

Aliyah Pacheco, Emily Fars and Charli McKay, three dance performers from Sinclair Park, left our guests in absolute awe with their contortionist performance.

All the girls practise, perform and travel together to competitions, including upcoming international competitions with each—with dreams of performing on Broadway and Cirque du Soleil.

The Sinclair Park dance program has literally changed the course of these young girls' lives in unimaginable ways and is a testament to the importance of investing in community and establishing measures to tangibly support Manitoba youth, and this is just one small example of the transformative work at Sinclair Park under the phenomenal leadership of its president, Tracy Ball.

\* (13:40)

Tracy best illustrates love of community through her tireless work. You can't help but fall in love with Tracy as she daily demonstrates her commitment to youth, families and community she serves at Sinclair Park. It truly is an honour to know and work with Tracy.

So today I acknowledge all of the girls in the Sinclair Park community dance program, and miigwech to Tracy, Sinclair Park board members, staff and the countless volunteers who make all these events at Sinclair Park Community Centre possible and accessible.

I ask my colleagues to help me in acknowledging and welcoming them.

#### **Accueil Kateri Centre**

**Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to honour a group of Dawson Trail heroes who volunteer their time and effort each week for the endless battle against hunger, a worldwide issue that unfortunately still exists this—in this day and age.

Madam Speaker, Accueil Kateri Centre is a charitable organization that provides food bank services for local families in need. They serve the rural municipality and town of Ste. Anne and provide up to five meals' worth of food to each registered client every second week. Founded in 2015, the kind-hearted volunteers of Accueil Kateri Centre came together with the mutual objective of overcoming hunger in the area. They reached out to local businesses, organizations who are willing to lend a helping hand in partnership.

Next, they set up multiple non-perishable food donation bins at local landmarks throughout the town of Ste. Anne and Richer. They have continued to provide food for—to those in need ever since.

Not only does Accueil Kateri Centre accept non-perishable food donations, but also financial donations, which help in keeping a consistent delivery of food to those in need. Financial donations can be made for one year, six months, two months, one month, two weeks worth of meals.

Madam Speaker, Accueil Kateri Centre's work doesn't end there. They are continuously working to promote food-related self-sufficiency, providing

community leadership on this subject. Their vision is one day to see a community that no longer requires the services of a food bank.

The president, manager, treasurer and member responsible for communications of the Accueil Kateri Centre Board join us in the gallery today.

Please help me in applauding their endless efforts in fighting the fight against hunger.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Dawson Trail.

**Mr. Lagassé:** Madam Speaker, I ask to have the names of the board members entered in Hansard.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to include those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

*Accueil Kateri Centre Board: Aurèle Boisvert, Armande Leclair, J. Guy Levesque, Suzanne Ritchot.*

**Madam Speaker:** Further members' statements?

#### **Lac du Bonnet Constituency**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Madam Speaker, with the recent changes to the Manitoba electoral boundaries, I would like to pay tribute to the Lac du Bonnet constituency, old and new, that I have been very fortunate to represent as the member of the Legislative Assembly since 2011.

When we think of tourism in Manitoba, we think of the Lac du Bonnet constituency. Whether you are following the Trans-Canada or the La Vérendrye trails through Powerview-Pine Falls, Sagkeeng, RM of Alexander, Lac du Bonnet, Pinawa and Victoria Beach, or taking the historic No. 1 through Beausejour, the RM of Brokenhead and Whitemouth, you will be able to explore many of our rural communities, each of which has something special to offer.

The Lac du Bonnet constituency offers an abundance of Manitoba's history and is home to many museums that celebrate and honour the artifacts of both the indigenous and settlers of the area. The discovery of gold in the Bissett region back in 1911 sparked an era of prospecting in the Wanipigow River watershed and in the area we now know as Nopiming.

Commonly known as cottage country, the Lac du Bonnet constituency comes alive in the spring as many Manitobans and visitors from outside the province head to their cabins or favourite

campsites, allowing the businesses in surrounding communities to benefit from the economic growth.

Many of the communities in the Lac du Bonnet constituency host annual events throughout the year that have almost become a tradition for many Manitobans and visitors alike: the Canada Day fireworks show in Lac du Bonnet, the Canadian Power Toboggan championships in Beausejour, the Fire & Water Music Festival in Lac du Bonnet, the Summer Winds music festival in Victoria Beach, the double B rodeo and agricultural festival in Beausejour, the 4P Festival in Powerview-Pinefalls and the Boreal Shores Art Tour featuring artists of their studios or group locations throughout the beautiful boreal forest—just to name a few, Madam Speaker.

Diverse in culture, environment and recreation, the Lac du Bonnet constituency has something to offer during any season, and I am extremely honoured to represent what is considered by most as the most beautiful region in this wonderful province, Madam Speaker.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Are there any further members' statements?

Does the member for The Maples (Mr. Saran) have a statement today?

The honourable member for Assiniboia?

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Well—

**Madam Speaker:** I would indicate that the member is not on the list. He's not on the rotation, but I'm wondering if there was a switch. *[interjection]* No?

Then, we—the rotation indicates that should be the member for The Maples, and if he's not standing to speak then that spot is gone for the day.

#### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, we have some special guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

Seated in the Speaker's Gallery we have with us today from Japan: the Ambassador, His Excellency Kimihiro Ishikane; his spouse, Kaoru Ishikane; Counsellor Shunichi Inoue; and Consul for Public Relations, Kohei Sakamoto; and the Honourary Consul for Japan, Ken Zaifman.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Concordia and Seven Oaks Hospitals Request to Retain ER Services

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** The Premier and his ministers are reaching for any excuse that their plan is failed—any excuse for—that their plan is not failing.

The use of consultations and talk of delays is nothing more than an admission of failure by this government. All Manitobans can see the cold, hard fact that their plan is failing: ER wait times has—have continued to rise since the beginning of their plan; mandatory overtime is way up; front-line workers are working in straight chaos.

The real solution to their failing plan would be not to close Concordia or seventy—Seven Oaks ER.

Will the Premier get up today and tell us that Concordia and Seven Oaks ERs will not be closing?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** We inherited a mess from the NDP. We're committed to cleaning it up.

But Ab MacDonald was a fine man, an absolute gentleman, a father and blessed with a wonderful wife, and he wasn't as modest as everybody says. I got to go to a hockey game with Ab thanks to George Sigurdson, and we were sitting there watching and they brought out the crew to clean up the ice mid-period, and I said, Ab, did they do that when you played in the NHL? And he said, they never had to in our defensive end. So he wasn't as humble as people say, but he was truly a fine Canadian, a fine gentleman and a wonderful friend to many in our province.

And I'm honoured that I have this chance—and I will address the substance of my colleague's question in the second answer, but I—honoured to have the chance to say a few words to his family today.

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

**Mrs. Smith:** The minister's saying his plan is failing due to an aging population, nothing more, but that's not what this minister and Premier are claiming.

The Department of Health's own population report, which I table here today, does not show a dramatic increase in a aging population or elderly either in the WRHA or the rest of Manitoba. What it does show is the same steady increase year after year

since this government has taken government: a trend upward.

\* (13:50)

So instead of hiding behind excuses, will the Premier stand up today, admit his plan is failing and keep Seven Oaks and Concordia ERs open?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, Madam Speaker, again, Concordia and other Winnipeg hospitals had the longest wait times in Canada and the previous government knew there was a problem—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —they knew there was a problem, but they didn't want to take advice, Madam Speaker. Even when they asked for a report to be done, they threw it under a desk some place and just didn't pay any attention to it, and that's typical NDP for you: when the heavy lifting starts, they run away.

We saw a challenge. We see a problem. We see a problem worth solving. We're going to solve the problem they created, Madam Speaker.

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

**Mrs. Smith:** It's that Premier that continues to throw reports on the floor that Manitobans have worked on that are telling him that his plan is going in the wrong direction.

The minister said 'norse'—nurses endorsed his plan; that is false. The minister said the percentage of elderly people was dramatically increasing in Manitoba; that is false. The minister said everything is fine and peachy; that, clearly, is false.

How can anyone trust the forthcoming report if the minister isn't even giving Manitobans the facts? Manitobans know that they cannot trust this government.

Will the minister stand up today and commit to keeping Seven Oaks and Concordia ERs open?

**Mr. Pallister:** I love it when the NDP ask questions about trust, Madam Speaker. And they shouldn't come into a debate unarmed, but that's exactly what they're doing now. Nobody trusted them when they were in government. They had no reason to trust them. I mean, they went around the province and promised everybody, right at their door, that they wouldn't raise their taxes, and then they jacked their taxes up.

Now they say the population's not aging. Well, if this population isn't aging in this province, Madam Speaker, it's the only jurisdiction in Canada and most of the western world where the population isn't aging.

Madam Speaker, we need health care for our people. They weren't getting health care under the NDP. They broke the system. We're fixing it up.

### **Seven Oaks Hospital ER Request to Retain Service**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Well, Madam Speaker, St. Johns constituents are confused and concerned about the future of the Seven Oaks ER. They want to be assured that access to critical care will be close to home when they need it most, but they're not getting any assurance from the Premier or his minister. Instead, they receive incoherent responses.

The government's own news conference on Friday has left the people of St. Johns with more questions than answers and concerned about the fate of their Seven Oaks ER.

Will the Premier stand up today and commit to keeping Seven Oaks ER open?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Appreciate any question from any NDP member on listening, Madam Speaker, because that is the party that staged an historic rebellion against itself because it wouldn't even listen to each other. Its own members were so confused, and their policy statements so incoherent—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —that they couldn't explain them to one another. They didn't have a clue what they were doing because they wouldn't communicate with each other.

Madam Speaker, they rejected—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —the previous leader, Greg Selinger, on the basis that he wasn't listening, but they weren't listening to each other either.

We took a report that the NDP themselves commissioned and we're acting on the advice that they ignored, Madam Speaker. We're proving that we're a government that listens to the experts. We are listening to front-line workers, too, and we're acting on the advice we receive. [*interjection*]



**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** We'll continue to act on that advice, because Manitobans deserve a government that listens, and they have one now.

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

**Ms. Fontaine:** Well, speaking of listening, nurses are not fine with what this Premier has done to our ERs and our system here. Nurses are not fine working 16 hours a day and recorded mandatory overtime. Nurses are not fine with overcrowded emergency rooms and lack of patient care, but we know how little this Premier and minister regard Manitoba nurses.

We've all seen it first-hand what they think they really do, but the reality check for this minister is that being a nurse is not a day at the spa, especially in the sheer chaos this minister has brought forward.

Will the minister stop the chaos, value nurses' opinions and actually listen to what they're saying and keep the Seven Oaks ER open?

**Mr. Pallister:** Finally, a question the NDP has some expertise on—chaos, Madam Speaker—because they had the longest waits in Canada for people in our city, sitting for seven and a half hours on average in Concordia not getting health care. Record numbers of patients actually leaving without getting any care at all is not success. It's dead last. It's 10th out of 10, Madam Speaker. That's what the NDP's telling us we should retreat to: dead last. It's not good enough for Manitobans, not even close.

We've already reduced the wait times—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —significantly, Madam Speaker. We've saved Manitobans—just already in our term versus the last NDP couple of years—a half century of sitting in waiting rooms waiting, not getting care, and the member—the best the members can come up with over there is we should go back to that?

Not a chance in the world, Madam Speaker. Manitobans deserve better than that.

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

**Ms. Fontaine:** From the very beginning families, patients and front-line workers have been telling the Premier to stop his rushed plans to close ERs and cut

our health-care system, but the Premier has refused to listen. And now when they finally sat down with nurses, they misconstrue statements that were made and tell the public the only thing that's hindering their plan is an aging population, which is clearly false, Madam Speaker.

How are Manitobans supposed to have confidence in their health-care system when the Premier and his minister clearly do not?

Will the Premier stand up today, apologize to Manitobans for the chaos that he's created and commit to keeping the Seven Oaks ER open?

**Mr. Pallister:** Again with the chaos, Madam Speaker.

There were three former Health ministers who rebelled against the previous government because they knew that the system was falling apart. Nurses were telling us and they're—I'm sure they're telling the members opposite as well, that they want to work in a system that works for patients. But they haven't been, Madam Speaker, for a long time under the NDP. Previous NDP Health ministers knew that. They threw up their hands and quit because they couldn't get it done.

Madam Speaker, our Health Minister and our previous minister are getting it done. This team is getting it done because health is our top priority. That's why we're investing more than \$400 million more, this year's budget alone, than the NDP ever put into health. But more importantly, we're getting better results for the people of Manitoba.

What they broke, Madam Speaker, we are fixing.

### **Concordia Hospital ER Request to Retain Service**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Madam Speaker, last week hundreds stood in front of the Concordia ER with one clear demand: save our ER. For two years they've been told over and over again that the facility was closing. For two years residents have begged the Pallister government to reconsider.

Now, at the eleventh hour, they claim they're doing a management review, but they're not listening to the—what the staff, the front-line staff and the residents have to say, and now they're even misrepresenting what nurses have told the government clearly.

Why does this minister continue to promote a plan to close Concordia ER, a plan that he knows is not working?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, the member for Concordia is just wrong.

He complains that we're not listening, but at the same time he knows that when Dr. Peachey was in this jurisdiction only a week ago, he consulted with a broad array of system leaders and front-line workers. For weeks he listened to the key people who were both running the system—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Careful—order.

**Mr. Friesen:** —change and those who worked in the system. And the member complains right now and chirps and says it's not true, but he knows it to be true.

Madam Speaker, they broke the system. We are fixing the system. We are relying on 'exterpretise.' We will do this the—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** —right way and we will do it for the benefit of Manitobans, who have waited long enough.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Madam Speaker, last week Pallister government said they were caught off guard by the fact that people were getting older in the city of Winnipeg and that would further strain the health-care system. It's nonsensical; it's a frightening admission, in fact, by this government.

If the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and the minister can't anticipate an aging population, they shouldn't be making sweeping changes to—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wiebe:** —undermine the care of tens of thousands of Winnipeg residents. They shouldn't be closing emergency rooms and services and certainly not in one of the most fastest growing areas of the city.

\* (14:00)

Why won't this Premier and minister back down and cancel their plan to close the Concordia ER?

**Mr. Friesen:** Well, Madam Speaker, not his finest effort.

Let me tell that member this: Our government takes an evidence—*[interjection]*—well, if they'd wait, we can give the answer. Our government takes an evidence-based—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** —approach to its decision-making. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** I know the members don't want to hear what we have to say, but what we have to say is this: that we're listening to Manitobans, that the changes that we are bringing to the health-care system are necessary after years of neglect by the NDP, years in which Manitoba got the worst results in Canada.

That group says that their only solution is go back. I assure the opposition, Manitobans do not want to go back. They are inviting a stronger, more robust, more sustainable health-care system that gets better health care sooner, and that is what we're bringing. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

The honourable member for Concordia, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Madam Speaker, the Premier is doing a management review because, of course, he knows that what he's doing is causing lasting harm to our health-care system and he knows it's not popular. He's looking for any excuse now to put these issues out of sight for an early election.

But Manitobans aren't fooled. The Premier has said over and over again he wants to close emergency rooms not just in Winnipeg, but, actually, across the entire province just to save a buck.

Well we, of course, have a different approach, Madam Speaker, and that is to invest in health care and to ensure health care access to all—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wiebe:** —Manitobans.

Why is the Premier closing emergency rooms in Manitoba?

**Mr. Friesen:** Well, Madam Speaker, finally a rare point of agreement. They did have a very different approach by the NDP. The approach can be summarized as follows: the most expensive system in Canada, the worst results in Canada, the longest—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** –length of stay in Canada, the most waiting for suspicion, diagnosis and treatment in Canada.

Manitobans have waited a long time for a government that will do the right thing to sustain our health-care system. All they can do is yell across the aisle, but they know—they know—that a stronger health-care system is not just possible, but within sight.

We will continue to stand up for all Manitobans.

### **Concordia Hospital ER Request to Retain Service**

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

The Concordia emergency room is set to close on June 6th, in just a matter of weeks from now. There's been utter chaos with staff—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** –departures from that hospital.

Our constituents are saying, loud and clear, don't close this emergency room. The Premier isn't listening. He's even misrepresenting what nurses have had to say.

Question is: Why has this Premier caused such damage to our health system?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, there you go again, Madam Speaker. Nobody in the NDP wants to do any of the lifting when it comes to improving the system. They just want us to go back in time to when we were dead last. That's not good enough for Manitobans.

So, you know, Madam Speaker, the Concordia facility served as a waiting room more than it did a treatment centre much of the time, and the member knows that and he knows the longest waits in Canada were in Concordia. So I'm surprised he'd stand in his place and tell us that the people of Concordia deserve to be not served by a system that failed so miserably and that was dead last in Canada. We don't agree.

They sat back and did nothing, Madam Speaker, out of fear, cowardice or just simply ignorance—I'm not sure which, maybe all three—but we'll go and we'll act on the advice of experts and that's what we're doing now.

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

**Mr. Maloway:** Clearly, the residents of northeast Winnipeg don't agree with this Premier on this point.

Last week, Madam Speaker, the Premier admitted that he can't accurately anticipate the aging of our population. That's a shocking admission because the Premier's making decisions that will impact the care of tens of thousands of people for decades to come.

The Premier has his ears closed to what northeast Winnipeg needs and he's only listening to consultants. He needs to listen to northeast Winnipeg and Transcona residents. They've been telling him. They've been telling him for two years: don't close the Concordia emergency room.

Why won't he listen?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, both the member and I know that the system was failing the people of northeast Winnipeg. He knew it so well, Madam Speaker. He knew that the NDP system was failing his people. My evidence would be, I suppose, that he took NDP right off his election signs last time. So he was embarrassed, and he had every right to be, that he was part of a government that failed so miserably to provide services to the people—[*interjection*]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** –of northeast Winnipeg. And I know it's a sensitive issue for him and his colleagues, but it's true, Madam Speaker, that Concordia was ranked as the longest waits in Canada. We're changing that. They seem content with it; we're not.

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

**Mr. Maloway:** Clearly, the Premier's tone-deaf on this whole issue. The Premier's caused chaos in our hospitals. Concordia's slated to close in just a few weeks. There's been a mass of departures there from the hospital over the last year.

Premier's done lasting damage to our health care with less care by the bedside.

Manitobans, northeast Winnipeg and Transcona residents, are telling the Premier: don't close the Concordia emergency room.

Why won't this Premier listen to the people?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, actually, our prebudget consultation process is just one of many, many

examples where you listen to thousands of front-line workers and take their perspectives very seriously. We've got the Idea Fund now, tens of millions of dollars in projects going forward, coming from front-line workers.

But the member and his colleagues have some explaining to do when it comes to trust. I mean, they walked around the city in 2011 election, they knocked, they looked people right in the eye—looked people right in the eye—and they said that they would not raise their taxes, and then they did, Madam Speaker. They knew they were going to. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** Now they talk about trust, Madam Speaker. Even if they could be trusted to take us back in time, they—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** Madam Speaker, even if they could be trusted to take us back in time, their guarantee to the people of northeast Winnipeg that they're going to have the longest waits in Canada—good luck running on that one.

They broke the system. We're going to fix the system. We'll make it work better. That's what Manitobans deserve. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

#### **Health-Care Service Reform Peachey Report Recommendations**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** It's incredible to me that the Premier repeats day after day complaints about the failures of the NDP while boasting of implementing an NDP plan to fix health care. It just shows how little difference there really is between these parties.

The Premier's decision to hire back Dr. David Peachey raises a lot of questions, as do Dr. Peachey's recent statements. He—Dr. Peachey claimed that nurses told him changes were great when nurses' union said they'd never been worse. He implied Manitoba has had a sudden spike in the number of old people who live here.

Now I don't want to blame Dr. Peachey, because everything he's saying fits in perfectly with this government's strategy of gutting health care while gaslighting Manitobans and telling them everything is fine.

The question is why Dr. Peachey is being hired at all. This government ignored much of his advice.

Are they just spending more public money so they can justify postponing a politically inconvenient ER closure in the middle of an election?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** That applause wasn't deserved, Madam Speaker.

No, actually what we're doing is what we've continued to dedicate ourselves to doing, which is to fix a broken system and make it work better for the people of Manitoba.

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

#### **Health-Care Services Funding Levels**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** It's also critical to correct the inaccurate statements the Premier and his minister's been making hundreds of times in and out of this Chamber. Health transfers are going up 3 per cent. This government only increased health-care spending once, and that was three years ago.

This Premier promised to cut at the top, but not only are there people on the front line who are burned out, broken and discouraged, this government is creating an entirely new level of bureaucracy: shared services.

\* (14:10)

The Premier wants an election. Manitobans deserve the truth.

Will the Premier just admit that the health system will never see an increase under his watch?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** It's \$414 million higher this year 'never was under the NDP, Madam Speaker.

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

#### **Health-Care Service Reform Peachey Report Recommendations**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** There's a term for what the Premier and his ministers have been doing to Manitobans; it's gaslighting. So when doctors, nurses, health-care workers, patients, the WRHA, CIHI, the wait times task force all tell this government things aren't

working, the answer is to deny it and, what's more, to blame the people who are raising it.

I feel a lot of sympathy for Dr. Peachey because this government seems to be making him the fall guy for their own failures since they bulldozed ahead with reckless changes over the objections of many experts.

Given the Premier's track record of firing anyone who stands up to him, if Dr. Peachey recommends that Concordia's—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** —ER stays open, why should we have any faith the Premier will listen?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, because, unlike his allies in Ottawa, we defend the rule of law, transparency and fairness, and we'll continue to do that, Madam Speaker.

Leader of the Second Opposition wants taxes to be higher; he wants bigger subsidies for special interests; he wants higher business taxes. He thinks the previous NDP government didn't have a big enough bureaucracy and didn't spend enough. He'd reinstate the vote tax. He wants us to borrow more money on the futures of our children, and, Madam Speaker, this is the mandate he hopes to be elected on, and that explains, I think, in part, why he doesn't have anybody with him today. *[interjection]*

**An Honourable Member:** Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Order.

I'll just point out to members that points of order are not allowed during oral questions.

#### **Birth Services in Flin Flon Request to Restore Services**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** We know that this government is about cuts and the bottom line. While this government are do a poor job to crisis manage the closure of Seven Oaks and Concordia emergency rooms, mothers and families in Flin Flon and the surrounding area have to travel over an hour to give birth in The Pas.

It also means that front-line workers at St. Anthony's hospital are forced to deal with the extra workload created by this government's refusal to restore birth delivery services in Flin Flon.

When is this government going to stop listening to high-priced consultants, listen to northern

Manitobans and restore birth delivery services in Flin Flon?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, I would hope that the member would know that that's inaccurate. She knows that the decision to curtail low-acuity obstetric services at Flin Flon was a medical determination, one made by a medical expert in obstetrics and then by a nurse expert.

That member is saying that we should ignore the experts.

We listen to the experts not just in terms of the transformation of our health-care system, which is necessary, but also when it comes to the safety of patients and babies.

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

#### **Northern Patient Transport Service Request to Restore Funding**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** The high-priced consultants hired by this government told us something that we already know: that timely access to health care is a serious problem in the North. Northern Manitobans have to—often need medevacs to Winnipeg because they don't have access to health care they need where they live.

Instead of improving health-care access, this government's response has been to make deep cuts to the Northern Patient Transportation Program while pursuing a privatization plan for Lifeflight.

Will this government back off their privatization plan and restore funding for the Northern Patient Transportation Program?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, I find it interesting and puzzling that an NDP member would make a criticism of a closure of an obstetrics ward in northern Manitoba.

What do the following communities have in common: Hunter Memorial Hospital in Teulon; Pine Falls General Hospital; Lakeshore District Health Centre in Ashern; Ste. Rose centre; Norway House Hospital; Churchill Health Centre? All of those were obstetrics hospitals closed by the NDP.

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

### Northern Health Clinics Construction Request

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** When this government came into power they immediately cancelled the billions of dollars worth of much-needed health-care investments, including clinics in The Pas and Thompson. With that money this government has spent on high-priced consultants, that would have built The Pas 'primary' health-care clinic at \$5.3 million, the Northern Consultation Clinic in Thompson at \$9 million, and they would've had—still had enough money left over to run the Concordia emergency room for a entire year.

Will this government commit to no more high-priced consultants and direct those savings to building clinics in The Pas and Thompson?

Ekosi.

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** That member knows that it was not that long ago, only a few weeks, in fact, that the Premier (Mr. Pallister), myself and other members of our party were—and the government were happy to be in Flin Flon to open the new emergency department there, a \$27-million opening of an emergency department there that will serve not only that community, but the outlying areas.

I only regret that I do not have time in this response to talk about all the ways our government is making good health-care investments right across northern Manitoba.

### Non-Profit Organizations New Strategy Announcement

**Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River):** Non-profit and charitable organizations play a vital role in our communities. Their services improve the quality of life for Manitobans, especially those in our community who are most vulnerable.

Our government understands the importance of a strong not-profit sector that is well equipped to meet the needs of those they serve.

Recently, the Minister of Municipal Relations announced the development of a new strategy for Manitoba's not-profit sector.

Can the minister please share—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Morley-Lecomte:** —the details with the House?

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Municipal Relations):** I'd like to thank the member for that great question from Seine River.

Madam Speaker, a strong, sustainable non-profit sector benefits all Manitobans and that's exactly what our government is committed to do. Last week at a community development forum with more than 150 representatives from non-profits all over Manitoba, we were pleased to announce that our government is working on a new strategy to build capacity and promote sustainability right across Manitoba in the non-profit sector.

Madam Speaker, our goal is to deliver positive outcomes and increase charitable—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wharton:** —right across—charitable giving right across Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

Unlike the NDP's top-down approach where they failed non-profits, we'll get it right.

### Cultural Sector Improvements Government Position

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** I want to raise this issue of serious double standards that this government shows.

Trudy Schroeder, the executive director of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, received the Order of Manitoba yesterday, but she's also been sharply critical of this government and previous NDP governments in their neglect of cultural infrastructure.

I know that calling for repairs to cultural infrastructure may seem hard to justify when this government is cutting EIA, life-saving drugs and freezing health, education and infrastructure spending, but let's consider what this government does talk about spending money on.

The Premier offered \$1.7 billion to Jeff Bezos, the richest man in the world. The Blue Bombers got a \$200-million bailout and the Premier is ordering MPI to give money to brokers.

Manitoba's cultural sector is a huge driver of tourism, innovation and exports, and art work is work, Madam Speaker.

Can the Premier explain why Jeff Bezos, Bombers and brokers all get bailouts, or are cultural industries one of those sectors he doesn't consider to be a real job?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** I appreciate any question from the previously unemployed member about jobs, Madam Speaker, given that this is the first job he's ever had in his life.

The fact is the member stood up and said for his first priority once he was elected—*[interjection]*—not—he didn't stand up for vulnerable—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —children in our province. He didn't stand up for people needing health care. He said he wanted a bigger office.

And, Madam Speaker, the member wants Manitobans to pay higher carbon taxes just because Justin Trudeau says it's a good idea. He mouths the words here as well. He says that Manitobans should pay a higher PST because the NDP thought it was a good idea, so he thinks it's a great idea too. He wants a subsidy for his party so they can advertise more.

These are the things the member stands for while we support major cultural projects in this province, significant cultural projects, sports projects, heritage projects around the province.

While we're supporting the sustainability of our cultural, historic industries in our province, Madam Speaker, the member stands there and supports himself and higher taxes. That's it with him.

\* (14:20)

**Madam Speaker:** There is a significant amount of heckling going on during this oral questions and it is coming from all sides of the House. And while one side may be unhappy about the heckling, they will turn around and heckle, and this is going—this is working from both sides.

The intent here is to be able to ask questions and answer them, and I am having some difficulty hearing all of them and I know that you want me to be able to hear them in case there are any rules broken. So I would encourage everybody here, this is the Legislative Chamber, it's a democratic Chamber, and I would ask everybody please to allow people to stand in here and be heard.

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

### Community Places Program Project Approval Concerns

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Well, that was a very creative response from the Premier, Madam Speaker.

The issue of double standards is a serious one, however, because it's clear this government does more than just reward its friends; they go out of their way to punish their opponents. When I asked the Premier last week about the Community Places Program, he seemed to think that the reason there were more projects in PC ridings is the allocation of seats.

But let's be clear about this breakdown of spending under this program: four seats in rural Manitoba alone received more funding than all the ridings in Winnipeg put together, Madam Speaker.

And when we look at the average spending per constituency, which I table, in Liberal constituencies it was about \$16,900; in NDP constituencies it was about \$33,500; while in PC constituencies it was over \$79,600.

Can the Premier explain whether he or anyone in his government directed this choice? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** I appreciate the member's reference in his preamble to punishing adversaries, Madam Speaker. No one has done that better than the Trudeau government in Ottawa he clings to so closely.

It actually caused Jody Wilson-Raybould to be kicked out of their caucus, not because she said anything that was inappropriate or untrue, but rather because she told the truth and she stood up for the rule of law, much the way the NDP has expelled Steve Ashton from being a candidate not because he misled anyone but because he told the truth about the record of one of his colleagues. Now, Madam Speaker, this is not how you stand for rule of law.

We're standing up for the culture projects the member referenced in his preamble. We're supporting them. We're supporting the people, and we praise the people who work so hard to advance these projects in our province. We're with them, Madam Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lamont:** As I recall, the Premier had to dispel or turf the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) for not being a team player.

Again, this relates to the double standards, and when I raised it, members opposite thanked me. They thanked me for talking about the projects in their constituencies, and it's truly sad they would take any pride in what they have done.

I tabled a document that showed a spreadsheet of Community Places Program projects that link projects to the MLAs and constituency they lived in. Now, it's a list of projects that were either recommended or denied.

And what's interesting, Madam Speaker, is that while 85 per cent of the final projects were in PC constituencies, there were 38 changes to the recommendations. More than two thirds recommended projects in Liberal and NDP areas that were spiked. There were projects recommended in Fort Rouge and River Heights and Kewatinook, but when all was said and done, someone turned them down.

Was there political interference in the choice of these projects? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** I'd really appreciate a question about SNC-Lavalin from the Liberal leader, Madam Speaker, because political influence on matters that are an issue of rule of law is wrong and should not be undertaken.

I would also remind the member that we have supported on this side of the House significant Manitoba projects not limited to but including military memorials, Inuit art, the aviation museum, Diversity Gardens, and our recently announced Heritage Trust funds will be available across the province for projects locally initiated that we'll be partnering in.

Madam Speaker, in terms of support of the culture and heritage and the sports fraternities and sororities and various groups across the province, we are going to stand with those organizations. We're proud of the work they do and we'll continue to stand with them.

### **Winnipeg Strike of 1919 Commemorative Display**

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** I thank the Premier for listing off all those wonderful things that his government is contributing to and honouring.

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

**Mr. Lindsey:** So let's talk for a minute about that which they're not honouring. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lindsey:** You know, 30,000 men, women—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lindsey:** —and children put down their tools 100 years ago to stand up for their rights in this province.

So what I'm asking the Premier today is: Will he commit to erecting a permanent commemoration for the strike of 1919?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, I will commit to continuing to stand with workers for their right to have a secret ballot on all union ratification votes, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Flin Flon, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Lindsey:** We want more than just empty words from members opposite or the Premier when it comes to honouring working people in this province. We want them to actually commit to something physical, something that says that they actually support workers and workers' rights.

So will this government commit today to a permanent fixture of some kind to commemorate the strike of 1919 or will we just get more empty, meaningless words from this Premier?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, I see that the member's grumpy as usual, Madam Speaker, and he has a right to be, because when he talks about empty gestures, he's talking about things like his effort to go to the doors and tell the people in Flin Flon that they should pay more to get to work, that they should pay higher carbon taxes, that they shouldn't work in a mine because, according to the NDP, you're supposed leave that in—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —ground, Madam Speaker. He has got to go to the doors and convince people he's telling the truth, which is difficult for any NDP member to do, especially on the issue of taxes. So he'll go to the door and he probably won't tell the people in Flin Flon he wants them to pay higher PST, but he really does.



So when it comes to issues like significant issues that matter to working families and working people, Madam Speaker, we're on their side and the member and his colleagues are against them.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Flin Flon, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Lindsey:** I guess we understand why their high-paid consultants use baffle gab.

What I want for this Premier is to stand up and recognize workers died in 1919 for doing nothing more than participating in a peaceful demonstration to stand up for their rights.

If nothing else, will this Premier commit to a permanent commemoration of Mike Sokolinski *[phonetic]* and Mike Sherbanzowich *[phonetic]* today?

**Mr. Pallister:** Where was the member and his colleagues when women were getting harassed and sexually attacked in their own caucus? Where was the member? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order. Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** Where were any of his colleagues? They were silent; swept it under the table and said nothing about it.

Where were they when a union leader in the city of Winnipeg with the—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:**—Winnipeg labour congress needed some help and support when she was being attacked? Where were they? They were nowhere to be found, Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*—all symbolism and everything short of actual help. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** Members weren't able to help. They didn't even stand up for their own—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order. Order.

I have just stood a few minutes ago and indicated to people I cannot hear when people are answering questions or presenting questions, asking questions and answering them. I'm having difficulty, and this just went way over the top of that. I will ask for everybody, please, to show some respect in here.

We've got guests in the gallery. We've got hundreds of people that watch this online. I would ask so that they can all hear properly. Yelling across isn't going to get us any further with this debate and,

in fact, it's very disrespectful to the whole democratic process that we're supposed to be standing and representing, so I would ask for everybody's co-operation, please.

The honourable First Minister to conclude his statement.

**Mr. Pallister:** When they had the chance to stand up and protect women in their own caucus and their own staff they wouldn't do it. When they had the chance to protect a union leader who was being harassed—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:**—they wouldn't do it. They just like the symbolism, Madam Speaker, but they don't enjoy doing the actual work.

We'll stand up and protect women in this province. That's what we're about and that's what we're going to continue to do. We're standing up for a safer workplace. It's something the NDP failed to do for 17 years.

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

\* (14:30)

### Point of Order

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

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** During my exchange with the First Minister, he referred to the fact that some members of my caucus are not here today. *[interjection]* He certainly—he implied it. So I simply want to—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Lamont:** I just want to make a point, Madam Speaker.

Not only that, but the First Minister continually was directing his remarks not through the Chair, but directly across to other members.

But I did just want to put on the record why my members are—two of my members are absent, whether that's possible or not. They're not—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Is the member finished with his point of order?

**Mr. Lamont:** No.

The reason the—I'm going to say it anyway. The reason the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) is not here is because he's at a funeral for George Myer. He was diagnosed with cancer in September. Nothing happened for months. He spent 48 hours in an ER over Christmas.

That's where Jon Gerrard is today.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable First Minister, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Pallister:** Yes. Quite frankly, Madam Speaker, I didn't refer to the absence of members. I referred to the absence of recognition of the member's comments. I was careful to do so.

So, in respect of his preamble, I understand he's emotional about the reasons for the absences he referred to just now, but that has very little to do with any comments made by me or any other member of the House.

**Madam Speaker:** Did the member for Assiniboia want to speak to that point of order? I see his—he's indicated to me that he does.

The honourable member for Assiniboia, on that same point of order.

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Madam Speaker, the reference to the physical attendance of members is not appropriate. That's well established. However, I will notice today and every day as we look across the Chamber, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) stands alone. There's no one over there with him, either.

**Madam Speaker:** I would indicate that the—*[interjection]* Order.

The member did not have a point of order. The—what I certainly heard is the Premier did not directly say that Liberal MLAs were not there. There were some other comments made, but he did not reference the absence of those members, and therefore it is not a point of order.

## PETITIONS

### Daylight Saving Time

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The loss of sleep associated with the beginning of daylight savings time has serious

consequences for physical and mental health and has been linked to increases in traffic accidents and workplace injuries.

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

(3) Daylight savings time is associated with a decrease in productivity the day after the clocks are turned forward with no corresponding increase in productivity when the clocks are turned back.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Bréanne Déquier, Ryan Gowronsky and Shawn Graydon and many, many more fine Manitobans.

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

### Early Learning and Child-Care Programs

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by Luzminda [*phonetic*] Nabas, Jean Nabas, June-Jude Nabas, and many other Manitobans.

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

(3) High-quality licensed child care has a lasting, positive impact on children's development, is a fundamental need—maybe I better I do that one again—sorry.

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

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

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase;

quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Madam Speaker, this petition has been signed by Tamara Ross, Domolingo [*phonetic*] Prosnier, Yvonne Kipling, and many other Manitobans.

\* (14:40)

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase funding for licensed, not-for-profit child-care programs in recognition of the importance

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

Madam Speaker, this petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

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

The background to the petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And, Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by Melanie Glaser, Amanda Lewis, Noelle Palsson and many, many other fine Manitobans.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

\* (14:50)

Signed by Angela Hanischuk, Paramjit Brae, Laura Chupinha and many more.

Thank you.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

(5) The workforce shortage of trained early childhood educators has continued to increase;

quality child care is dependent on a workforce that is skilled and adequately remunerated.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Signed by Barbara Turner, Nian Conti and Torrie Vicklund and many more Manitobans.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

And this is signed by James [*phonetic*] Willsey, Nicolle Smith and Jane Link and many other Manitobans.

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to the petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And, Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by Meranda Storin, Calla Vandenberghe Burton, Tonya Van Mackelberg and many other Manitobans.

### Quality Health Care

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government's program of cuts and restructuring in health care have had serious negative consequences, reduced both access to and quality of care for patients, increased wait times, exasperated the nursing shortage and significantly increased workload and the reliance on overtime from nurses and other health-care professionals.

(2) Further cuts and consolidation are opposed by a majority of Manitobans, and will only further reduce access to health-care services.

(3) The provincial government has rushed through these cuts and changes and failed to adequately consult nurses and health-care professionals who provide front-line patient care.

\* (15:00)

(4) Ongoing cuts and changes appear to be more about saving money rather than improving health care.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will improve this timeliness and quality of care for patients by increasing the number of beds across the system and recruiting and retaining an adequate number of nurses and other health professionals to meet Manitoba's needs.

And this petition is signed by Michael Barkman, Curtis Reynolds and J.S. Seinhieber and many other Manitobans.

**Madam Speaker:** Grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader):** Could you please call for second reading debate, Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act (Various Acts Amended). And, following its hasty passage, could you then call for debate Bill 24, The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2019.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the House will resume debate on second reading of Bill 22 this afternoon, to be followed by second reading of Bill 24.

### DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

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

**Madam Speaker:** Resuming debate on Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act (Various Acts Amended), standing in the name of the honourable member for Point Douglas, who has three minutes remaining.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** Well, I'm going to put some more words on the record about Bill 22, but I'd like to be sitting in this House actually asking the Minister of Health questions about—in Estimates. But, you know, here we are talking about The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act.

*Mr. Doyle Piwniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

Well, let's talk about this government's transparency. This bill partly focuses on ownership transparency, which is ironic and hypocritical considering that the members of this Pallister government continue to be evasive and actually avoid transparency. Manitobans actually expect their political leaders to follow the law and to be open and transparent about their fiscal dealings.

Well, let's talk about the Premier (Mr. Pallister). Let's talk about his transparency. The Premier actually threatened to sue the Winnipeg Free Press for publishing a story that said he hadn't paid his taxes—his taxes in Costa Rica, taxes that actually went to support people that needed housing, people that couldn't afford housing. Hmm, I see a trend here with this Premier. He likes to pick on people that are poor, that need housing. They continue to sell off Manitoba housing that actually supports people who need safe and affordable housing. But does this government care? No, because they're worried about money over people, and their austerity shows it time after time.

So \$8,000 he had to pay in back taxes. And, you know, in fact, the Premier said, oh, I don't owe any money. No, there's no money there. And he didn't even want to tell Manitobans that he actually had a place in Costa Rica. The Premier disregarded The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council

Conflict of Interest Act and actually misled Manitobans over the nature of his personal financial holdings, as well as his financial interests in Costa Rica.

For years this Premier has provided incomplete conflict-of-interest filings hiding—and who knows how much more he's hiding—his Costa Rica assets as required by law. And, actually, in fact, Manitobans only learned the truth through a Costa Rican newspaper which revealed undeclared assets to holding companies in Costa Rica which contained three properties, including a residence in the coastal area of Tamarindo and the Pacific coast of Costa Rica.

The Premier only disclosed his Costa Rica assets after he got caught. He got caught. And then, only then, did he tell us that, oh, he hasn't paid his taxes and, in fact, he actually tried to blame it on his wife and say, I have no dealings in paying any of that; that's my wife's department. So—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member's time is up.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** *[interjection]* Well, thank you, yes, it's a heck of a way to spend your birthday, talking about The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act. It's right up there with the minor amendments act—*[interjection]*—yes, which one—the Interim Supply 2020 bill that really is just beyond ludicrous. But, you know, nothing surprises me about this government anymore.

They continue to filibuster their own budget by having us debate some of the most inane and inconsequential legislation ever put before a House probably in Canadian history, Mr. Deputy Speaker. *[interjection]* Well, and the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) says, well, what should we be doing? And every member of this House knows, as certainly he well knows, is that we should be in Estimates today. We should have been in Estimates all last week and we should have been in Estimates the week before that so that there is a proper accounting of government finances and so that the opposition on behalf of the people of Manitoba that we represent—and, in fact, on behalf of all people of Manitoba—have a chance to ask ministers in Estimates very direct, very specific, very detailed questions about the budget and its implications for the people of Manitoba.

But we're not doing that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Instead, we're spending time working with the government almost seemingly to filibuster its own agenda. But, as I said last week on a bill of utter inconsequence—it's almost—you almost forget which useless bill it was—but, as I said last week, the people of Manitoba elect us, 57 of us, to come to this Legislature to debate the issues that are of consequence to them and their families.

And yet we have a government that fails to respond to the colossal needs in our communities, the needs of families that live in our communities. And I don't even mean the constituencies. I mean our neighbourhoods, our communities, the very place that we all live and thrive together.

And so we are instead, today—the name of this bill is called The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act, and if it sounds as dull as it reads, well, that's because it is, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The bill deals with extraprovincial registrations of business. Registrars may enter into agreements with other Canadian jurisdictions respecting the extraprovincial registration of corporations, partnerships and co-operatives.

Cabinet may make regulations about these registrations. This part of the bill also deals with extraprovincial limited partnerships that can now be registered in Manitoba. And then it deals with extraprovincial limited liability partnerships that have an attorney for service no longer require a registered office in Manitoba.

And, Madam Speaker—or Mr. Deputy Speaker, forgive me—while I'm sure somewhere in Manitoba, this is of consequence, this is not really a substantial matter that we need to be discussing in this Legislature today when there are so, so many needs in our communities.

The bill also addresses the supervision of co-operatives, and so it amends The Cooperatives Act to authorize the minister to designate a superintendent of co-operatives. Those functions of the registrar of co-operatives that relate to the supervision over financial matters, the issuing of securities and appeals of membership terminations in a housing co-operative are transferred to the superintendent. The registrar is also no longer required to act as an adviser to co-operatives or provide model forms of articles and bylaws to co-operatives.

\* (15:10)

Now, this may well be consequential to the co-operatives movement in Manitoba. We're not sure exactly because there's been no explanation in the minister when he gave up—got up to give his lame introduction of the bill, really didn't give any explanation as to why this particular change was happening or occurring or the need for it, who might have—he might have consulted with in coming up with this particular amendment to The Cooperatives Act.

Lots of questions were left unanswered even as we asked, and I'm sure it was my friend from Flin Flon, maybe my friend from Minto, maybe my friend from Concordia who got up and asked questions on this bill to the minister at the time, but, of course, no answers were forthcoming, which lead us to believe that the minister really doesn't understand his own legislation, which is problem enough.

But, when the legislation is presented to the House over and over and over again instead of us being in Estimates where we actually ought to be, then it raises a number of questions about the government's agenda, the government's intention to address the real issues facing Manitobans and the government's intention to attempt to try to distract Manitobans from the impact of their austerity agenda.

And then, finally, the act touches on ownership transparency, and isn't it always so interesting how the government is always so interested in businesses and what's happening with them while working people in Manitoba are left day by day to—are hung out to dry by this government on the vast array of issues?

But—so the government's real priority, apparently, is, instead, trying to speak clearly about ownership transparency in the business community, and so The Corporations Act and The Cooperatives Act are harmonized with recent changes to federal legislation respecting ownership transparency.

The act—this part of the act also addresses corporations must maintain a register of individuals who, separately or collectively, exert more 25 per cent of the shareholder voting rights. Reporting issuers, publicly traded corporations, licence insurers and loan and trust corporations are exempt from this requirement, and I would suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you probably need to be a chartered accountant to understand the real impact of this. We tried to ask questions of the minister when he introduced the bill on this



particular matter to try to get more information, to try to get real answers, to try to get substantive answers, but none were forthcoming.

And so we're left, again, to conclude that, of the three elements that make up The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act, that the minister certainly didn't understand the legislation that he's introducing into the House. He was simply unable to answer any questions that we put to him.

And so we're left to, again, question the government's priorities for Manitobans except in this sense, that if they can cozy up to the business community they'll do that at every turn, but if it means working day in and day out in this Legislature to address the needs from people of Manitoba, well, that's not going to happen. That's clearly not happening right now; it happen—hasn't been happening in this Legislature for a couple of weeks.

And it's a sad commentary on the state of public engagement and the public interest in Manitoba when this Chamber is reduced to having to address these bills day after day when, in fact, we should be in Estimates and the government and ministers, the Premier (Mr. Pallister), Cabinet ministers, should be in, defending and helping us to understand the nature of the cuts that they've made to all kinds of services that Manitobans rely on.

But we're not doing that. Instead, we're left to do that and—to do this today, and I have to say I think what gives the whole thing away is that no member of the government gets up to speak about this bill. I waited in my chair a few seconds here to see which member of the government side would pop up to defend this critically important issue that needs—that we need to spend so much time here on the House and, frankly, none did.

And I would suggest to you that not only is the minister undermining the interests of Manitobans when we're forced to spend so much time on such a really meaningless bill in the context of all the other issues that need to be addressed in Manitoba, but, at the same time, it speaks volumes that the government side isn't even getting up to debate their own bills, to defend their own bills, to tell us how they—why they regard this as being of such monumental importance.

I'm sure my friend from Riding Mountain—who will be lucky, I think, to hang on to his seat in the next election—was probably out door-knocking over

the last little while, and I'm hazarding a guess that this was not brought to his attention once.

I know my friend from St. James is going to go and—going to go run in a new constituency, Assiniboine. I'm not sure why he wasn't welcome in St. James anymore, but I dare to say I have no doubt—

**An Honourable Member:** I live in Assiniboine.

**Mr. Allum:** Oh, he says he never lived in his constituency in the first place; never a good idea for an MLA, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I know he would have been out door-knocking because he's scared for his seat as well—and well he should be—over the weekend, I have no doubt about that. And I'm sure that this matter, Bill 22, was not raised with him once during the course of his door-knocking exercises.

I hazard to say they were probably addressing critical issues in health care and education when he went to the doorsteps. No one was talking about the business registration act and so that's—it's kind of disappointing—

**An Honourable Member:** Very pleased with Grace; they're very pleased with Grace Hospital.

**Mr. Allum:** And the member for St. James (Mr. Johnston) now talks to me, saying something about Grace Hospital, and let me just say to him: you're welcome. The NDP was proud to build that great institution and the great innovations that have happened there. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Allum:** Of course, you'll put up the plaque—and this is the old story with the Tories. They'll put up the plaque: We'll do the hard work of getting things built on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Allum:** —I find it quite remarkable that the leader of the opposition, the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), gets up every day and he talks about important issues in health care, whether it's keeping the ERs open at Seven Oaks or Concordia or the cuts to services—physiotherapy being a good example—that have been sliced and diced apart by this government.

And, on our side of the House, we want to get up and we want to engage with the government on those

critical health-care issues but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are we doing that today? Are we doing that, either here in the House or where we should be, in Estimates? No, we're not. We're looking at the business registration act.

My friend from St. Johns, who is a remarkable individual in her own right, gets up every day and talks about a wide variety of issues in the justice system. She wants to know why there's been twice as many murders this year as there has been last year; why crime rates are going up; why there have been cuts to the Elizabeth Fry Society; why there's been cuts to the John Howard Society; why there has been real—no real effort to really get behind a crime prevention plan that works, that's rooted in the determinants—the social determinants of health, but that hasn't been forthcoming.

So are we doing that today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, either here in the Chamber or in Estimates? No, we're not. We're talking about the business registration act.

My friend from St. Johns also wants to get up and talk about missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. It's such a critical issue facing our country. It is at the core of reconciliation. If we can start to do that right, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then we're positioned to be able to take those first gentle steps toward reconciliation, but are we talking about that today? No, we're not. We're talking about the business transparency act.

My friend from Concordia, as I said last week, gets up, as he did today, to speak out on behalf of keeping the Concordia ER open, and he joined with hundreds of other Manitobans last week at Concordia to protest the government's actions, to advocate for keeping it open.

\* (15:20)

But are we talking about keeping the Concordia ER open today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, either in the House or in Estimates? No, we're not. We're talking about the business transparency act.

My friend from Concordia also wants to get up and talk to the Minister of Education, engage with the Minister of Education on any number of education issues affecting this province. He'd like to get more detail on the so-called education commission that's going through the province.

And I know, to his credit, that he's been to virtually every single one of the open house sessions

that have been held by the commission to date, and what he's come back and told us time and time again is that the people who attend those sessions are telling the government to walk back their cuts to education, walk back their cuts to the K-to-12 system, start investing in education, start investing in our children. But are we talking about that today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the House or in Estimates? No, we're not. We're talking about the business registration transparency act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know my friend from Concordia also wants to talk about to the Minister of Education, engage with the Minister of Education, either in this House or in Estimates, about the woeful state of post-secondary education in this province under the Pallister government.

He wants to ask what impact has happened by the sudden and huge increase in tuition. He wants to know about the impact of taking away the tuition rebate program. He wants to know what impact has happened when the government sliced away, cut access program funding, an unspeakable act, in my view, something that is so reprehensible I can hardly get my head around it. My friend from Concordia wants to talk to the Minister of Education about that critical post-secondary issue, either in the House or in Estimates, but are we doing that today? No, we're not. We're talking about the business registration act.

My friend from Concordia also wants to talk about the state of capital spending on our campuses, which has been not only nothing, but less than nothing since the Pallister government came into power.

Now, when you think about our government that was elected four times by the people of Manitoba over 16 years—incidentally, when the fixed election date came in in 2007, we ran our fixed election dates in 2011 and 2016, but that's just an aside, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But since the government has come into power, there's been no capital construction at any post-secondary institution in this province.

But yet when you think about the 16—our 16 years in government, over four elected terms, go to any of the campuses and see the difference that was made by our predecessors who took a bold step to try to innovate and invest on any of the—on every single campus in this province. You only have to go downtown to see the incredible campus at Red River downtown, just adjacent to City Hall. It's a remarkable learning commons. And then across the street at the Union Tower building, which sat

empty for so long, is now a remarkable educational institution. That institution was built by the NDP.

The government has not done anything like it. Are we dealing with that today, either in the House or in Estimates? No, we're not. We're talking about the business registration act.

My friends from Brandon should be wanting to get up and speak about the absence of post-secondary investment in Brandon at the—at Brandon U—

**An Honourable Member:** How about that school we're building that you failed?

**Mr. Allum:** And I hear my friend from Brandon West chirping in the background. Where's he been as we try to—as the process of trying to move the rest of ACC to the North Hill, where is his voice been on that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? He has no problem heckling me in the House here today, but when it comes to the critical educational issue in Brandon about getting the North Hill project completed, where is he? He's silent. He's not saying anything. He hides behind the business registration transparency act. He doesn't even get up to debate it. He doesn't want to talk about critical issues in Brandon.

Are we—but are we talking about that critical issue today, about making sure that the North Hill project gets completed for ACC? Are we talking about that today, Mr. Deputy Speaker? No, we're not. We're not talking about it here in debate; we're not talking about it in Estimates. Instead, we're forced for the umpteenth time to look at the business registration act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my friend from Flin Flon asked the Premier (Mr. Pallister) a very direct question about how the government will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike in question period today. You know, he couldn't have sent an easier softball over to the Premier if he tried, because the right thing to do, the honourable thing to do was for the Premier of Manitoba to get up and to accept the suggestions made by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) about how we could commemorate the Winnipeg General Strike, now entering its 100th anniversary, and only two days, I believe, away from when it started 100 years ago.

Did the Premier respond to the good suggestions made by the—by my friend from Flin Flon? No, he didn't. Instead, he threw insults across the floor, as he constantly does. He makes issues personal and he

throws insults across the floor instead of actually answering questions or leading this House in serious debate on serious issues of consequence to the people of Manitoba.

But are we talking about any of those issues today, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Oh no, we're not. We're talking about the business transparency act.

My friend from Minto, as I said last week, is the newly minted Finance critic for the NDP. He wants to get up and ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) how much money this government has made from the legalization of marijuana to date. It was something for a budget to come out to begin with in March in which there was no projected revenue for that particular revenue stream in the budget. And since then, have we heard anything from the Minister of Finance about that important issue? No, we haven't, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We've heard crickets from him.

And so I know my friend from Minto wanted to be in Estimates today to address that issue and many, many other issues relating to the finances of the Province of Manitoba. But are we in Estimates talking about those critical issues today? Are we debating them in the House today? No, we're not. We're looking at the business registration act.

I know that my sister from The Pas talked about a northern patient transfer program that has been hacked and slashed by this government, and we—she raised a really critical issue about it today in question period. Did we get an answer? No. Did we expect one? No. Did—were they even in the same universe of an answer? No. But we should be talking about that in Estimates today. But are we, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Are we talking about the northern patient transfer program in Estimates, where we should be, or are we even debating it here in the House? No, we're not; we're talking about the business transparency act.

I know my friend from Wolseley is coming up to my 'hood, into Lord Roberts tonight to give a presentation that he's done in a number of places across the province on the impact of climate change, what science is telling us about climate change. He's certainly putting the record of the Conservative government out there, but he's more concerned with making sure that people are educated on the issue and understand what scientists are telling, and how important that we begin to address climate change both in terms of mitigation and adaptation right now, today.

That's how pressing, that's how important this issue is. Even as I was watching John Oliver last night, he talked about it and how people in positions of power have their heads in the sand when it comes to this particular issue. Like this government, they're in denial about the impact of climate change going forward.

So my friend from Wolseley wanted to be in Estimates today to talk to the Minister of Sustainable Development (Ms. Squires) about the Pallister government's climate change green scam—plan—green washing thing that they've got going. And—but are we in—are we doing that in Estimates today or are we even debating a profoundly important climate change bill in the House today? Have we seen anything like that in the light of day during the three years that the Pallister government has been in power? No, we haven't. We haven't seen it for three years; we're not seeing it today. We're not in Estimates being able to talk about it today. Instead, we're back to the old drawing board of talking about the business registration act.

\* (15:30)

The other day I said that my sister from Logan wanted to talk to the Minister of Education, who also is the minister for immigration, about immigration. And as I said, she wanted to talk about the head tax, that deplorable concept that the Pallister government in the 21st century has imported from the late 18th, early 19th century, put a head tax on people coming in to this province at 500 bucks a shot that—which has raised about \$5 million. And my sister from Logan got up one day in question period, and she said to the Minister of Education and immigration, well, you say you've spent \$3 million. Where's the other \$2 million? Was there an answer? No, there wasn't, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So my friend from Logan wanted to be up in Estimates, but the Minister of Education, who doubles as the minister of immigration and he's obviously giving short shrift to both—he can't handle either job, it appears—she wanted to be in Estimates to discuss what happened to the revenue associated with the head tax, that deplorable concept—I'm going to have to wash my mouth out with soap even to have—when I go home just having had to say that term over and over again. It's such a deplorable term. It's such a deplorable concept. It doesn't speak to Canadian or Manitoban values.

My sister from Logan wanted to get up to—in Estimates and talk to the Minister of Education and

immigration about that important subject. But are we in—are we doing that in Estimates today? Are we even doing it in the House today? No, we're not, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're talking about the business transparency act.

My friend from Tyndall Park has a number of critic responsibilities. He certainly wouldn't mind being in Estimates today to talk to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler) about how he's working to address the canola issue in our province. The only thing I've heard for the—from the minister on this particular issue was for him to say, hey, you know what we should do? Let's take a trip to China. But that's all. No answers. No plan. No strategy. Nothing of substance.

And so I know my friend from Tyndall Park, who doubles as our Agriculture critic, wanted to be in Estimates today to talk to the Minister of Agriculture about the canola crisis. But are we doing that today, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Are we doing it in Estimates where we should be? Are we even doing it in the House by addressing a bill on that important issue? No, we're not. What are we talking about instead? The business transparency act.

I know if my friend from Elmwood was here, he'd want to be talking again and again and again about keeping the ER opened at Concordia. He'd also want to be talking about infrastructure. This government has cut virtually half the Infrastructure budget from what it once was when we were in government.

And not only that, the government has tried to cheat the City of Winnipeg out of \$40 million, leaving a sizable—sizable—financial and real pothole for the City of Winnipeg. I know my friend from Elmwood might also even like to talk about the government's infrastructure plan to renew the—or rebuild the Louise Bridge.

But, you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? He's not going to get a chance to do that. He's not going to get a chance to talk to the minister today about infrastructure projects, about infrastructure investment, about investing in this province for now and future generations to make sure that they have the kind of infrastructure, whether it's physical infrastructure of roads and bridges or whether it's a hospital or a school or a child-care centre. He's not going to get that opportunity to talk about that. He's not going to be able to talk about it in Estimates. He's not going to be able to talk to it—about a bill in the House that we're debating.

Because, again, for the umpteenth time, the government is instead putting forward the business transparency act for debate today when, in fact, it does not address any of the critical questions, critical issues, colossal needs facing our neighbourhoods, facing our communities, facing our towns and villages, facing our First Nations, facing Metis people in their communities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're not doing any of that. Instead, we're forced, with almost a proverbial gun at our head, to talk about the business transparency act, an act that would've really, literally taken a couple of minutes to actually get through, if the government had brought more substantive issues to the table. But they haven't, and they continue to fail the people of Manitoba as a result.

Mr. Deputy Speaker—and I know you know this—when austerity is your only agenda, then after the cuts, there's nothing, and I mean nothing, left to talk about with this government. They don't have a plan for building the province of Manitoba. All they're really interested in doing is diddling about, wasting our time when, in fact, New Democrats—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member's time is up.

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan):** I'm surprised and I echo the sentiments of my brothers and sisters of this side of the House, why we are discussing Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act, right now when there are many, many more pressing issues to discuss.

I don't disagree that there are housecleanings to be done, bills to be cleared, bills to go through second, third readings and thereafter, committees. However, there are much more urgent priorities that we should be discussing today.

What are those priorities? My brother, member from Riverview, just mentioned we're so eager to engage the government in Estimates process. We have many questions to ask the ministers, the Premier (Mr. Pallister), on behalf of all Manitobans. We have a duty to fulfill, and that is to hold this government to account. We take that duty seriously. We are committed to getting to the bottom of the issues that are—and problems that are plaguing our varied communities in Manitoba. And what are those issues in our communities? Well, everyone knows, if you're listening to the radio, watching TV news, reading the daily newspapers, peace and order.

I just heard that one of the problems right now is the ever-increasing use of firearms in committing crimes, crimes against persons, life of persons, and to—crimes to commit robbery. And people are using firearms now.

Not too long ago, the weapons being used are, well, knives and crowbars. But now we see the use of firearms. Just, I think, a few weeks ago, our community was saddened to hear of the death of a Filipino 50-something- aged male Filipino who was killed, was shot and eventually he died because the people who did this to him wanted to rob him.

\* (15:40)

And that poor man has family. That person has friends, that person is well-loved by his co-workers, and now they are left to bear the pain and the great loss of losing a family member, a dear friend, all because someone had the bad intention of—well, it's bad enough to rob someone, bad enough to waylay someone, but to kill the person in committing the act of robbery is so—not just disgusting but so abominable, and, of course, we are still not through yet with grieving over the loss of this young 17-year-old boy, should be graduating very soon next month, a 17-year-old boy who was the only male son of Imelda, whom I know very well, who's well-loved in her community.

To this day, the grief of that family and the grief of the boy's many friends are so palpable, so intense, they don't know how they'll get over this, their grief. They are so saddened that this very nice, very loving and quiet boy will die such kind of death in the hands of persons not only made bad by their addictions, but totally made deranged by substance that is now a huge crisis in our province, and that's the meth crisis.

We should be talking about where the departments of Justice, of Families and the likes should put their heads together to solve this crisis and make our communities safe. Imagine if this boy had lived, he would have been a very successful business person. He would have been a very successful baker, because that's his dream, to be a well-known baker, an internationally known chef. Imagine all the opportunities that—and the possibilities that this boy could have seen in his later life, the love that he could have continued to shower on his family, his parents and his friends.

This boy didn't even have a chance to be in a relationship and even have children of her own—his own, just like many of us here, the joy of being with

their—our own children and later in life our very own grandchildren. Because of the meth crisis plaguing the cities today—our city today—that boy has not realized all those joys that many of us are now enjoying.

Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act—well, there will be time to discuss this, but right now there are far more urgent, important issues to tackle. I've just mentioned peace and order, the meth crisis. To this day, we don't know what this government has done with the \$4 million or so they have signed in last December from the federal government with all the fanfare and photo ops. That \$4 million, if put to good use immediately, could have prevented several deaths that have occurred since that signing date, that it could be attributed to the meth crisis.

To this day, we haven't heard from this government what they'll be doing to address the absence of beds that would take in addicts or substance abusers that cannot be accommodated in their homes and cannot be services or helped by community organizations. To this day, we don't know—we have not heard yet from the minister who signed it with—along with the federal minister—what this government will do to make good use of that \$4 million from the federal government.

What else are pressing issues, besides peace and order? Housing. Day after day, we get calls and even visits to our constituency from constituents asking for help to be referred to Manitoba Housing. In the past, we took great pride in being able to talk directly to staff members for Manitoba Housing when we have case work related to Housing.

There was a particular instance, I don't remember the name now of the lady—a constituent. She was residing in one of the Manitoba Housing high-rise buildings and has disability. For some reason, that area of Manitoba Housing she's in is—she felt not very safe in that place. And there were all—from time to time, commotions and flare ups of conflict among residents. And she's a woman and—with disability. And she has—she would have difficulty protecting herself and warding off unwanted attacks if it comes. She has a part-time job and—which requires her to come home quite late in the evening. And with problems with mobility, she felt so unsafe in that place.

It so happened I was doing some door knocking in that building and she related to me her problem. Right away, the following day, my staff made

inquiries with Manitoba Housing. And she has a preferred place and she said it's closer to her work. So we connected with the staff in that particular housing place, and it didn't take very long for that request to be granted.

\* (15:50)

And I even has forgotten about it. I thought there are more issues to tackle, more pressing issues to tackle, until one day I received an email from this lady, and she was so grateful that she has now moved to the housing place that she had long wanted to be. And she's—she felt safe and very happy to be there.

And I thought, oh, so, it was not that easy to grant this lady's—this constituent's request; just a phone call away was what it all needed. And in this kind of job, we felt fulfilled. We felt encouraged. That little action we did—which is part of our work, anyway, that's what we signed up for—resulted in happiness, security and safety of a constituent.

Those are the kinds of issues that we should be talking today, not Bill 22.

We should be talking about health care. Just the other day, Thursday, my daughter—well, with two young children, there are times when you will have no sleep at all at night. And that Wednesday evening into the morning of Thursday, it was 7 a.m. and the two young kids are still awake. When she woke up or stood up around 9 a.m. to take care of breakfast, she suddenly felt dizzy and fell down.

And she fell flat on her face and there was a cut here on the lower left lip. And it was huge that—it needed to be stitched. So the poor husband, who's working, had to leave work and go home and take her to Seven Oaks hospital. Too bad, because they were there, say, for five hours and still she couldn't be attended to, because it was just a cut on the lip, but it was bleeding.

And by the time, evening time, it was still bleeding, so she was told to—they phoned Health Links, and she was told to go to Victoria instead, where she could be attended. Well, at Victoria, at around 10 in the evening, by then there was already a scab on the wound. So for them to be able to stitch it—it required seven stitches—they have to remove the scab. So that's not only painful, but unnecessary if she were attended, say, within the next five hours of waiting in the emergency room.

So there could have been a mitigation of pain and she could have been back in his house—in her

house with her children but, instead, the kids had to be with her in the hospital. And, of course, we know the hospital environment—you should not be taking kids there with you. Even adults who are otherwise strong could take in, you know, germs and bacteria that's all over the hospital environment.

So we should be taking—talking about health care instead. We should be asking the Minister of Health, during Estimates, what are really happening in the health-care file under his watch.

But we're now talking about Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act. Rather than Bill 22, let's hear from the Education Minister what's happening; why are—during Estimates we want to ask the Education Minister: Why is a—post-secondary students paying too much tuition these days under this Conservative government?

I was at a U of M alumni event, the one just—similar to the one just held a week ago wherein the university honours distinguished alumni for their community work. I think that was two years ago when the minister of Education then was also at that event. And, at that event, among the many honourees, the several honourees, one of whom was a member of my constituent—senior's moment—I—oh, Sister Lesley is her name—and she heads the house of peace. She was honoured by U of M.

Also honoured at the—on that evening was the husband-and-wife tandem of a well-known architect. Okay, I knew their names a few days ago, but now it eludes me. But the husband and wife architects are well known not just in this province, in Canada, but also internationally. And what struck me during the response, the acceptance of the honour, well, the male awardee—I'll—I might remember his name later on—but he was so thankful that he was in Manitoba. He was educated in the—in public schools of Manitoba because they don't have sufficient means to attend private schools for boys.

And so for his university, he attended the University of Manitoba, and he was particularly grateful and appreciative of the government's support to public education, the government's support to the University of Manitoba where he obtained his undergrad as well as his master's degree.

And I thought at that particular evening there were announcements from this government that cuts to public education, cuts to universities, cuts to colleges were in the offing. And, if the government

of the day then during the time of this student architect were of the same persuasion as the government of today, those funding for public education, for university education, would have been reduced, would have been missing. But it was—they were funded well then. And I remember for 10 straight years in recent memory, the government of the day, our government, then, even froze tuition fee increases.

\*(16:00)

So many students were able to obtain higher education, enrol—were able to enrol in colleges, universities and were able to take advantage of the tuition freeze and obtain their degrees and certificates, which to this day are helping them earn income, not just for themselves but for their families, and thus can be a positive contributor to the economy of the province.

Now we're taking precious time debating—discussing Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act, when we could be talking and engaging ministers of the Crown to find out what is happening not just to higher education—post-secondary education—but what is happening in the file for adult education—support for adult education.

I've had the privilege of visiting and talking to staff, administrators of the various adult education centres in Manitoba. I think I've visited all of them except for one or two. And, in those visits, it was so heartening to meet the administrators and students of adult eds everywhere. I've also attended many adult ed graduations. And one—and many of the grads really left an indelible impression in me. But one was particularly strong, and to this day I remember her, and I could still visualize her.

She was a—she graduated from adult ed and she did—she had many problems early on in life. She became an unwed mother. She had to raise, oh, several children all by herself, and so she wasn't able to finish high school, but because of adult ed, she finished high school. And after finishing her high school from the adult education centre, she was able to obtain a government job and—in one of the departments. I forget now the department.

And she said at that graduation she was the first in her family to finish high school. And that was a huge accomplishment in their family. And she brought so much joy and pride in her community. And she said since she grew up, maybe from the time

she was born to the time she was raising her kids, she was on social assistance. She had no other way of life but to rely on social assistance.

But, upon finishing her high school from the adult education, she was able to obtain a job from the—with the government of Manitoba. It was paying decently, a good pay, not very huge, but a good pay—enough to cover the daily needs of herself and her children. And for the first time, she was off welfare. And she said she felt so proudly. She felt so happily that it's possible to be off welfare. And she wished many, many more people who are on welfare will be able to be self-sufficient like herself.

And so she was a poster child for adult education because it changed her life; it changed her community, and it gave dignity to her personhood.

So these are the topics, though these are the issues that we should be talking today, not Bill 22. The issues that are relevant, the issues that are pressing, that are urgent, that could make a difference that will spell life, death, and success to many, many Manitobans who would otherwise find despair, who would otherwise be confined to hopelessness, who would otherwise be without opportunities to improve themselves.

We should be talking about issues that will improve—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member's time is up.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Thank you for that slow clap, to the members of the opposition.

I think, in principle, this is—this bill has good intentions. One of the major challenges facing governments across Canada and in governments around the world has been a lack of beneficial ownership legislation, and because of that, it has made Canada a home to what's called snow-washing, as well as an international tax haven.

In fact, if you look at the lists of countries that are deemed as participating in co-operating with the OECD, The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Canada is not at the top—is not—doesn't sort of get one of the best ratings at all. In fact, it's in the middling for its failing to participate, and it's because of the fact that it's actually too hard to find out who owns companies, it's too easy to register a company without letting anybody know who owns it, and this has very serious

economic implications because it means not just that people are able to move funds to Canada and to Manitoba and not pay taxes on them, but also that other jurisdictions are basically unwilling to participate and unwilling to improve their laws around this because Canada doesn't—because Canada and other countries have essentially decided to participate and compete with international tax havens.

There's an excellent book recently released by a publisher—Fernwood Publishing. I believe it is, here in Winnipeg, called *Legalizing Theft*, by Alain Deneault, translated from the French, which talks about the many challenges and if—this is an incredibly important issue because if we just made sure that people paid the taxes they owed, we actually wouldn't have any deficits, we wouldn't have to deal with cuts, we wouldn't have to deal with austerity.

And they termed that—the tax havens are kind of an old-fashioned term. Really what they should be called is accommodating jurisdictions because they really are lawless. They allow people to register businesses without saying who owns it; businesses—you have a whole series of sort of a Russian nesting doll of businesses, of businesses owning businesses, and although it's very difficult to see what very high-income people in Canada make, at the very, very top of the range you actually have people who own a whole series of what are considered to be small other—small businesses, but they're not actually small businesses.

They are Canadian privately owned corporations which may have no employees; they may have no address. They essentially are a way for people to either reduce taxes by claiming personal income as corporate income, or income sprinkling, or to avoid taxes altogether.

And there is actually a gender lens on this because one of the ways in which this happens is that when marriages break down, you'll have cases where lawyers are helping husbands hide assets overseas or in tax havens in ways that essentially deprive women and spouses of the assets to which they have a right during marital breakdown.

\* (16:10)

And there have been a number of stories that have come out about this. They are very major. Of course, they're issues like the Panama Papers, but it is—again, it's important to realize that there are



all sorts of ways in which major companies end up underpaying or avoiding taxes, and this bill doesn't adequately address it because it doesn't actually have an open registry. What we actually—one of the things we require and that Canadians of tax—for tax fairness have called on, they've called for a federal registry for—and—that is open, that shows beneficial ownership.

And there are a couple of ways in which this bill is problematic. One is that it's not open, is that you actually have to know that a corporation exists, and you have to sort of go knocking on their door in order to find out what their registry of ownership is.

The other is that the percentage of what is determined to be a significant percentage of ownership has been—it's been increased to 25 per cent from 10 per cent. And there is support across the political spectrum for these changes. Canadians for Tax Fairness have been long-time advocates because in—because tax avoidance, which is legal, and tax evasion, both have an incredible impact not just on the economy as well as on government revenues. For example, one might think that when you consider different places that are a source or a—that are destinations for Canadian foreign investment, where do Canadian companies put their investments? The No. 1 place is China; the second place is Barbados. And the amount of money, the billions and billions of dollars that are flowing to Barbados, are an order of magnitude greater than the actual GDP in Barbados.

And I'll just read from what Canadians for Tax Fairness had to say: Tougher laws and greater 'transparency' are what's—transparency are what needed—are what's needed to fix Canada's money laundering program. It said why we fail to catch money launderers 99 per cent of the time. The report by the C.D. Howe Institute, again, not a—essentially, they're a market-based website—sorry—group, estimates 100 to 130 billion dollars in dirty funds are laundered in Canada every year, but regulators and law enforcement have a hard time clamping down on this criminal activity due to a lack of information and weak transparency laws.

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

The report recommends the federal government create an open registry of beneficial owners and offer solutions to privacy concerns such as dividing the registry into public and confidential information. It was authored by the—Kevin Comeau, a member of the beneficial ownership working group, that C for

TF has organized, Canadians for Tax Fairness. And it comes on the heels of another study released this week by the US-based FACT Coalition that underscores the financial and human risks of anonymous ownership in the US—is that anonymous companies end up trading in illicit goods. It said some of the scariest examples include counterfeit medicines to treat breast cancer, knock-off parts to the Pentagon that cost the military tens of thousands of dollars, and the coalition urges government to get on board the global trend towards greater transparency. It says that Canada needs to do it as well, but it's important that we do it correctly.

The advocacy group Global Witness recently released an analysis of the UK's new public registry and found several flaws in the system that have allowed money launderers to use companies with no beneficial owner listed. The report makes recommendations to improve the registry such as giving government power to verify information it receives as well as stronger enforcement and sanctions against those that break the rules.

Earlier this year, BC announced it would create an open registry to curb money laundering activities, and the former RCMP deputy commissioner this week released a report that found that \$5.6 billion—with a B—\$5.6 billion of illicit money travelled through BC real estate transactions alone last year. BC's finance minister, Carole James, hinted that some other Canadian provinces are also considering an open registry and a Globe editorial this week endorsed our call for a federal beneficial ownership registry. And, again, unfortunately, this is not what this bill contemplates. Essentially, it requires the listing of beneficial registry—beneficial owners without actually making it open, which is absolutely essential.

And this is also significant because of the very large numbers of, again, of what are known as Canadian private corporations that are essentially shell corporations that are used for the avoidance of taxes. They don't carry on business. They don't invest to create capital. They don't invest to create value. They're not doing anything productive for the economy. They exist for one purpose only, which is to reduce the taxes of the owners. And there are all sorts of ways in which this is unfair. One is which that the only people who can afford these tax avoidance measures—and many of them, they're legal—but the only people can actually afford these measures are people who are making very large amounts of money.

The other is that when these people avoid taxes, it effectively means that it shifts the burden to people who can't access those measures with the result that that kind of tax avoidance, which we've seen across Canada and across—and in—including in Manitoba—leaves a heavier burden for those people who are basically following the rules and doing what they can, including—actually including bona fide small businesses and, of course, individuals who are paying through their taxes and paying more through taxes in terms of income.

The other concern is that we don't know whether we—I—we don't know how this is going to be improved or whether there is—if the government is contemplating this. There are other areas, like trusts, where people are—which are being covered by the federal government which aren't covered by this. And that's the great frustration.

The one thing I also wanted to add, actually, was that, as I mentioned, it isn't just that governments are—will lose billions and billions of dollars every year in terms of lost revenue, but that the economy loses it as well because this money, the capital is flowing elsewhere to sit where it doesn't do anything as opposed to flowing back into the Canadian economy where it might actually be used for productive uses.

And this is one of the great challenges. I'd mentioned earlier today that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) had offered \$1.7 billion to Amazon, to Jeff Bezos, the richest man in the world, in an effort to try to lure their headquarters here—their second headquarters here because their first headquarters are actually located in a tax haven in Europe. And this has been extremely common and a huge challenge for these big multinational corporations, whether it's Google, Apple and others who have essentially hid money offshore. And, again, as Alain Deneault said, the result is that countries like Canada, and to some extent the US and others and the UK, have actually started to try to compete with so-called accommodating states which are effectively lawless states where the normal rules of business and tax simply don't apply.

And, at a time when we have growing inequality, where it's getting worse and worse, where the total number of financial assets and assets around the world are held by a smaller and smaller number of people, this is a—this has massive implications because it affects government's abilities to invest in education, invest in health care and invest in

infrastructure, essentially because corporations have been able to shirk their responsibility and hide in ways that are, to say the least, socially non-productive, but that they're a real—they're actually a hazard. They undermine democracy. They actually undermine the rule of law in ways that are profoundly disturbing.

And there are even environmental components to this as well because many of the companies, as they've—the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists looked into the companies that have hid literally trillions of dollars offshore and found that many of them do so—is that their embrace of sort of shady accounting practices is also reflected in shady business practices, that many of them are—tend to be environmental scofflaws as well, that they have no interest in following any of the rules anywhere. They don't—they're not interested in following tax laws. They're not interested in following civil laws, nor are they interested in following environmental laws. So these companies that are reaping huge amounts of money are also engaged in acts of widespread environmental devastation.

So part of this—the challenge is that we live in a so-called globalized economy, but we have yet to come to grips with having any kind of global law and order. In fact, that has not been the case at all, and, as a result, we have competition between jurisdictions to see who can undercut the other on everything from regulations, taxes, labour laws, all of which unfortunately are practices that this government has been doing. The idea of being most improved has really been the idea that this is a race to the bottom. And, frankly, a race to the bottom is not one that anybody ever wants to win, Madam Speaker.

And when we consider the challenges, the—there have been efforts in many ways to reduce corporate taxes and reduce small-business taxes. The promise has always been that this will result in greater growth in—but next year, of course, we're looking at a very serious economic situation with this government because they've essentially pulled back hundreds of millions and even billions of dollars from investing into this—in the provincial economy, hundreds of millions of dollars that could put people to work, hundreds of millions of dollars that could be helping educate people, building infrastructure, caring for people and investing for now and investing—building something for the future so we can actually pay off the debt that this government has been racking up.

\* (16:20)

But that's not what's been happening. They've kept on increasing the debt. They've kept on borrowing while not spending, while refusing to invest. And, frankly, there's a saying, if you reap—we will reap what we sow, and this government has not been sowing anything and, frankly, that's what we're going to reap because next year we're looking at a very serious potential economic downturn of the worst growth in 20 years.

And the rationale for all of this has frankly been that there is not enough revenue, that we have a large deficit that needs to be slain. And what we really need is to have measures. It doesn't even necessarily mean—have to mean increases in taxes. We just simply have to collect the taxes that are not being collected, collect the taxes which people owe and to close many of the loopholes and be more—so that people can't hide their wealth, they can't hide their incomes. And that makes a huge difference to the bottom line of the federal government; it makes a huge difference to the bottom line of the provincial government.

And that we are—because we have been choosing to try to compete on the basis of being an accommodating jurisdiction, that has serious negative implications. It's also true in places like Ireland. There have been a whole series of—where Apple has had an office for years, but they haven't—they actually don't have anybody who works there, but they are given huge tax breaks for it. I think—I believe Apple has unpaid taxes in the tens of billions, Google has unpaid taxes in the tens of billions that are just sitting offshore as dead money. And it's also the case with many Canadian corporations who are shoving money offshore, including actually Canadian banks.

And I can—the frustration here is that we're asking Manitobans—or, this government certainly has been asking Manitobans to make all sorts of sacrifices, to say that it's all hands on deck. It certainly hasn't been all hands on deck because there are some very different ways in which different constituencies in this province have been treated. But the fact is that we should be getting tough—much tougher on collections, on scofflaws and on tax avoidance and tax evasion. And while this is supposed to be a step in the right direction, it doesn't go nearly far enough.

Ultimately, we have to make sure that businesses and corporations are making the contributions they should be paying. The—again, Canadians for Tax

Fairness has—and their US counterpart—have pointed out that there are large corporations in Canada who pay significantly less as a percentage of their income tax as the average Canadian. You might have major corporations who are only paying 3 per cent or 4 per cent of their entire income because they've been able to shift profits overseas.

And one of the challenges here too, is that there is—there are huge financial flows between tax havens—not just in the Caribbean, but elsewhere—that have resulted—that are, again—they're creating—they're—all they're doing is—they're not creating anything productive. They're not creating anything lasting. It is really just a storehouse for people's sometimes ill-gotten gains or just people who are trying to avoid paying their fair share of taxes.

And this is—and the further consequence of this is actually—which is tragic, is that the housing market in Canada has been used for this purpose, as well. There is a website called Better Dwelling, which talked about the fact that there are huge numbers of empty condominiums, and there are houses in Vancouver where people would—are paying two and three million dollars per house. Nobody can actually afford to live there because effectively, as they put it, the city has ceased to be a place where you can live. It is, in effect, a safety—it is a bank with safety deposit house—boxes. And those apartments and those condos are not for living, they're just for people to store their money in.

And that has a series of tragic consequences. One is that it means that people who do need a place to live in places like—whether it's Toronto or Vancouver or anyplace else in—across Canada, that this money laundering is inflating something that is a necessity of life, that people have—absolutely need to have shelter. They need to have a roof over their head, but they are not able to afford it because of these large flows of international—of money that's being laundered.

The other aspect of it is that it actually ends up putting the entire economy—it can put the broader economy at risk because it actually makes it impossible for workers to live, to be able to make enough money to live. It makes it impossible for businesses to be able to carry on, because they can't afford to pay the rent.

And these are the consequences of policies that have encouraged, sort of, untrammelled speculation in assets and have turned a blind eye to money laundering and to tax evasion and tax avoidance in

ways that ultimately have—are—in the long run, are absolutely detrimental to our economy, to our society.

And so I wish I could support this bill. Unfortunately, it doesn't go anywhere near far enough. *[interjection]* I am winding down, I am winding down. I am going to be—yes, I'm slowly winding down. I could even—I could wind down quickly if you like to, but I just want to say this is a—this is baby steps when we need a great leap forward.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Here to present some comments on the bill the government's chosen to debate today. It's always a little bit of a roll of the dice to figure out when the Pallister government is going to roll out its real legislative agenda.

Last week, the item that was the most important that they could come up with that they felt Manitobans cared the most about was relating to the capital budgets two years from now; not even the current fiscal year that we're in, not even the current budget we're supposed to be debating in Estimates, but next year's discussion of capital dollars.

And then, today, the most exciting piece of legislation that the government can come up with for us to debate—and bear with me, all of you having to read this later on, or transcribe it by the hard-working staff in Hansard—Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act. Now, that's—that'll get your heart racing.

And the sad thing about this, Madam Speaker, is there are some important updates in here. This bill is mostly just bringing Manitoba law into compliance with changes that have already been enacted by the federal government, with which I have no major issue.

But, even in a rather mundane, straightforward piece of legislation like this, the Pallister government cannot resist the opportunity to cut more services to Manitobans.

And the reason why I start with this point, Madam Speaker, is it is yet another example of the fundamental betrayal, by the Pallister government, of, really, the only promise that they made to Manitobans in the last election: namely, that there would be no cuts to services and there would be no layoffs.

And yet here, again, right in the explanatory note of the bill itself—this—these explanatory notes, of

course, are crafted by Leg. Counsel to summarize, in plain English, what it is that the law itself is proposing to do. And it says right here: the registrar for co-operatives is no longer required to act as an adviser to co-operatives or provide model forms of articles and by-laws to co-operatives.

That is a really important service, Madam Speaker. I can say this with some authority because I am very proud to remind the House that several brand-new co-ops were created in my constituency of Wolseley when we were in office, and that is no small undertaking.

For a co-operative effort to manage to bring the associated people with the talent and the time and the energy and the resources to set up a brand-new enterprise to try and address a fundamental challenge that they have identified in their community, it is a highly commendable act, and one that is fraught with no small number of hoops to go through.

\* (16:30)

And both of these organizations have benefitted enormously from being able to talk to members of the civil service, talk to the staff that work in the co-operatives branch of the provincial government and be able to get advice on how best to proceed on a number of different points, how to access something as simple as sample bylaws from another co-op or generic bylaws for all co-ops that then a new group of people could use to decide what it is that they want to have in their own bylaws.

This law specifically says those services are no longer going to be available, and it's just a slap in the face to anyone who wants to establish and participate in the co-operative side of our competitive economy and we have huge success stories covering all communities in our province to show the valuable role that co-ops play, and the Pallister government here is undermining them.

And the two co-ops in my constituency that I refer to are both housing co-ops. The first was the Greenheart Housing Co-op, located on Sherbrook Street, and that was the first housing co-op to be built in Manitoba in, at the time, a quarter century.

There had been a real boom in building affordable housing and social housing back in the 1980s and then federal government policies changed, provincial government priorities at the time in the 1990s changed and all that pretty much ground to a halt, and so this was the first housing co-op to be established in Manitoba in decades, and all that

institutional knowledge was stored but pretty difficult to access if you do not authorize and, in fact, you directly say in legislation that the people who keep track of that institutional knowledge are now no longer required to share it.

So would that co-operative, which now I'm happy to say means that two dozen families or individuals who would have otherwise been in a very different housing situation, they now have a safe and affordable community-based home that they never would have had before.

And the second housing co-op that I'm very proud to have played a big role in helping along is, of course, the Old Grace Housing Co-op located at the corner Preston and Arlington.

I believe construction is winding down, if not 100 per cent complete now, but this was an incredible undertaking, much larger than Greenheart. Greenheart, as I mentioned, was a few dozen units. Old Grace, when all is said and done, will be around 60 units of varying sizes and of varying designs to accommodate the enormous diversity of the people who live there, and the different target communities and audiences that this very well-meaning group of people wanted to help serve.

How easy would it have been for them to accomplish what they accomplished if they hadn't even been able to get basic information from the co-op's branch in the provincial government and, more importantly, given the intense housing crisis that our province is stuck in, how difficult is it going to be for existing co-ops to be able to get the advice that they've come to rely upon and how impossible, perhaps, is it going to be for anyone who wants to set up a new housing co-op or any type of co-op if the provincial government, in bringing forward a mundane piece of legislation, cannot resist the opportunity to whittle away at the public services that the public has every right to demand from them, especially when a promise was specifically made by a government that they would not be cutting these types of services.

It's—to put it in business terms, Madam Speaker, this is classic bait and switch. You advertise a product or a service which you actually don't have any intention of living up to, just to get people into your store, and then try and switch them off to something else. That is exactly what the Pallister government has done from day one, and this is just another example of that.

And, to look at the history of co-ops in Manitoba, to look even around currently, we have so many incredible success stories. And it's not even so much that the Pallister government wants to weaken the advice that's available; they're after—they're actually attacking existing co-ops, some of our largest and most successful local co-ops, with a financial regulatory change assigned to credit unions.

Credit unions in Manitoba are stronger here than in most other provinces in the country, and they offer a wonderful alternative to the traditional banks. And you can only imagine what our local financial sector might be like if we did not have co-ops in the form of credit unions to be able to go to as well, for those of us that choose to do so. And, really, why wouldn't we want to have that option in our community?

I mean, I have the honour of visiting a number of classes around the city and the province to meet with students and teachers or professors at universities, and one of the questions I like to ask when we talk about citizens' power is: How many of you have a bank account? You know, and every hand in the room will go up. How many of you have a credit union account? About half the hands will go up. And then I'll ask, what's the difference? None of the hands will go up because people don't necessarily know.

But, when you belong to a credit union, you actually own a portion of the business and you have every right as a citizen to show up at the credit union's AGM and vote on the resolutions that will be brought forward, to vote for the people you want on the board, who are best going to represent what you would like to see the credit union do. You can bring forward motions and resolutions at the AGM, saying—for instance, let's say we want to have reduced user fees for young people who are just starting out, or maybe a lower interest rate on a student loan or something. You can bring forward those ideas in a democratic forum when you actually belong to the credit union.

It doesn't matter—[interjection]—yes. Doesn't matter if you have \$1 in your chequing account or if you have \$1 million; you get one vote. Imagine trying that democracy at the shareholders' meeting at any of the banks. You won't even be allowed to get in the room. They'd just chuck you out before you even get there.

So credit unions provide a far more democratic and participatory and empowering model of doing business. And yet here we have the Pallister government actively siding with the banks and

attacking the credit unions. And what have they done? They have decided to require credit unions to pay an additional \$15 million a year in provincial corporate income tax. I'm going to say that again, \$15 million more.

Where was that in the news releases from the provincial Conservative party when they went door to door during the last election? What—did they ask everyone they spoke to, are you a credit union member, because you know what, we're going to hammer your credit union? We're going to hammer all the credit unions from Steinbach to Crosstown to Assiniboine and everywhere else with a new \$15-million charge.

And they'll—there's no justification for this if you're actually interested in supporting a co-operative economy. Credit unions are going to have to go from paying 1 per cent tax on their net earnings to 12 per cent. That is a massive hit. Who's going to have to absorb that? Well, ultimately, that's going to come down to the people who are members of a credit union and people who work for the credit union.

So you cannot tell me that this piece of legislation here is just an isolated incident, that this is just a one-off where the Conservatives are going after the sharing economy, the co-operative economy in our province. This is part of a systemic effort by the Pallister government to make life much more difficult.

I honestly have to think a government behaving like this would be just happy as can be if all the credit unions disappeared and we only had banks left, because that really is where they're headed. And you need only quote from the CEO of Credit Union Central of Manitoba, a gentleman by name of Garth Manness. I've had the pleasure of meeting on multiple occasions. He said this announcement from the government came as a complete shock, and he made a couple of really good points which I want to read into the record.

\*(16:40)

He said in a Free Press article—Winnipeg Free Press article from March 14th, so just a little more than a year ago, March 14th of 2018—he said, quote: Our primary competitors, the banks, have access to capital markets and have many more vehicles in order to build their capital base. But the co-op financial institutions are structured differently than corporate financial institutions. The only way for

credit unions to build equity is primarily through building retained earnings, end of quote.

And he went on to say, again, that tax at—quote, taxing away our income just makes it that much more difficult for us to meet the targets that government is setting.

So on the one hand, government's raising the bar for credit unions and financial institutions, and at the same time, for credit unions only, they're making it more difficult for credit unions to be able to do that. And so attacking co-operatives in general, like credit unions, means, again, these institutions are not going to have the support from this government that they had while the NDP was in office and that people who want to establish or—establish new financial institutions like this or new co-operatives are not going to have all the resources that they should have had.

And credit unions, I will point out, exist in rural Manitoba where there's Conservative MLAs, the same as they exist everywhere else. There's credit unions all over the place, and it'll be very, very interesting to see if the credit union membership decides that this type of behaviour from the government deserves to be supported at the ballot box.

And this sort of lack of transparency, lack of consistency between what the government has said that they were going to do—no cuts and no layoffs—and what they're also doing—what they're actually doing—is very much a theme of this provincial government. I mean, for goodness' sakes, they can't even figure out what to do with this enormous problem they have on their hands, represented visually perhaps no better than any drive down streets in northeast Winnipeg these days, where yellow signs on pretty much every yard and window are calling on this government to keep the ERs open at Concordia.

And, lo and behold, the government has just found itself in such a pickle that after promising no cuts and no layoffs and then after shutting down the urgent-care centre in my constituency of Wolseley, shutting down the ER in the south Winnipeg hospital, at Victoria, and now announcing over and over again that Concordia and Seven Oaks were next, lo and behold, the general public has told them in no uncertain terms they don't approve of this government's behaviour. So what do they do? They got to fly in a consultant to hang out for a weekend and pay him a hundred grand to come up with the

observation that Manitobans are getting older. And, oh, we didn't know that somehow when the original recommendations were made.

You know you really have a problem with transparency when the best argument you can come up with is that people are somehow aging more than one year at a time in Manitoba. Granted, you know, it's the amount of time we spend in this Chamber, some of the answers we get back from the government—and the Premier (Mr. Pallister), in particular—during question period, that will age you. That's more of a mental health issue, though, rather than an actual physical aging, might be the distinction to make.

But people are just laughing at this government's lame excuses. Everyone knows that they don't care about health care. Everyone knows that this is all part of an agenda to privatize the public service that Canadians feel the strongest about. And they're just watching this government twist in the wind, trying to continue to do what it said it would not do and all the while try to pull the wool over Manitobans' eyes that cuts and ER closures are somehow justified because we're getting older. Or, oh, we're going to have to wait a little bit because people are getting older. Nobody buys it and nor should they.

This is not the only place where transparency on the part of the government has been found lacking. Where was the transparency to anyone attending a post-secondary institution in Manitoba or working at a post-secondary institution? Where was the promise that tuition was going to go up? Where was the commitment to cut the graduation tax credit by this government?

They did all those things. But they didn't tell anybody about it at the time. They said no cuts and no layoffs. And then, lo and behold, when the faculty association, Madam Speaker, at the University of Manitoba, when the faculty association is entered into collective bargaining discussions with their employer, the University of Manitoba administration, they're making progress. They're putting some numbers down.

What does the Premier do? In an act of transparency, he secretly sends a missive to the University of Manitoba saying, I don't like the numbers you guys have put down. You have to comply with these numbers instead, and don't tell anybody that that I told you to do it.

And how did that turn out, Madam Speaker? Oh, for all these Tories who want to talk about saving money—blah, blah, blah—that decision cost the government millions of dollars in a settlement that they had to pay to the faculty association at the University of Manitoba, because lo and behold, the Premier broke the law in Manitoba and was held accountable at the Manitoba Labour Board accordingly.

Where is the transparency in all of that? And they still have the temerity to put the word transparency into a piece of legislation that they have brought forward here today.

You want to talk transparency? Let's talk about climate change. Oh, my goodness. For a government to still have even a shred of integrity when it claims to have anything resembling a proper plan for climate change, let's explore the transparency of that claim.

Well, this government said they had a plan: now turns out it was a complete scam. The measurement tool that they proposed to use for climate change is completely made up. Nobody else in the world uses that. It's so bad that they had to admit they're not actually going to be counting emissions in Manitoba under their plan.

They only want to count things that they think have reduced emissions. They're going to ignore all the things that've increased emissions over time.

And, on top of that, if you, Madam Speaker, or any other hard-working Manitoba, out of your own initiative, if you retrofitted your house, or maybe you switched to a cleaner-burning vehicle and you reduced emissions by one ton in year 1 of this government's five-year plans, they would count that as a five-ton reduction five years later.

Nobody in the world, Madam Speaker, has the audacity to try and portray the crisis in climate change with such ridiculous accounting methods, but that's what this government has done.

And even with all of those hidden gems which they did not announce, even despite the fact that the Premier is talking about how his plan was better than the federal one, even though he knew full well that it wasn't, even though he knew his government had commissioned two economic models asking that exact question, they only released one of the models, and even that model showed that increasing carbon pricing, over time, under the federal proposal,

would've done more to reduce emissions than this government's would.

And let me be clear, neither government's proposals are acceptable or sufficient, Madam Speaker, but just to prove the point, yet again, that what this Premier (Mr. Pallister) says and what he's actually doing are two completely different things. Despite all of the spin, all the effort that they've spent, all the green paint they've slopped on their policy announcements, what happened to carbon emissions in Manitoba?

In just the first full year of the Pallister government being in office, which was 2017—we just got the numbers for that year, 16 months after that calendar year ended, but what did we learn? In 2017, Manitoba's emissions went up by 700,000 metric tons.

We had never emitted more than 21 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent in Manitoba since records were begun in 1990. And now the Pallister government, in one year, has blown past that barrier and is closing in on the next one in just their first year in office.

So you want to talk about transparency on that front? Oh, my goodness, I don't know how they look themselves in the mirror and actually believe that what they are doing has even a shred of transparency attached to it.

The Premier himself is not exactly setting a very robust example for his ministers or for his backbenchers on what it means to be transparent. And this is all on the public record, Madam Speaker. I'm not revealing anything new here, but all of us, as MLAs, are required by law to fill out in complete—in a complete fashion, our conflict of interest forms.

And that means, under conflict of interest law, you have to identify every single asset that you have. If you have a shell company or if you have a property that you own or if your immediate spouse or family members own those types of things, that's all got to be documented and all of those documents are made available to the public.

\* (16:50)

And this legislation exists for very good reason. We do not want a scenario, Madam Speaker, where anybody, whatever their position is, whatever their political party is, we don't want a situation where someone in a position of decision-making authority

is benefitting themselves through the decisions that they're making. That's what we have to avoid. And the person put in that situation should, if they have integrity, want to be avoiding it.

Well, the Premier, for years, refused, refused, Madam Speaker, to file complete and sufficient conflict of interest information on his form. He just said he didn't have to, that he was above that somehow. And he still, even after he got caught in—ironically enough, the Premier's going to hate this fact, but it's on the public record—the only reason he got caught was because of a newspaper—and it seems the Premier hates newspapers generally—but it was a newspaper in Costa Rica. And he also doesn't like people talking about Costa Rica.

But, lo and behold, it was a newspaper in Costa Rica which identified that our Premier owned two additional companies which he had never disclosed on any of his conflict of interest information. And I tip my hat to my colleague, the MLA for Minto, who did some very good research and digging there to bring a lot of this information to light. I thank my colleague for 'Emwood'—Elmwood—has helped out on that front as well, as, indeed, have we all on our team.

But it's very important that the public know that what the Premier is asking of everyone else, what he is expecting of everyone else, is not something that he personally is doing or believes in doing.

And, just to close off, let's look at this ridiculous scenario where he now feels that he can ignore the law and call an election earlier than what the law says should happen. It's very clear. The law on the books says, the next provincial election in Manitoba will be—does it say May of 2019? Does it say June or July of 2019? No, Madam Speaker. It doesn't even say 2019 at all. The law says October of 2020. That's when Manitobans should go to the polls.

But for some reason this Premier feels, again, that he doesn't have to be transparent, that he doesn't have to be accountable, and he can just make up whatever rule he wants and try to get away with it. It would be an illegal act to call an early election and to watch him twist in the wind on, oh, I'll give everyone advance notice if we go early, and now he's saying, oh, there's been lots of talk about it; I don't have to provide advance notice. It's just behaviour that should not be condoned or found acceptable by anybody.



Nobody should be impressed when someone walks into the sandbox and says, I don't have to pay attention to the rules that are usually here; I'm going to do whatever I want, and I don't care what the impacts are on any of you. And that applies both to people on his own team, people in other political parties and to the Manitoba public as a whole, because if he's willing to do this, time and time again, if he's willing to ignore accountability and ignore transparency and break his word over and over and over again, it's just a matter of time before his behaviour will have an impact on every single Manitoban, if, indeed, it hasn't already.

Right now students in universities are feeling it. Kids and parents needing child care are feeling it. Kids and parents and teachers and EAs in the school system are feeling it. Anyone—anyone—having any interaction with the health-care system, whether they are a doctor or a nurse or a technician or support staff, or, heaven forbid, a patient or family member supporting patient, every single one of those people have been negatively impacted by the bait and switch tactics of the Pallister government.

And, if you want change, the public is going to have to demand it, and I will certainly be there encouraging them to do so with the days that I have left in this role.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I appreciate you listening to my comments on Bill 22. Suffice to say, I do not see any particular reason why, with all of the enormous issues that we have in this province, the government has chosen this of all things for us to debate today. We are supposed to be, at some point, getting into Estimates, where, again, a government has to be somewhat transparent, they have to be somewhat accountable because we, as the opposition party, get to go through each budget line—each line item in the budget under each department—and ask questions about it.

This government does not like questions. They do not like anyone knowing what they're actually up to, and that's the reason why they're hiding. That's the reason why we continue to have these types of bills brought forward rather than anything that might address any of the issues that are really on Manitoba's minds these days, and I very much hope and predict that Manitobans send a very strong message the most effective way possible in the next election.

Thank you very much.

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** Once again, it's an honour to stand and to put a few words to Bill 22, The Business Registration, Supervision and Ownership Transparency Act.

And, like my colleague from Wolseley, this has been kind of a rather strange session, whereas I'm still looking forward to participate in the democratic process called Estimates. With that, I have many, many questions to our ministers in regards to the budget. So, with that, I will continue to participate in debate on this bill.

Madam Speaker, when it comes to ensuring that our local businesses thrive, transparency is incredibly important. We need to be encouraging Manitobans to participate in our local economy and build businesses. We respect ownership transparency by supporting local businesses.

Co-ops contribute to the rich social fabric of the city. For example, I've heard several times about this business, Pollock's Hardware, that has been a staple in our community for nearly 100 years, for example.

Transparency is necessary to improving local organizations. Manitobans deserve to know who owns the business they frequent. People are becoming more conscious about where they spend their money. They want to support organizations that help their local community. And, indeed, co-ops are an essential way to do that.

As nature—as the nature of work in co-ops are—sorry, as the nature of work and jobs are changing, local industry is essential in supporting our economy. Investing in local businesses is vital in—to ensure the sustainability and success of our local economy.

This government has a history of hiding from transparency and accountability, which is why it is ironic that they are bring—forwarding a bill that is focused on ownership transparency. They also have a history of hiding from transparency and accountability.

For example, they continue to hide the truth about the closure of Concordia, Seven Oaks ER from Manitobans. The Premier (Mr. Pallister) has repeatedly misled Manitobans about his communications habits while in Costa Rica, another important issue.

The NDP support more ownership and transparency in our economy. Financial co-operatives such as credit unions offer sustainable finance for local people. They are run by and for

people at a community level, and they offer a safe approach to saving bonds.

And, just to put on record to explain exactly what a co-operative is, let me move forward. A co-operative is an enterprise that is owned and controlled by its members. Like any business, a co-op provides goods or services, but co-ops are governed by a membership where each member has one vote in the co-op's direction and key positions.

Over 400 co-ops provide a range of products and services province-wide, from fitness centres to child-care co-ops, to grocery and to hardware stores. Co-ops in Manitoba are comprised of 800,000 members and hold over \$14 billion in assets.

Why do Manitobans choose co-operatives? Well, Madam Speaker, they choose co-ops because it's to reinvest in their communities, reduce costs and

more effectively meet their individual and community interests.

Why do co-ops benefit Manitoba communities? Co-op co-operatives are formed to meet a local need or priority that is not otherwise being met. They are locally owned and controlled. This means very high accountability to the local community, ensuring that activities are relevant and responsive to local needs.

For example, co-ops often demonstrate concrete action towards environmental and social sustainability. Co-operative—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 26 minutes remaining.

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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Monday, May 13, 2019**

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Altemeyer	1832
Lathlin	1837

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

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