



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



Vol. LXXIX No. 81A - 10 a.m., Tuesday, November 4, 2025

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CORBETT, Shannon	Transcona	NDP
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike, Hon.	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
ROBBINS, Colleen	Spruce Woods	PC
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	Ind.
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

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

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): On House business.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on House Business.

MLA Lamoureux: Could you please canvass the House to see if there is leave for the following:

(1) to allow two report stage amendments, sponsored by myself, to be moved to Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities), despite the bill being listed on the Order Paper under concurrence and third reading and despite the required notice not being provided;

(2) for the House to consider both report stage amendments to Bill 225 consecutively this morning, despite the fact it is the private members' business for the government caucus;

(3) for the House to consider concurrence and third reading of Bill 225 once the question has been put on both amendments; and

(4) at 10:40, the Speaker is to interrupt the debate to put the question on all remaining stages of Bill 225 if they have not been disposed of by then.

The Speaker: Just before I do that, just to remind everyone we are in private members' business.

So is there leave to consider report stage amendments and concurrence and third reading of Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities), as described by the honourable member for Tyndall Park?

Is there leave? [*Agreed*]

REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS—
PUBLIC BILLS**Bill 225—The Public Schools Amendment Act
(Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities)**

The Speaker: So, as agreed to, we will now go to report stage amendments for Bill 225.

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I move, seconded by the member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook),

THAT the title of Bill 225 be amended by striking out "UNIVERSAL SCREENING FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES" and substituting "EARLY READING SCREENING".

The Speaker: The amendment is in.

Motion presented.

MLA Lamoureux: I will keep my remarks very short, as we'd like to see a timely passage of this amendment here this morning.

It is very straightforward. This amendment, we're actually changing the title of the legislation, and this comes from the—what was presented to us at committee from several presenters, how important language is around the title of the legislation, as well as through conversations with many of my colleagues here on the House, on both sides, with support for the amendment.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Further speakers to the motion?

Seeing none, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: So the question before the House is the report stage amendment to Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities).

All those in the House in—is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

The motion is accordingly passed.

MLA Lamoureux: I move, seconded by the member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook),

THAT Bill 225 be amended in Clause 2(2) by replacing the proposed subsection 41(1.0.1) with the following:

Early screening for reading difficulties

41(1.0.1) The appropriate educational programming to be provided by a school board under clause (1)(a.1) must include early reading screening for pupils in kindergarten to Grade IV that means all of the—that meets all of the following requirements:

(a) the screening tool, benchmarks relating to the tool and screening practices must meet the criteria established by the minister;

(b) each pupil must receive two screenings for reading difficulties in at least three of the school years;

(c) the teacher must provide the results of each screening on the next report of the pupil under clause 96(1)(g);

(d) the school board must ensure that a pupil who is identified as having reading difficulties has their progress monitored, receives appropriate programming and, if necessary, is also assessed in accordance with the regulations made under subsection (1.1).

Exception C – individual education plan

41(1.0.2) Despite clause (1.0.1)(b), a pupil who has an individual education plan is not required to receive an early reading screening if under the plan it is not reasonable to expect the pupil to meet or approximate the applicable benchmark related to reading.

The Speaker: There was a small error in what the member said. Is there leave to have the amendment considered as written? *[Agreed]*

THAT Bill 225 be amended in Clause 2(2) by replacing the proposed subsection 41(1.0.1) with the following:

Early screening for reading difficulties

41(1.0.1) The appropriate educational programming to be provided by a school board under clause (1)(a.1) must include early reading screening for pupils in kindergarten to Grade IV that meets all the following requirements:

(a) the screening tool, benchmarks relating to the tool and screening practices must meet the criteria established by the minister;

(b) each pupil must receive two screenings for reading difficulties in at least three of the school years;

(c) the teacher must provide the results of each screening on the next report of the pupil under clause 96(1)(g);

(d) the school board must ensure that a pupil who is identified as having reading difficulties has their progress monitored, receives appropriate programming and, if necessary, is also assessed in accordance with the regulations made under subsection (1.1).

Exception – individual education plan

41(1.0.2) Despite clause (1.0.1)(b), a pupil who has an individual education plan is not required to receive an early reading screening if under the plan it is not reasonable to expect the pupil to meet or approximate the applicable benchmark related to reading.

The Speaker: So it's been moved by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux), seconded by the honourable member for Roblin, that the—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

The Speaker: The second—dispense.

The second amendment be—is in order.

MLA Lamoureux: I rise to speak to the second amendment being brought forward here this morning in the House. Very happy to support the changes to this legislation.

* (10:10)

In summary, the very first amendment talks about the change in language to reading difficulties rather than learning disabilities. This was a result of what many presenters had shared with us at committee, and again, through many conversations here in the House as the bill has progressed this far. It was something that all MLAs felt more comfortable supporting.

The second change is in the language that rather than having the minister approve the specific tool, it now reads: the screening tool benchmarks relating to the tool and screening practices must meet the criteria established by the minister. I believe this is a very helpful amendment and will make the legislation stronger, Honourable Speaker.

The third change is actually extending the original legislation from kindergarten to grade 3.

The amendment extends it from kindergarten to grade 4, ensuring that three of the school years, children are screened twice per school year.

And the last change, Honourable Speaker, was that rather than reporting—ensuring that teachers reported to both parents and guardians within 30 days of the findings, teachers will have until the following report card, and there are three report cards that come out throughout the grades of kindergarten to grade 4. So by the following report card, parents and guardians will be made aware of the findings of the screening.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: If there are no further members wishing to speak, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: The question before the House is the second report stage amendment to Bill 225.

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS— AMENDED PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 225—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities)

The Speaker: Now, as previously agreed, we will now move on to concurrence and third reading of Bill 225.

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I move, seconded by the member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook), that Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities), be—reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

MLA Lamoureux: I'm very, very excited to be able to rise here this morning for a third reading of Bill 225. And I'm excited to be able to share with the House just what this legislation does. I believe every single member in this House is already acquainted with the legislation. We've been debating it now for nearly a year through the legislation itself, through committee, through members' statements, through question period, through debate here in the House. And it truly is just—it's wonderful to see all the parties being able to come together to support this incredibly

important piece of legislation that is going to advance education here in the province of Manitoba.

What this legislation does is it ensures that children from kindergarten to grade 4 are being screened with an evidence-based tool twice per school year for reading difficulties. With the findings of these screenings, Honourable Speaker, the schools will have to act upon it. We will need to ensure that children are individually assessed to ensure that they are being provided with resources to bring them up to speed.

Unfortunately, here in Manitoba, literacy rates are very low; 40 cent of children are meeting literacy standards right now, that's exceptionally low. And these numbers are even lower for Indigenous children here in Manitoba. And it speaks to why this legislation is so, so important. And we've seen it passed in other legislatures across the country, and how by legislating it, it enforces that these changes are made. And this is a testament to children here in the province.

It shows the children here in this province that we, as legislators, we care about them. We want to see them succeed, that they're going to move on from their educational experience on to better things into the world. They will be able to pursue jobs of their choice, jobs of their liking because they are going to be receiving stronger education here in the province of Manitoba, Honourable Speaker.

The legislation also ensures that parents and guardians of children in school receive the information that comes from these screenings. Oftentimes, information gets lost in between things, whether—it can be from, oftentimes, forgetting things to information not being relayed where it should be relayed to. But it's incredibly important that when we have findings of these screenings that are being practised on children here in Manitoba, that we do something with them.

And that's what this legislation does: it ensures that we push through what the findings are, what—even when they're difficult, to ensure that children can, in fact, succeed.

In closing, Honourable Speaker, what I really would like to do is just thank everyone. Over the last year, year and a half, I've met with hundreds of different people from different organizations: many parents, many teachers, even children who have shared their own personal stories about why this legislation is important and how it would have impacted their personal lives.

I want to thank them for their consultation on the legislation, for their presentations at committee. I know some of my colleagues were at committee with me and that was incredibly powerful, the testimony that was shared, even the children who shared their personal experiences with learning difficulties, Honourable Speaker. I'd like to thank legal here in the House for all their work in drafting the legislation and going back and forth, especially over the last 24 hours with these amendments.

I'd like to thank everyone who took part in a press conference a couple of weeks back to make that final push, show this government that—before November 6—why this legislation needed to pass. I believe this press conference had a huge impact on why we are here this morning, Honourable Speaker.

I'd also like to thank all individuals and Manitobans who reached out to your personal MLAs. I know over the last couple of weeks, I've received probably about 50, 60 emails from individuals in Manitoba who aren't constituents of just Tyndall Park, but constituents of other ridings who have reached out to their MLAs, to the Minister of Education and cc'd me on why this legislation needs to pass. I believe that it is the pressure from our constituents that truly allowed for this legislation to move forward.

Lastly, I'd like to thank all of the staff of both the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine), the Opposition House Leader, my staff, as well as the clerks and, again, legal, for having all these last-minute amendments and changes made and ensuring that we could see it passed here this morning.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker, and thank you to all of my colleagues here this morning.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I want to start my comments with respect to Bill 225 by thanking the member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux) for bringing this bill forward.

I think she has managed to do something remarkable here, and that's getting this government to agree to pass a bill that isn't theirs. Because, as we've seen from this government, their pattern is to refuse to work together with other parties on bills.

An Honourable Member: She seconded the bill—my bill.

Mrs. Cook: I hear the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) heckling. Actually, I seconded the amendments today and the passage of this at third reading.

An Honourable Member: Yes, yes—the bill from last year.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cook: Maybe the Minister of Justice wants to get up and speak to the bill; I hope that he does.

I know that we sat through five and a half hours of committee to this bill, sat late into the night and heard from experts and parents and even one very articulate 10-year-old boy with dyslexia. And those presentations spoke to the heartbreak and the difficulty of families that have struggled in Manitoba's education system to learn to read.

And I just want to put on the record today a couple of quotes that we heard that night, because, of course, not everybody can sit at committee. We heard from one presenter, and her name was Ellen Gorter, and her presentation was powerful because she, as an adult and a parent, struggled with dyslexia herself as a child and now also has a child with dyslexia. So I think she knows more than most about what that's like.

* (10:20)

And she said, and this is quoting from Hansard: "I worked harder and harder but reading never came easily. Instead, I carried guilt from teachers, from home and from myself, believing I just wasn't trying hard enough. Growing up undiagnosed throughout my school years, I felt isolated and ashamed. I watched other students read and write effortlessly while I stumbled and hid my confusion."

She goes on further to say: "I've met with countless parents who share similar stories, families working multiple jobs, doing everything they can for their kids, but unable to afford private testing or tutoring. There's a clear pattern. Many come from hard-working, lower income backgrounds, and many of these parents themselves struggle with reading. It makes sense: dyslexia is genetics. But what's heartbreaking is the system that failed us decades ago is still failing children today."

And that's why we need this bill, and it's why access to universal early screening for learning disabilities, for reading difficulties, is so important.

It's actually very timely that we're passing this bill today. Members will know that last week saw the release of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission's report into literacy education, and that report is called, Supporting the Right to Read in Manitoba: The ABCs of a Rights-Based Approach to Teaching Reading.

And the report touches on the importance of early screening.

I'm quoting now from this report, which is publicly available. It says: Early screening helps identify students who may have reading difficulties before issues become entrenched. It involves short, standardized checks done two to three times a year starting in kindergarten. These tools can predict future reading challenges and help teachers intervene early before students fall too far behind. The sooner schools can identify and support struggling readers, the better their chances of success. While screening tools can help identify at-risk readers, they are not the same as diagnostic tests. They highlight who may need help, not why.

Across Manitoba, early screening is used inconsistently. We heard that some school divisions have adopted universal early screening while others have not, and many rely on tools that are not evidence-based screeners. Educators and administrators also hold mixed views about screening. The commission also found there is confusion about what early screening means, how often it should happen and which tools are appropriate. Overall, screening practices in Manitoba appear to vary widely and lack consistency and there also appears to be an inconsistent understanding of what constitutes early screening.

It goes on further to note that successful implementation will require strong professional development. Educators and administrators need more training and guidance to understand what makes a screening tool valid, how to administer it properly and how to use the results to improve instruction and implement effective interventions in order to make a meaningful difference.

So what I'm getting at with this quote is that this is part of the puzzle. What we're doing today is implementing universal early screening in all Manitoba schools, which is a fantastic first step, but it's only a first step, because after we've screened, we need to ensure that appropriate interventions are available to help those students who are highlighted in the screening as needing additional support.

The Manitoba Human Rights Commission touched on the importance of intervention and just the types of different interventions are available. And I was actually very surprised when I started learning more about the way we teach reading in schools and the debate over the way we teach reading, about just how political this is. Some folks have very entrenched

beliefs about reading and are somewhat reluctant to consider the science of reading and moving to a more structure-structured literacy approach from the current balanced literacy approach in schools.

And I just want to thank folks in my own constituency, like Carrie Wood, and she's been here at the Legislature, she presented at committee, along with many others who have taken the time to educate me and so many others about reading and the science of reading and how we teach reading and how it impacts people with dyslexia and other learning difficulties.

And the Manitoba Human Rights Commission touches on this when they say: Survey and consultation feedback highlights a strong desire for interventions based on structured literacy approaches; direct, explicit and systematic instruction and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency and comprehension. Reforming intervention programming in Manitoba to ensure early, consistent and evidence-based support for all students is essential to provide every child with a fair chance of developing strong literacy skills.

So again, while what we're doing today in passing this bill is very important, I think it bears repeating that there's going to be further action required from this government in order to ensure that all Manitoba learners have a good chance of success.

The other reason we need this legislation is that it, first of all, it gives the previous ministerial directive on this topic teeth. Secondly, it mandates that screening results are provided to parents, and with the amendment today it will ensure that those results are provided to parents by their next report card. That part's really critical so that parents are informed, students are informed and can take action appropriately, particularly if appropriate interventions are not yet available in their school.

Again, I just, I want to take a couple of moments to thank not only the member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux) but also Dyslexia Canada, everyone who came out to support this bill, everyone who's doing the work of educating all of us as legislators about this topic who are perhaps not experts in reading education.

I—while I'm pleased to see that we are going to pass this bill today, I was really dismayed at committee when we sat through, you know, five and a half hours of heartbreaking testimony, that the minister came out with a prepared statement at the end of committee and

basically said that they felt that the legislation was redundant.

I'm very glad they've had a change of heart, and I congratulate the member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux) on that. And, with that, I hope that what follows is an investment and approach to reading education that will help all learners, including those with dyslexia in all Manitoba schools.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): I just wanted to put a few brief words on the record, here. I also wanted to say thank you to Ms. Riediger for joining us here today as well. I've had some great conversations with her on this bill and on the work that our minister has done so far.

I also just want to quickly say that, you know, the interpretation from the member from Roblin seems to be a little bit askew, here. What I see is happening here today is that it shows that our government caucus is willing to work with anyone to pass good legislation. Ultimately, what we see here is that the member for Tyndall Park came forward with a collaborative and iterative approach with our House leader. And they were able to put together, I think, some really strong legislation.

And so we are happy to pass this bill today. And I think that what that shows is that when you're willing to work in good faith with each other and come forward in good faith that you can get good things done for Manitobans, because that's what we're doing here, ultimately.

So, you know, the PCs can do what they want in terms of making this a partisan issue, but, ultimately, right now, they are stonewalling important bills that are basically going to make Manitobans safer across the board. And so what I would like to say is, take the same sort of iterative and collaborative approach that the member for Tyndall Park has taken so that we can pass good legislation together.

Thank you so much. We look forward to passing this bill.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Is there will of the House to recognize the clock as 10:40 so we can proceed with the question on Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities)?

The Speaker: Is there leave to see the clock as 10:40 as requested?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

The Speaker: Leave has been denied.

So, if there are no further speakers, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: So the question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 225, as amended.

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

Mr. Johnson: Is there will of the House to call Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities), unanimous?

The Speaker: Is there leave to call the vote on Bill 225 unanimous? *[Agreed]*

The vote is accordingly recorded as being unanimous.

House Business

Mr. Johnson: On House business.

The Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader, on House business.

Mr. Johnson: Honourable Speaker, could you please canvass the House to see if there's leave to 'expediate' consideration of a number of bills as following:

* (10:30)

For the remaining of orders of the day, private members' business this morning, the House shall consider concurrence and third reading of bills 208 and 234, with the question to be put immediately with no debate. Once these questions have been disposed of, the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) or designate can call other business.

(2) At the beginning of orders of the day, government business on Tuesday, November 4, the House will consider the final report stage amendment to Bill 48, with the House not seeing the clock until the question has been put.

(3) At the beginning of orders of the day, government business on Wednesday, November 5, the House will consider second reading of Bill 46, with the Speaker to interrupt debate to put the question at 4:58 p.m. In the event of a recorded vote being requested, the

bells are not to ring for—are to ring for a maximum of five minutes.

At the beginning—(4) At the beginning of orders of the day, private members' business on Thursday, November 6, the House will consider second reading of Bill 222 with no debate and the question put immediately.

(5) Once the question on second reading of Bill 222 has resolved, the House will immediately dissolve into Committee of the Whole to consider clause by clause of bills 203, 222 and 226, with the Chairperson to put all questions necessary to dispose of the bills without debate. The Chairperson is to report back to the House immediately upon the committee concluding to—the business before it.

(6) Once the report of the committee has been received, the House will then immediately consider concurrence and third reading of bills 203, 222 and 226 with the following provisions: members may speak for up to five minutes; debate on each bill shall be limited to 10 minutes total, with the Speaker to put the question after the debate has concluded or no other members wish to speak to the bill; the House will not see the clock as 11 a.m. until the question has been put on all three bills.

(7) At the beginning of orders of the day, government business on Thursday, November 6, the House will consider concurrence and third reading of Bill 48, with the House not to see the clock until all members who wish to speak to the bill have spoken and the Speaker has put the question.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Is there leave for the House to expedite consideration of the bills as described by the Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Johnson)?

Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no.

Leave has been denied.

* * *

MLA David Pankratz (Deputy Government House Leader): On House business, can you please call Bill 234 for third reading from now until 10:50; followed by Bill 208, the Manitoba small-business act, from 10:50 to 11?

The Speaker: It has been announced that we will now go to concurrence and third reading of Bill 234, The Pride Month Act, commemoration of days, weeks, months act amended, until 10:50. We will then go to debate and concurrence on third reading of Bill 208, The Manitoba Small Business Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 234—The Pride Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)

Mr. Tyler Blashko (Lagimodière): I move, seconded by the honourable member for Radisson (MLA Dela Cruz), that Bill 234, The Pride Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended), reported from the Standing Committee on the—Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Blashko: I want to start out by thanking the many people and the organizations that I connected with during the consultation for this bill, Bill 234. Their support and their insights really helped strengthen what we put forward, so I do want to thank Rainbow Resource Centre, Sunshine House, Eastman Pride, Pride Winnipeg, Brandon Pride, The Two-Spirit Michif Local, 2 Spirits in Motion, as well as Bahaghari Pride.

It's a relatively straightforward bill. This bill recognizes June as Pride month. We know Pride is 365 days a year, but communities across the province often gather during the month of June.

Pride is not one thing. It's to recognize historical resilience, the struggles and the victories we've had. It's to build community and to welcome people in and to show appreciation for our trailblazers. It's a protest in the pursuit of justice. It's a manifestation of possibilities, and for those in precarious or unsafe circumstances, it can be a beacon of hope.

The opposition PC Party will undoubtedly get up and speak to this bill. Maybe the members from Spruce Woods (Mrs. Robbins) and Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) will take this opportunity and speak to their commitment and—to supporting their local 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

Either way, the PCs have a choice. They can double down on the pattern we've seen over the past

two and a half years: a transphobic campaign that endangered learners and educators, a split caucus on recognizing Two-Spirit and Trans Day of Visibility, unanimously voting against including gender expression recognized under The Human Rights Code and making the active choice to not show up at Pride celebrations across the province.

Or they could choose to grow. They could choose to learn and they could signal to their queer constituents that they value their contributions to their communities. Having third reading for this bill at this moment gives us an opportunity to see in real time in communities across the province why this bill is necessary.

In September, Steinbach Pride had to postpone their events because of threats to their local community. Just this weekend here in Winnipeg, hundreds of people gathered for the Rainbow Resource Centre fundraiser celebrating 20 years of legalized same-sex marriage. And over the same weekend, the rainbow crosswalk was vandalized in Souris.

Me and many of my NDP colleagues were in Souris when the crosswalk was painted earlier this summer. We joined the rescheduled Queer Country Fair in Steinbach a few Saturdays ago and our Deputy Premier (MLA Asagwara) even officially—sorry, even our—and our Deputy Premier even officiated the vows—the 'vowal' renewal for Michelle Ritchot and Stefphany Cholakis, the first same-sex couple to get legally married in Manitoba.

The common experience across these three communities is that members of your provincial NDP government were there, showing up for queer and trans communities across the province. So to everyone doing this important, life-saving work of building safer communities, classrooms and families, whether you're in Steinbach, Souris, Winnipeg or anywhere else across our province, thank you.

It is important and you are building a better future for worlds across generations. Regardless of whether this bill passes, know that your provincial government stands with you and that our NDP team will show up and share in that labour of love.

Thank you.

Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods): I rise today to speak about an issue that goes beyond paint on a pavement. It goes to the heart of who we are as a community and as Manitobans.

Recently in Souris, the community witnessed an act that is both disheartening and unacceptable: the defacing of Pride crosswalk. That crosswalk is not just a patch of colours. It is a symbol, it is a symbol of the—of inclusion, acceptance and the recognition that every person deserves to live safely and authentically, no matter the gender identity, sexual orientation or background.

Defacing that crosswalk is not simply vandalism; it is a statement of exclusion, a rejection of the diversity that strengthens our communities. Manitobans are better than that. We are a province built on co-operation, understanding and respect for one another.

When one person or group is made to feel unwelcome or unsafe, it affects all of us. Honourable Speaker, we have a choice. We can allow division to grow or we can come together and reaffirm the values that define us. We must in—choose inclusivity over intolerance, understanding over ignorance and unity over division.

Every person in Souris and across this province deserves to feel safe walking down a street, attending school or simply being themselves without fear of judgment or harassment. Acts like this remind us, that work of inclusion is never finished. Inclusivity is a daily commitment to speak out against hate, to support our neighbours and build communities where everyone belongs.

* (10:40)

Let us all remember that symbols like the Pride crosswalk are powerful. They tell young people in our communities: you are seen, you are valued and you belong. By protecting those symbols and the people they represent, we strengthen not just those individuals but our entire community.

Honourable Speaker, Souris is not alone in facing these challenges. Across Manitoba, across Canada and all around the world, communities struggle with division and prejudice. In Manitoba, we have the opportunity to lead by example. We have the opportunity to show that small towns, large cities and rural communities alike can come together to celebrate diversity and respect differences.

I think of the young people in Souris who now walk past that crosswalk each day. I think of the courage it takes to be visible in the world that does not always accept differences, and I think of the responsibility we all share as neighbours, as leaders and as fellow Manitobans to make sure that courage is

met with support not hostility, with solidarity not vandalism.

Honourable Speaker, this is an opportunity for all Manitoba to rise above acts of hate. It is an opportunity to send a message that our communities are defined not by division but by compassion, respect and the courage to embrace differences.

Let us come together with those who are marginalized. Let us show that we will protect symbols of inclusion and the values they respect, because at the end of the day, inclusion is not just a policy or a symbol or a patch of paint on a street, inclusion is a choice we make every day in how we treat one another. It is a choice we make when we speak out against hate, when we offer support to someone who feels unseen and when we come together as a community to ensure that every person in every corner of Manitoba feels safe, valued and welcome.

Honourable Speaker, I'm proud to live in a province where we can make that choice, where we can make it together. Let us seize this moment to reaffirm our commitment to inclusivity, acceptance and respect. Let us rise above acts of hate and build communities defined not by fear but by love and understanding.

Thank you.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I appreciate the opportunity to stand today and speak to Bill 234, The Pride Month Act.

My first comment is I would like to thank the member for Lagimodière (Mr. Blashko) for bringing this bill forward. It's an important bill for Manitoba to recognize June as Pride month.

I know, for myself, it's very important bill as well because I have been a continual supporter for the Pride month and the Pride marches in my constituency and in Brandon, not just since I've been a member of this Legislature but since I have been a police officer with the Brandon Police Service for many years prior to this.

I made it a very important part of my schedule then and now to participate in any of the events that happened in Brandon, including a partnership with Pride Brandon when I was the chief of police to ensure security and safety at all of the events put on by the Pride committee.

I was honoured every year after year to march with multi-generations—myself, my children and my

grandchildren—in the Pride parade and show support for the community within Brandon. And I know that this will continue for many years to follow so that we can instill the fact that this is a month for inclusion and to make sure that there is no hate, that there is no violence perpetrated against individuals in the LGBTQAI+ community.

One of my proudest moments whilst I was with the Brandon Police Service was to hire the first recognized LGBTQAI+ member of our service. And I have spoken with her today and she is happy that I could bring forward her name and the fact that she is a proud member of that community and a proud member of the Brandon Police Service.

So to Jerra Green: Thank you for joining the Brandon Police Service and for being authentic and making sure that this is brought forward to our community. I know I was proud to walk with Jerra, I was proud to hire Jerra and I was proud to announce—or not announce—I was proud to work with her in a number of different avenues.

Most importantly, I'm proud to say that this year, Jerra is also a mother to Halle and has brought new joy to her life. So congratulations to Jerra and her partner.

Honourable Speaker, this is about showing up at events and not just talking about it. I know the MLA for Lagimodière talked about this. I'm proud to represent this every year in my constituency, as are members of our caucus.

It gives me great pride to recognize this and support Bill 234 on behalf of myself and our caucus.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: No further speakers?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: So the question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 234, The Pride Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

DEBATE ON CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 208—The Manitoba Small Business Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)

The Speaker: As previously announced, we will now move on to debate on concurrence and third reading of Bill 208, The Manitoba Small Business Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended). And the debate is open and standing in the name of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain, who has four minutes remaining.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain): Just have a—put a few more words on the record when it came to the small business that the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) put forward. I just want to continue with—you know, again, one of the reasons I'm in this Chamber is because I was in—a small-business owner.

One of the frustrations part I had was, it was the previous Selinger government who—I was in the insurance industry and they chose to—they were getting more further and further into debt and so they had to raise taxes. And for small businesses that was a big impact because one of the things that they first came out with was putting PST on insurance premiums, not just homeowners or commercial policies and stuff like that, but even on life insurance.

And when you start getting to that era—that area of taxing, especially when life insurance proceeds are tax-free, you're starting to really go into the—they were getting really desperate. Very, very desperate and that was very concerning for me, where their direction of—they're—they were taking this province. And I feel like I always have—that saying goes, history doesn't repeat itself but it does rhyme.

And for them to put a forward—a bill like this forward, when it comes to protecting small businesses, it's kind of the ones that they attack. You know, they've actually—the most of them that were part of a union, and that's where they always feel—especially the member for, when it comes to, not Radisson but Rossmere, indicates that, you know, it was—every business owner is almost an enemy of the unions.

And the fact is, I said before, I contradicted that. Our employees are basically our family, and if you don't treat employees well, they're going to move on. And as—to be competitive in this world, you do have to have good workforce, good human resources.

And the fact is, right now with this government, they want to take away their rebates on property taxes.

* (10:50)

That was one of the things that, for a lot of businesses, that was something that they got back, that they were able to thrive, be able to know that they're not being under attack all the time when it comes to taxation.

I know our commercial premiums that we had on our commercial policy, we had to pay another 7 per cent. That affects all businesses when it comes to small business. And that is one reason why I decided to run, is because they were out of control. Their spending was out of control, and it's going to happen again and it's going to be on the backs of a lot of business owners. And it always happens. History doesn't—it goes back to even Pawley days.

And I—the funny thing is, when they started going into such huge debt—we saw that in Ontario when the NDP were in power there—they created such a huge debt for that province, it took generations to actually correct it. We saw that in Alberta: they destroyed that province, their financials on that one. They're doing that right now in BC. And the fact is, I'm really concerned that, again, they're going to be overspending again and they're going to be putting that on the backs of small business. They always do that. That's their philosophy; they're all pro-union.

And even when that last—the first budget they came out with: join the union, become a part of the middle class. That's really disturbing for small business, for investment in this province and very concerning.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): It's a pleasure to be able to stand today and talk about small businesses in our community. I'd like to get the chance to put a few words on the record in support of recognizing the lifeblood of our communities and our province.

You know, in Lakeside there's a number of small businesses—and many of the small communities in Stonewall, Teulon, Warren, Woodlands, Elie. And, you know, they're a huge part of our local economy and they're sincerely the heartbeat of our towns, Honourable Speaker.

When you walk down main street in any one of these communities, you can feel the sense of pride from all the owners of the shops. They know your name. The café where all your neighbours gather and

tell stories and talk about what's going on in the Legislature—that was a bit of a joke there. But they're not just businesses; they're the stories and the relationships that build strong and our—keep our communities vibrant.

I had the opportunity the last week to take a tour with the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and the No. 7 Highway economic development tour and started out in Teulon where we had breakfast in a restaurant that I wasn't even aware of in my constituency.

So there's so many businesses there that many people don't know about, obviously. So we got to have breakfast there and then we went over to see Vidir Solutions. Now there's quite a story there. Vidir Solutions, a small business that began in Arborg in the, I'm going to say, late '70s, early '80s on a small farm there, a machine shop—a small machine shop. Just a farmer who wanted to help other farmers build some parts or manufacture some parts to help them get going with their operations.

And that small business has turned into 250 employees: 150 in Arborg and now 100 in Teulon. So these small businesses are, once they get started, they just grow to help the economy in our regions. Now from Teulon, we moved over to Stonewall on this tour and we got to tour Stonewall Glass and, of course, our Quarry Park

So we see that entrepreneur spirit also in the town of Stonewall—I think there's 19 restaurants in the town of Stonewall as well. Boutiques, tradespeople, service providers: they built their livelihoods right there at home in Stonewall. And business community continues to grow and show resilience and creativity throughout the challenges of this NDP government.

So, you know, they continue to stand strong and hold things together to keep their doors open, even when they have the challenges that are going on today.

In Warren and Woodlands, number of growing businesses. When I was on council in Woodlands—and I think I mentioned this before and in the Chamber—there was a small little cattle equipment manufacturer just north of the town of Woodlands and worked out of little Quonset and they're—Plymouth Brethren company that started building there called Arrowquip.

And I was a huge supporter of theirs—they wanted to expand so—big proponent and we managed to help them get their business set up right on No. 6 Highway there. So now they're employing

200-plus people manufacturing cattle equipment—cattle handling equipment.

And right next door, just recently they built the only zero-turn manufacturing—zero-turn lawnmower manufacturing plant in Canada. So between those two companies, there are well over 250 people that they employ in our community of Woodlands there.

Head over to Elie, another part of Lakeside there, a number of small businesses and local trades, home-based businesses, family operations: they've all stood the test of time. And these entrepreneurs also show us that the community spirit and creativity can thrive anywhere here in this province, Honourable Speaker.

And we all know that I've worked for some small businesses and I had my own little enterprises at the farm myself. Now, running a small business, we all know isn't easy. It takes long hours, it takes a lot of sacrifice and willingness to take risks. Yet despite the challenges like rising costs in an NDP government, supply chain disruptions, workforce shortages, our local business owners continue to persevere.

And as they persevere, they continue to give back to our community. They sponsor local sports teams. They donate to school fundraisers and support community events. And they're—these small businesses are always the first to step up when someone in town needs a hand. They're job creators, they're mentors, they're leaders in our communities. And they help to keep our young people connected to opportunities locally.

So I just want to say thank you to our small-business owners in this province—and have kept their doors open through these tough times. Thank you to the employees that work hard to serve their communities and thank you for the opportunity to recognize small businesses in our province.

The Speaker: Other members wishing to speak?

Seeing none, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: The question before the House then is concurrence and third reading of Bill 208, The Manitoba Small Business Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Is there will of House to recognize the clock as 11?

The Speaker: Is the will of the House to recognize the clock as being 11 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 24—Fighting Climate Change and Protecting Manitoba's Air, Land and Water

The Speaker: The hour being 11 a.m., it is now time for private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is resolution 24, Fighting Climate Change and Protecting Manitoba's Air, Land and Water, brought forward by the honourable member for St. Boniface.

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): I move, seconded by the MLA for Radisson,

WHEREAS the Provincial Government recognizes the urgent need to protect Manitoba's environment and combat the effects of climate change; and

WHEREAS the previous PC Provincial Government cut funding to environmental organizations and failed to do the important work to reduce emissions and protect the environment; and

WHEREAS the previous PC Provincial Government neglected critical environmental infrastructure and failed to take meaningful action to protect Manitoba's lakes, rivers, and ecosystems; and

WHEREAS the current Provincial Government is taking action to protect Manitoba's environment by investing in the modernization of the North End Water Pollution Control Centre, one of the most important environmental projects in the province; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government is helping preserve one of the last great intact watersheds in the world through its support for the Seal River watershed alliance, led by Indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government introduced a provincial Electric Vehicle (EV) rebate program, providing up to \$4,000 for new EVs and \$2,500 for used EVs, and expanded public EV charging infrastructure, making clean transportation more accessible and lowering costs for Manitoba families; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government is building up 600 megawatts of wind power in partnership with Indigenous nations which is the first investment in wind generation in decades; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government launched the Affordable Home Energy Program to help Manitobans lower their energy bills and cut emissions by installing geothermal heat pumps and making efficiency upgrades; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government is partnering with the Federal Government to support a feasibility study for a national marine conservation area in western Hudson Bay; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government has launched Manitoba's Path to Net Zero by 2050, a bold plan to cut emissions, grow a clean economy, and ensure a sustainable, affordable future for all Manitobans.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba commend and support the provincial government for its leadership and commitment to building a cleaner, greener and more sustainable future for all Manitobans.

The Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for St. Boniface, seconded by the honourable member for Radisson (MLA Dela Cruz), that

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense?

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: No? I hear a no.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba commend and support the provincial government for its leadership and commitment to building a cleaner, greener and more sustainable future for all Manitobans.

* (11:00)

MLA Loiselle: Climate change is not a distant problem; it's here, it's reshaping our communities, our ecosystems and our economy right now. Every flood, every wildfire, every drought is a reminder that we can't afford to wait.

For over seven long years, the previous PC government gutted environmental protection, slashed funding and ignored the voices of Manitobans. They left our province vulnerable and unprepared for the climate disasters we're now facing.

French spoken

L'Honorable Président, le changement climatique n'est pas un problème lointain : il est déjà à notre porte. Il redéfinit — il redéfinit nos communautés,

nos écosystèmes et notre économie. Chaque inondation, chaque incendie de forêt, chaque sécheresse nous rappelle que nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre d'attendre.

Pendant plus de sept longues années, le gouvernement conservateur précédent a démantelé les mesures de protection de l'environnement, coupé le financement environnemental et ignoré les voix des Manitobains. Il a laissé notre province vulnérable et peu préparée aux catastrophes climatiques auxquelles nous sommes aujourd'hui confrontés.

Translation

Climate change is not a distant problem: it is already upon us. It is redefining our communities, our ecosystems and our economy. Every flood, every forest fire, every drought reminds us that we cannot afford to wait.

For more than seven long years, the previous Conservative government dismantled environmental protections, cut environmental funding and ignored the voices of Manitobans. It left our province vulnerable and unprepared for the climate disasters we face today.

English

But our NDP government is taking action, Honourable Speaker. We are delivering on our promise to build a cleaner, greener Manitoba; one that protects our air, our land and our water for generations to come.

Honourable Speaker, climate change affects every Manitoban. Whether you live in St. Boniface, in the North or on the Prairies, you've seen the impact. We've watched families displaced by record-breaking floods. We've seen smoke from wildfires choke our skies. We've seen farmers struggle through droughts that threaten their livelihoods.

These aren't isolated events, they're warnings and they're becoming more frequent, more intense and more expensive. The cost of doing nothing is far greater than the cost of taking action.

French spoken

L'Honorable Président, le changement climatique touche tous les – tous les Manitobains : que vous viviez à Saint-Boniface, dans le Nord ou dans les prairies, vous en avez constaté les effets. Nous avons vu des familles déplacées par des inondations records, nous avons vu la fumée des feux de forêt envahir notre ciel, comme nous l'avons vu l'été dernier. Nous avons

vu des agriculteurs lutter contre des sécheresses que menacent leurs moyens de subsistance.

Ce ne sont pas les événements isolés : ce sont des avertissements, et ils deviennent de plus en plus fréquents, de plus en plus intenses et de plus en plus coûteux.

Translation

Climate change affects all Manitobans: whether you live in St. Boniface, in the North or on the prairies, you have seen its effects. We have seen families displaced by record floods, we have seen smoke from forest fires fill our skies, as we did last summer. We have seen farmers struggle with droughts that threaten their livelihoods.

These are not isolated events: they are warnings, and they are becoming more frequent, more intense and more costly.

English

This is why our government is taking a real investment to build resilience and protect what we love about this province. We're modernizing the North End Water Pollution Control Centre, one of the most important environmental projects in Manitoba.

This single project will protect Lake Winnipeg, safeguard our drinking water and ensure sustainable growth for decades to come.

We're supporting the Seal River Watershed Alliance, one of the most significant Indigenous-led conservation initiatives in the world. This partnership preserves one of the last great intact watersheds on earth, protecting water, wildlife and a way of life that has sustained communities for generations.

We're also helping Manitobans make cleaner choices that are affordable and practical. Our EV rebate program offers up to \$4,000 for new electric vehicles and \$2,500 for used ones, while expanding public charging infrastructure across the province and up Highway 6.

We've launched the Affordable Home Energy Program, helping families install geothermal systems—I've had one since 2007—and make energy efficient upgrades that lower bills and cut emissions.

And for the first time in 'decades,' Manitoba is building 600 megawatts of new wind power, in partnership with Indigenous nations. That means thousands of good jobs and reliable, clean, affordable energy for families and businesses across Manitoba.

These are the kinds of investments that make climate action not just possible but practical and they make life more affordable, not less.

Let's contrast that with what came before. Under the PCs, Manitobans' environment and climate department was cut by 70 per cent. Let that sink in for a second: 70 per cent. Twenty per cent of the remaining positions were left vacant. They gutted environmental monitoring and conservation programs. They repealed the sustainable development act; who knows why? Failed to reduce emissions and even privatized forest fighting services.

They sent millions of dollars out of province by contracting an American company to handle Manitoba park passes and they pushed forward dangerous projects like Sio Silica which threatened the drinking water of thousands of Manitobans, even after losing the election in violation of caretaker convention.

This is the PC record on the environment: neglect, cuts and contempt for Manitobans' right to clean air and water. But our government is rebuilding what they tore down. We're investing \$6.5 million more in environmental stewardship. We've committed \$30 million to upgrade water treatment and sewage facilities. We're restoring oversight, expanding park infrastructure and keeping park access free for all Manitobans all year round.

We're modernizing The Environment Act to strengthen accountability and transparency, because Manitobans deserve to know their government is protecting their future, Honourable Speaker. And through our critical mineral strategy, we're ensuring resource development happens responsibly, creating good jobs while upholding strong environmental standards.

Honourable Speaker, our Path to Net Zero by 2050 is Manitoba's first real climate roadmap. It's based on science, on affordability and on partnership with Indigenous nations. It includes three-year action plans, measurable goals and a climate change committee of Cabinet because leadership means more than words; it means accountability. We are taking a balanced, thoughtful approach: reducing emissions, protecting ecosystems and growing our clean energy economy, all at the same time. We are also investing in Manitoba's future.

Budget 2025 increases environmental stewardships by \$6.5 million. We're developing a clean heat strategy, prioritizing renewable energy sources like

geothermal and electrical heat pumps for homes across the province. We're expanding our solar and wind capacity safely and efficiently. And we're building a made in Manitoba clean energy economy that creates thousands of new blue-collar jobs—put on your steel-toed boots—for manufacturing zero-emission buses at New Flyer to supporting Indigenous-owned energy projects across the North.

Our plan recognizes that protecting the environment is not just an ecological responsibility; it's an economic opportunity. It's about jobs, it's about affordability, it's about the kind of Manitoba we want to leave for our children.

French spoken

Notre plan reconnaît que la protection de l'environnement n'est pas seulement une responsabilité écologique, mais aussi une opportunité économique. Il s'agit d'emplois, il s'agit — il s'agit d'accessibilité financière et il s'agit du type de province que nous voulons léguer à nos enfants.

Translation

Our plan recognizes that protecting the environment is not only an ecological responsibility, but also an economic opportunity. It's about jobs, it's about affordability and it's about the kind of province we want to leave for our children.

English

Honourable Speaker, we are preserving 30 per cent of Manitoba's land and waters by 2030, in partnership with Indigenous nations, environmental groups and local opportunities. We're restoring our parks, planting trees and improving trails and campgrounds from Birds Hill to Spruce Woods. We're investing in invasive species prevention, protecting our lakes and rivers from zebra mussels and flowering rush.

This is what leadership looks like. This is what it means to protect Manitoba's air, land and water. Our government is guided by one simple truth: the health and well-being of all people and all living things depend on the health of the environment. This is why we're acting now, because the choices we make today will determine the Manitoba our children inherit tomorrow.

We will not stand by as others did. We will not look away while floods destroy homes and drought destroys livelihoods. We will lead with science, with partnership and with innovation.

French spoken

Nous ne resterons pas les bras croisés comme d'autres l'ont fait. Nous ne détournerons pas le regard alors que les inondations détruisent nos maisons et que les sécheresses détruisent nos moyens de subsistance. Avec courage et détermination, nous bâtissons ensemble une voie vers l'avenir grâce à la science, au partenariat et à l'innovation.

Translation

We will not stand idly by as others have done. We will not look away as floods destroy our homes and droughts destroy our livelihoods. With courage and determination, we will build a path to the future together through science, partnership and innovation.

English

Honourable Speaker, this motion is about more than policy, it's about protecting what makes Manitoba home: the clear lakes, the open skies and the strong communities that define us. Together, we can build a cleaner, greener and more sustainable future for all Manitobans.

* (11:10)

Miigwech. Merci, Honourable Speaker, and let's get to work.

The Speaker: So just a reminder to all members that, as we called it 11 o'clock at 10:58, we'll be calling it noon at 11:58.

Questions

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

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Is this resolution sponsored by my friend, the MLA for St. Boniface, really about protecting Manitoba's environment, or is it about protecting the NDP's reputation after months of criticism from environmental groups and community leaders?

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): Thank you for that question, Honourable Speaker.

Last summer, we saw an unprecedented fire season. We had tens of thousands of Manitobans which had to be evacuated from their homes. Our family lost their cottage. We saw Nopiming park burn to the ground; 70 per cent of the park burned to the ground.

This is about the future; the future starts now. This is about good, green jobs in the long term and having a plan that is going to protect our environment for the long term.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): The health and well-being of people and all living things is directly linked to the environment. If we don't take care of the land, air and water, there will be severe consequences for everyone.

My question for my colleague is: How will climate change impact him and his community?

MLA Loiselle: Like to thank the honourable member from Seine River for that question.

Climate change could impact St. Boniface a number of ways, from floods to extreme heat. My community includes many hard-working families who rely on safe roads and stable infrastructure. When extreme weather events happen, it's those roads, schools and neighbourhoods that are at risk.

That's why our government is focused on real climate action, to ensure communities like St. Boniface are resilient and prepared for the future to come.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Do the NDP really believe a resolution filled with recycled talking points will make Manitobans forget about their past environmental failures?

MLA Loiselle: Our Path to Net Zero is about lowering costs, not raising them. The most expensive option for families is doing nothing, which is exactly what the PCs did with floods, fires and drought, which drove up costs for households, farmers and communities.

Our plan helps families save money through clean, affordable home energy, geothermal, EV rebates and Indigenous-led wind power that keeps hydro rates stable. And, unlike the PCs, we have a clear and accountable road map to ensure every investment is responsible and cost-effective.

We're taking action now so families aren't stuck paying far more later.

MLA Cross: Our NDP government has shown a clear commitment to tackling climate change and protecting the environment. Can my colleague share with the House some of the steps we're taking to safeguard the environment?

MLA Loiselle: Thank you for the question. Our government is dedicated to growing our province economically while also preserving our natural environment. Some of the things that we've been doing include the critical mineral strategy, which will create jobs—good jobs—for Manitobans while responsibly harvesting resources.

Honourable Speaker, we are—we're also introducing more climate-friendly energy options through our Affordable Energy Plan. And we're also—we've also made \$23.4 million of investment into NFI-built facility here in Winnipeg to create zero-emission buses, which we're already seeing on the roads.

The Speaker: No further questions?

Mr. Nesbitt: I'm wondering if the member can tell the House how much the NDP's new 600-megawatt wind proposal will cost taxpayers. The last time they promised green energy, the 300 mount-watt-megawatt St. Joseph Wind Farm was pegged at nearly \$800 million. Is this new 600-megawatt plan a \$1.6-billion repeat of history?

MLA Loiselle: Thank you for that question. Actually, the honourable member from Riding Mountain is absolutely correct. We're actually going to build some more energy, unlike the previous government through their seven and a half years of doing nothing: not a calorie of anything, actually.

So yes, we're going to invest in the environment. We're also going to invest in clean energy and we're going to partner with First Nations and the Manitoba Métis Federation and Indigenous peoples to do so, because we believe in a clean, bright future for all Manitobans while lowering costs.

MLA Cross: Honourable Speaker, under the previous failed PC government, Manitoba's environment and climate department was gutted and environmental oversight fell apart.

Can my colleague explain how our NDP government is reversing that damage and restoring Manitoba's leadership in environmental protection?

MLA Loiselle: Unlike the previous PC government, which cut the environment and climate department by a whopping 70 per cent, our NDP government is rebuilding Manitoba's environment leadership. We've invested \$6.5 million more in environmental stewardship, committed \$30 million to upgrade the North End Sewage Treatment Plant, all while building our Path to Net Zero emissions by 2050.

Mr. Wowchuk: Manitobans remember the NDP's last attempt at a wind energy boom, the St. Leon and St. Joseph projects: both financial disasters that ended up in bailouts.

Why should anyone believe this new plan will be any different?

MLA Loiselle: Well, Honourable Speaker, I think it's all about government timelines and dollars. Manitoba's Path to Net Zero sets a 25-year blueprint with three-year action plans, a climate change committee of Cabinet, stronger legislation and a province-wide co-ordination so every major decision moves us towards net zero.

We're backing this with real investments: \$30 million to modernize the North End treatment plant, \$6.5-million increase in environmental stewardship in Budget 2025, EV rebates and 600 megawatts of new wind—first in decades—Indigenous-led conservation including the Seal River Watershed and a feasibility study for a western Hudson Bay national marine conservation area.

We're taking action, Honourable Speaker.

MLA Cross: Our NDP government has made it clear that protecting the environment goes hand in hand with building a strong economy. Can my colleague share some of the concrete actions our government is taking to safeguard Manitoba's environment while keeping life affordable?

MLA Loiselle: Protecting water is at the core of our plan. That's why we're investing \$30 million to modernize the North End Water Pollution Control Centre, one of Manitoba's most critical environmental projects. We've also launched the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention and Response Plan, funded mobile watercraft inspections and eradicated harmful species like zebra mussels.

And unlike the PCs, who ignored Indigenous-led conservation, we're partnering with First Nations to protect the Seal River Watershed, ensuring clean water for generations.

These are real investments, Honourable Speaker, with measurable outcomes—not empty promises.

Mr. Nesbitt: Honourable Speaker, Manitobans remember Bipole III coming in three times over budget and years behind schedule.

What confidence can anyone have in this government's ability to manage large-scale energy projects?

MLA Loiselle: I think it's all about making difficult choices sometimes and building for the future. When we talk about an energy corridor for the future to the North, we're talking about modern, responsible infrastructure like what we're proposing to connect clean energy to Nunavut. And yes, that could include pipelines as part of our multi-use corridor that carries clean energy, hydrogen and critical minerals—not just oil.

Our focus is on sustainability and partnerships, ensuring any development meets the highest environmental standard and is led by Indigenous communities who share directly in the benefits. This is about building the future of clean trade and energy in Manitoba responsibly, collaboratively and in a way that keeps our province competitive in the global shift to net zero.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Cross: Honourable Speaker, for years, the PCs refused to put forward a real climate plan, leaving Manitoba without any real direction as emissions rose. Now our government has introduced Manitoba's Path to Net Zero, a plan based on science, affordability and partnership.

* (11:20)

Can my colleague explain why having a climate road map is so important for Manitoba's future?

MLA Loiselle: A long-term climate plan is essential because the decisions that we make today will define the safety, affordability and economic stability of Manitoba for decades to come.

Our Path to Net Zero creates clear goals, three-year action plans and strong accountability measures, so we can protect families, grow our economy and ensure Manitoba's environment is healthy for future generations.

This is the kind of responsible planning Manitobans deserve and something the PCs failed to deliver.

The Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is now open for debate.

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): It's always a privilege to rise in this House to speak on issues that matter to Manitobans, issues like clean water, healthy air and a sustainable future for our children.

Mr. Diljeet Brar, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

But let's be honest about what we're debating here today. This resolution is not about protecting Manitoba's environment, it's about protecting the NDP's image. After months of broken promises, photo ops and press releases that say a lot but accomplish little, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and his team are trying to rewrite history with a feel-good motion designed to distract from their failures. Manitobans will see through it. They know talk is cheap and results are what count.

Honourable Speaker, the record shows very clearly who delivered real environmental action in Manitoba: it was a Progressive Conservative government. When our government came to office, we didn't rely on slogans; we built a plan, a Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan, rooted in four pillars: climate, jobs, water and nature. It wasn't dreamed up in a backroom; it was shaped by Manitobans themselves through public consultation, surveys and community engagement.

And unlike the NDP's glossy press conferences, our plan had teeth. In 2018, we passed The Climate and Green Plan Implementation Act, legislation that made transparency and accountability the law. It established a \$40-million Climate and Green Fund for emission reduction projects, set up public greenhouse gas reporting and created an independent Expert Advisory Council to keep government accountable.

And, honourable Speaker, that fund didn't sit in a drawer; it delivered. It backed wetland restoration, public and active transportation, building retrofits and recycling initiatives. Every dollar was targeted at cutting emissions while supporting local jobs. It proved you can grow the economy and protect the environment at the same time.

When the PCs took office, Manitoba's water systems were aging, overburdened and neglected. The previous NDP government spent years talking about Lake Winnipeg but did almost nothing to protect it. So we acted.

In 2020, we invested \$61 million to modernize the Portage la Prairie Water Pollution Control Facility, improving nutrient removal and safeguarding the Assiniboine River and Lake Manitoba. It was one of the largest municipal environmental investments outside Winnipeg's Perimeter.

We also delivered the Birtle south transmission line in my constituency of Riding Mountain, connecting Manitoba's—Manitoba Hydro's clean, renewable grid to Saskatchewan, exporting our hydroelectric power to replace coal generation. That's climate leadership with both environmental and economic benefits.

And, honourable deputy Speaker, the PCs were the ones who finally tackled the North End Water Pollution Control Centre here in Winnipeg, one of the most critical environmental projects in our province. For over a decade, the NDP let that plant crumble, ignoring repeated warnings while phosphorus poured into Lake Winnipeg. It was our government that committed \$96.7 million toward the upgrade, part of a total \$212.8-million project.

So when the NDP stand here today patting themselves on the back for modernizing that facility, Manitobans should remember they didn't start it; they inherited it. Our environmental vision wasn't limited to the Perimeter Highway. We knew that climate resilience had to include rural and northern Manitoba.

In 2021, we partnered with Ottawa to fund a regional wastewater system for Winkler and the RM of Stanley, a twenty-million dollar—\$21-million investment that allowed one of Manitoba's fastest growing regions to expand sustainably.

We invested in new—in a new bacteriological water testing lab in Thompson, giving northern communities faster, more reliable water results for the first time in decades. That's tangible action, improving public health, protecting waterways and supporting the North.

And, in 2022, we released Manitoba's first whole-of-government water management strategy since 2003, setting clear goals for water quality, climate resilience and infrastructure renewal. That strategy is still guiding environmental policy today.

Honourable Speaker—or deputy Speaker, no government in Manitoba's history has invested more in flood mitigation than the Progressive Conservatives. In 2023, we launched a \$990-million water strategy action plan, 72 projects over five years, including the single largest provincial flood mitigation project ever:

the Lake St. Martin channel. This project will protect communities that have suffered devastating floods time and time again. It was conceived, designed and funded entirely under the Progressive Conservatives.

We also dedicated \$221 million under the sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership to support soil conservation, water storage and on-farm emission reductions, recognizing that Manitoba's farmers are key partners in climate resilience. That's what environmental protection looks like: empowering people to protect their land, not punishing them with red tape.

Honourable Speaker, environmental protection doesn't come from bureaucrats in Winnipeg, it comes from community partnerships. The PC government invested \$4.8 million in local green infrastructure projects, urban tree planting, energy-efficient public buildings and modernized water systems across multiple communities. We provided \$1.5 million in grants to municipalities, businesses and colleges for projects that cut emissions and created green jobs.

Honourable deputy Speaker, we committed \$200 million to capital infrastructure in Manitoba's provincial parks, something the NDP has not lived up to over the past two years.

Let me give you a few examples of our investments out in—across the province, here. Stonewall received \$150,000 to electrify its mobility fleet, lowering municipal fuel costs and proving that climate action isn't just for big cities. Red River College got funding to convert a diesel school bus to electric, teaching students real-world innovation in green technology. The RM of Ritchot received \$150,000 for a rural car-share initiative and funding for a native grasslands project, enhancing biodiversity and reducing emissions.

Even small non-profits like Crossways in Common benefited, with solar and electric boiler upgrades, cutting costs and emissions. These aren't headlines, they're results: real projects, real jobs, real environmental progress.

Honourable deputy Speaker, the PCs believe in science-based management, not ideology. We funded the Lake Winnipeg Foundation with \$50,000 for a three-year phosphorus data project, giving policy-makers better data to protect one of Manitoba's most important ecosystems. We supported rain garden projects, energy-efficient retrofits and waste-reduction pilots, including one in West St. Paul that diverted food waste from landfills.

We committed to plant 1 million trees a year for nine years in partnerships with the federal government, the largest reforestation commitment in Manitoba's history. This was the PC approach: science, community and measurable outcomes, not slogans.

Now, honourable Speaker, let's turn to the NDP's record, because it's important to separate fact from fiction. The same NDP that stands here today talking about wind power once turned Manitoba's early wind projects, St. Leon and St. Joseph, into economic disasters. When the foreign companies involved walked away, it was Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba taxpayers left to clean up the mess.

They cancelled the Waverley West geothermal project, killing one of Canada's most promising renewable energy neighbourhoods. They tripled the cost of Bipole III, ignored the North End treatment plant for years and left Manitoba Hydro burdened with billions in unnecessary debt. That is not climate leadership, that is mismanagement on a grand scale.

And now they promise 600 megawatts of new wind generation. Honourable deputy Speaker, given their record of delays, overruns and cost blowouts, Manitobans have every reason to doubt they'll deliver a single watt on time or on budget.

Under the guise of environmental protection, this government is already laying the groundwork for another hog barn moratorium, a policy that devastated rural Manitoba last time they tried it. That moratorium did nothing to improve water quality, nothing to reduce nutrient loading, and nothing to protect our environment.

* (11:30)

What it did do was punish farmers and stifle one of Manitoba's most important industries, one that employs tens of thousands of people and feeds families around the world.

When the PCs lifted that moratorium we restored balance, protecting the environment and supporting agriculture. We recognized that Manitoba's producers are not the problem; they are part of the solution.

So, honourable deputy Speaker, while we all share the goal of protecting our land—air, land and water—we cannot support a resolution that twists the record and rewards failure. We will continue to stand for practical environmental action, for projects that deliver results, protect our communities, and secure a

sustainable, affordable future for all Manitobans, because that is what real leadership looks like.

Thank you, honourable deputy Speaker.

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Honourable deputy Speaker, what we have here before us today is not a motion about protecting the environment. It's a motion about protecting the NDP's reputation. It's about rewriting history with a feel-good resolution after a year of photo ops and broken promises and recycled talking points.

Manitobans can see through it. They want action and they want results. Our PC team delivered measurable environmental actions and not headlines. We didn't rely on glossy announcements. We built real projects, funded by real dollars and net real outcomes.

In 2017 we launched a Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan, the most comprehensive homegrown climate strategy in our province's history. And as my colleague mentioned, it focused on those four pillars of climate, jobs, water and nature.

Manitobans themselves helped shape it through open consultation. We backed that plan with the climate and green fund. That \$40 million was directed to projects like, as mentioned before, wetland restoration, clean water infrastructure, waste reduction and energy efficiency upgrades.

That plan wasn't just talk, it delivered. We invested the \$61 million in Portage la Prairie's water pollution control facility, protecting the Assiniboine River and Lake Manitoba. We connected Manitoba's hydro clean grid to Saskatchewan through the Birtle south transmission line, helping displace coal power, a real environmental and economic win.

And when we committed the \$96 million to the North End Sewage Treatment Plant, a project the NDP ignored for over a decade, and now pretend they started.

But, honourable Speaker—or honourable deputy Speaker, environmental stewardship doesn't stop at Winnipeg's perimeter, and being a rural person, it's very important to put attention toward some of the rural initiatives. It includes the lakes, the forests and the communities that define rural and northern Manitoba.

Our PC team delivered the first full water management strategy since 2003, setting clear goals for water quality and climate resilience. We invested nearly a billion dollars in the water strategy action plan, protecting Lake St. Martin, Lake Manitoba and

communities that have endured devastating floods and displaced residents from their homes.

That's what real leadership looks like—working with people, not lecturing them. Yet today we hear from a Premier (Mr. Kinew) who wants Manitobans to believe that environmental protection means closing off Crown land, restricting traditional access and undermining rural livelihoods.

PCs believe in balanced conservation where hunters, outfitters, trappers and families can continue to responsibly use the land they've stewarded for generations. Moose hunting, sustainable wildlife management are a part of Manitoba's heritage and culture, and we have seen over and over again the threat to sustainability in my constituency in the Duck and the porcupine mountains, where we have a collapsing moose population and we allow hunting to continue, and this is jeopardizing the future of all user groups. But instead of collaboration, this NDP government is creating confusion and resentment, restricting Crown land access without clear consultation.

Limiting hunting opportunities, ignoring the communities most affected. And when we talk about protecting Manitoba's environment, we have to see what really makes up this environment and what inhabits it. Let me be clear: protecting the environment and protecting access are not opposites. You can do both, and our team has proven it.

We have collaborated with Indigenous and Northern communities to support conservation while maintaining responsible access to these Crown lands. And we understand that those who live on the land are its best stewards. We have to learn from the peoples who live on these lands. They are the ones that know what needs to be done.

And while the NDP talks about sustainability, they're quietly laying the groundwork for another hog barn moratorium: the same failed policy that devastated farm families and rural economies while doing nothing to improve water quality.

Manitoba producers remember what that meant: lost jobs, shattered barns and communities left behind. The PCs took a different path, supporting farmers through programs that reduce emissions and sustain agriculture, like the efficient trucking initiative and the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership.

We proved that environmental progress does not come from punishing producers; it comes from partnering with them. The NDP's hog barn moratorium wasn't just a policy misstep, it punished

hard-working farmers, it stifled rural economies, proving once again that their environmental promises often come at the expense of Manitoba families.

Honourable deputy Speaker, the NDP's environmental track record tells a very different story than the one they're trying to sell today. They tripled the cost of Bipole III. They mismanaged the St. Leon and St. Joseph wind farms, leaving taxpayers on the hook.

They cancelled the Waverley West geothermal project, killing one of Canada's most promising renewable energy developments. By cancelling this project, the NDP shut down a proven opportunity to provide clean, efficient heating and cooling for thousands of Manitoba homes, delaying innovation and setting back our province's renewable energy leadership.

And they let the North End sewage plant crumble while Lake Winnipeg's health deteriorated. Now the same party that bungled all of these projects wants Manitobans to trust them with another 600 megawatts of wind power.

Given their history of delays, their history of bailouts and broken promises, they—why should anyone believe they'll deliver a single watt on time or on budget? Honourable deputy Speaker, the PC record speaks for itself. We modernized water systems from Winkler to Thompson. We launched the largest tree-planting program in Manitoba's history: 1 million trees per year.

Every time that I drive back to my constituency, I see some of that great work even along No. 1 Highway, where you got these shelterbelts and the trees are thriving and someday, there'll be many times where that No. 1 Highway won't be closed because of some of those initiatives to the health of the land.

We funded community-led climate projects from EV conversions in Stonewall to sustainable brewing in Neepawa. We showed that practical environmental leadership delivers results: cleaner air, cleaner water and stronger local economies.

This motion from the NDP is not about progress; it's about political theatrics. It's about an attempt to greenwash a failing record and distract from their growing list of broken promises.

* (11:40)

Manitobans deserve more than recycled rhetoric. They deserve a government that respects their way of life, protects their right to access Crown lands,

supports their hunting traditions and invests in real, measurable environmental outcomes.

Our team will continue to stand up for Manitobans and for every community that believes stewardship is a shared responsibility, not a government slogan. And it is—we will not support a bill of this nature—or a resolution of this nature. We have shown that we deliver on our promises, time in and time out, and that it benefited all of Manitoba.

So thank you, honourable Speaker.

Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): It's always a pleasure to get up in the Chamber and put a few words on the record about our environment. And, honourable Speaker—or honourable deputy Speaker, we are the most environmentally friendly government in the history of Manitoba, bar none. And trust us, we're just getting started.

So I appreciate the few members that have gotten up—the member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk), the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt)—for stating something that I agree with here, that the PC environmental record does speak for itself, because their record is quite simply zip, zero, zilch, nada. They did absolutely nothing over their two terms in office.

I really do wish—I really do wish—that environmental protection was a non-partisan issue. It shouldn't be. It shouldn't—it's not a left or a right, it's not about whether you're conservative or progressive or anything else. I really wish that people would view it that way, or at least I wish that the PCs would view it that way. Because, at the end of the day, it's about protecting the environment that we love: Manitoba.

And I'm so proud to be the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. It is an honour of a lifetime, as I know many members have stated that in the past. But it truly is. And so let's go through, I'll just—I'll take a few moments just to go through some key elements that I think are worth highlighting.

First of all, let's talk about our record. So we've been—we've had the opportunity over the last two years to be in government, and again, that's a deep honour. And in that two years, we have laid the groundwork and stood up an incredible amount of programs after seven and a half years of zip, zero, zilch, nada, which was the PC record on the environment.

Let's start with that wind power that the members opposite clearly hate. They clearly do not want to move into more clean energy. I know that we have

Manitoba Hydro, which has delivered clean energy for a number of decades, but we are vastly behind on wind energy.

In fact, our government is the first government, the first administration to stand up some wind energy since the Doer era. And just across the border, in North Dakota, just to highlight for Manitobans where we're at on wind, they have 4,000 megawatts of wind. Right now, we're at 200 megawatts. That's unacceptable, in my view. That's unacceptable, which is why our government immediately began this process of standing up more wind, 600 megawatts, which, unlike the members opposite, is actually generating new energy.

The members opposite like to—you know, throw shade about generating new, clean energy, but the bottom line is they didn't do any of that over their time in office, and so it's a good thing that Manitobans had the good sense to finally, after two terms, decide that it's time to actually see a government that is going to move on important things like the environment, like generating clean energy.

And so that's one thing. Some other things, we're—we've developed the first geothermal program where Manitobans can affordably install geothermal heating systems, cooling systems for their homes. We recognize that climate change is here and this is a way that we can tap into the earth's natural way of heating and cooling in an environmentally friendly way, in a way that will lower people's greenhouse gas emissions on an individual basis, as well as reduce load in the cases of those people that have electric heating, reduce load for Manitoba Hydro so that we are being more efficient. And we stood that up.

Right now, there's a program that, if you are below a certain income threshold, that you're going to be able to tap in for free. And so that's fantastic. Let's absolutely ensure that everyone can tap into this clean energy that we have here right in Manitoba. Additionally, the average Manitoban, \$75 a month—\$75 a month, 15 years, no upfront costs. What a great way to be able to heat and cool your home. That's what we did.

We also are beginning the stages of electrifying our transportation sector, a sector that has over 30 per cent of our emissions. We put in—put forth an EV rebate to make it a little bit cheaper for the average Manitoban to get an EV or a plug-in hybrid. And to make it even more accessible, we ensured that used EVs would also qualify for this program in being able to get \$2,500 because we want to make sure that all Manitobans can make the environmentally friendly choice.

What else did we do? We're well on the path to protecting Seal River, the Seal River Watershed, some of the most pristine areas in our province. And we're working together with the four nations on delineating a protection area of the watershed here that is going to be just a fantastic area of pristine nature that is going to be there for Manitobans for generation to generation to generation to come. And that is just unbelievable because that's about 6 per cent of Manitoba.

Unlike the PCs, two terms in office, you know how much they—did they protect? Was it 5 per cent? Did they move it up 5 per cent, less than Seal River? No. Didn't get to five. Did they get to four? No. Three? No. Two? No. One? No. Actually, it was 0.06—point zero six, I believe, is the amount that they moved the needle over two terms in office.

And I think that that's unfortunate because I think Manitobans want to see more protection of nature. And so we're moving on that Seal River Watershed. We are moving on a whole host of different wildlife management areas, a whole host of significant peatland areas, a whole host of provincial parks just like Lemay Forest, another area here in Winnipeg where we saved Lemay Forest, protecting another green space so that Manitobans can enjoy it for generations to come.

This is on top of what we did already for parks. We made parks free for a year. We wanted to make sure that Manitobans could enjoy the most beautiful places in our province and so we made it free. Let's make it accessible for all Manitobans.

And at the same time, to ensure that our parks get a little bit nicer, a little bit more beautified, shall I say, we put in an incredible amount of capital: \$25 million, which is an astronomical amount of capital for our provincial parks, more than any other administration in our province's history.

Now, in terms of our Path to Net Zero, something that I'm so proud of and so proud of our department for bringing it forward. It is the first time in our province's history that we have a whole-of-government approach, a whole-of-government approach that is bringing together all the different departments in government, as well as all the different sectors in our society. We want to be all pulling in the same direction.

The members opposite brought up the rural communities and brought up different agricultural groups; we want to work with everyone. We want to work with the farmers. We want to work with the different sectors in agriculture so that they can decarbonize as

well, because it's going to make it more efficient for them.

And they're right on board. Every time that I'm meeting with these different sectors, whether it's Manitoba Pork, whether it's the Beef Producers, whether it's just your average farmer, they recognize that they are the stewards of the land. And we're going to continue to work with them as they decarbonize and as we move toward net zero.

You know, I'm just—as I was listening to the members opposite and suggesting that, you know, all this leadership that took place over the environment, I really wish that their words were true. I really do.

* (11:50)

I wish that the member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk) and the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) were these environmental leaders, but that's not what we saw. In fact, we saw them as environmental laggards; they didn't do anything. And they cut the department, they cut the oversight in terms of environmental protection. They cut the folks, the good environment officers that do the good work to ensure that companies and different municipalities are doing the right thing.

And they like to tout all of these different aspects of what they did, and I think that's really unfortunate. I think it's unfortunate that they want to, you know, blow a bunch of sunshine at Manitobans when, in fact, that isn't their record.

And so, you know, I hope that the members opposite recognize the importance of the environment. I have yet to see that, but I hope that they get on board with our Path to Net Zero. It's an exciting plan, something that is going to move Manitoba forward on our way to achieving zero emissions. It is something that is just going to move us towards the economy of tomorrow.

Thank you, honourable deputy Speaker.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): I just want to correct a few things that the member just put on the record. Well, some things they're right.

Okay, so they're claiming that they spent \$25 million on parks. That was cut from \$220 million. You go right back, look at the announcements, and that was our commitment, and one of those projects on the \$220-million list was Hecla Island village road. We try and attract tourism from all over the world—and they, you know, they come up in droves to the

Interlake—and thank them for doing that and spending their money there in the businesses.

But when they get there, they're greeted by a road that is falling apart, and it was cut under this NDP government, and that is the simple fact. They're cutting everything but the grass in our parks. It is just atrocious.

But it's always important to debate matters like this in this House, honourable Speaker, and they affect the future of our province and obviously the health of our environment. Manitobans expect us to protect the air that we breathe, the land that we live on and the water that sustains our communities. But they also expect honesty, accountability and real results. And with that \$220 million that was being cut and a pittance of \$25 million being spread around the province, sprinkled around like pepper out of a pepper shaker, and then they tout that they're doing all this for Manitobans, that's just absolutely putting false words on the record.

That's why today's NDP resolution feels like a environmental plan and more like a political repair job, I would say. They're trying to fix their horrible record that they've already created in this two-year period. After a year of broken promises—and actually two years of broken promises—policy reversals and photo opportunities, the government now wants to rebrand itself as an environmental leader, honourable Speaker, but Manitobans are not fooled. They remember the NDP's record, both before 2016 and since returning to office. And they know that this resolution is about rewriting history; they're trying to erase their past. And, matter of fact, they are not protecting the environment.

The Premier (Mr. Kinew) can hold all the press conferences that he wants, but Manitobans want action, not slogans. When the Progressive Conservatives formed government in 2016, we inherited a province with mounting environmental challenges and no coherent plans to address them. Ruttan Mine, for example, was a mess that was left by this NDP government for you, the taxpayer, to clean up the mess. And we took that on as a PC government and protected the environment from that abandoned mine.

All of the accounts—as mining companies move through the province, they put money into accounts and the government takes money from them and puts it in to account. We go to look at those accounts when we're in government so we can address some of these issues. What was in them? Just a number. The actual

money was gone into general revenue under that NDP government. So they claim to be saviours, saviours of the environment, and they raided these accounts to still be disgustingly over budget.

The NDP had spent years of talking about sustainability, but very, very little was being done, honourable Speaker. We were the ones that rolled up our sleeves and we delivered as a PC government. A Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan, a plan rooted in four pillars: climate, jobs, water and nature. This was just not a glossy brochure, list of promises as the NDP spews out here and there. This was a real strategy, developed through public consultation. That's something that members opposite know nothing about, is the public consultation.

Just ask the people of Point Douglas, and this is—these are grounded in measurable results that we delivered. Manitobans themselves helped shape it because environmental policy should reflect the values of the people it serves, something else the NDP doesn't understand. They just take everything, nod and smile in committee and just throw it in the garbage as they're walking out. They don't take anything into consideration that is presented by the public.

In 2018, we gave the plan teeth by pressing—by passing the climate and green plan implementation act. It established a \$40-million climate and green fund. This supported emission reduction projects across Manitoba, everything from wetland restoration and energy efficient building retrofits to active transportation and recycling initiatives. It covered the gamut, honourable Speaker. Each dollar was directed at cutting emissions while supporting local jobs.

That's another thing the NDP does not care about, is small businesses or jobs in rural Manitoba. The only jobs they create are bureaucratic jobs. They don't step out of the way and let businesses create those jobs. We proved that you can grow an economy and protect the environment at the same time. That's what happens under a PC government.

Honourable Speaker, our government made some of the largest environmental infrastructure investments in Manitoba history. In 2020, we invested—

The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar): Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member would have four minutes left.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

CONTENTS

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Report Stage Amendments– Public Bills

Bill 225–The Public Schools Amendment Act
(Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities)
Lamoureux 3339

Concurrence and Third Readings– Amended Public Bills

Bill 225–The Public Schools Amendment Act
(Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities)
Lamoureux 3341
Cook 3342
Pankratz 3344

Concurrence and Third Readings–Public Bills

Bill 234–The Pride Month Act (Commemoration
of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)
Blashko 3345
Robbins 3346
Balcaen 3347

Debate on Concurrence and Third Readings– Public Bills

Bill 208–The Manitoba Small Business Month
Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and
Months Act Amended)
Piwniuk 3348
King 3348

Resolutions

Res. 24–Fighting Climate Change and Protecting
Manitoba's Air, Land and Water
Loiselle 3350

Questions
Nesbitt 3353
Loiselle 3353
Cross 3353
Wowchuk 3353

Debate

Nesbitt 3355
Wowchuk 3357
Moyes 3359
Johnson 3360

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

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