

MEDIA STATEMENT

Tuesday November 18, 2025



Manitoba Federation of Labour appreciates focus on needs of working families in today's Throne Speech

Statement by MFL President Kevin Rebeck in response to the Kinew government's 2025 Speech from the Throne:

Working families want to know that quality health care and public services will be there when they need them. Manitoba has suffered from a staffing crisis in health care and the broader public service for years, and we know that the Kinew government is focused on fixing it. We are glad that the Throne Speech prioritizes rebuilding the public services that we all rely on after years of cuts and neglect under Heather Stefanson and Brian Pallister. Manitobans are counting on this government to make the necessary investments to ensure safe and appropriate staffing levels and to reduce long waits and barriers to accessing services. Moving to eliminate mandatory overtime in health care and legislating safe patient ratios are critically important and long overdue steps.

At the same time, with the uncertainty of Donald Trump's tariffs continuing to loom over our economy, it was encouraging to hear the government commit to investing in Manitoba workers and Trump-proofing our local economy.

Starting with the construction of four new schools, the Manitoba Jobs Agreement will ensure that Manitoba is built by Manitoba's skilled trades workers and create good, family-supporting jobs here at home. It is time to put an end to the scourge of out-of-province license plates that was allowed to flourish on construction sites under the previous government.

As we enter cold and flu season, it was encouraging to hear the government commit to establishing new rules that will prevent employers from requiring sick workers to get doctor's notes if they take a couple of days off work to rest up and feel better. We know that when employers require sick notes for minor illnesses, it wastes a large amount of time and resources within our health care system. This commonsense change will be a positive one for working Manitobans.

On the health and safety front, we would have liked to learn more about this government's plans to follow through on consensus recommendations made by its Workplace Safety and Health Act Review Committee in January, including rule changes to require that employers provide psychologically safe and healthy workplaces. And far too many workers, particularly in health care, education, first responders, public transit and retail, continue to face extraordinarily high levels of violence on the job. Manitoba's unions want to work with employers and the government on solutions that will better protect workers and bring the rates of violence down.

Finally, as the holiday season approaches, we know that the cost of living is top of mind for many working families. And one of the biggest monthly costs for families with younger children is child care. While the provincial government's recent partnership with the federal government to boost the wages of child care workers will make a real difference for staffing and quality care, parents continue to face barriers to affordable child care spots because our province just does not have enough spaces to meet demand. While new space creation has accelerated under the NDP, Manitoba is still only halfway to meeting its commitment to add 23,000 spaces by 2026.

– 30 –

Media Contact: Andrew Tod, 204-391-0063, atod@mfl.mb.ca

USW9074:AT/EM.cope342