SPEECH
FROM THE
THRONE

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Manitoba



Delivered by:

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Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba

Photo Credit:

Cover: Swan Valley, the stretch to Magnet Hill

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Stronger Today, Stronger Tomorrow

We begin by honouring the sacred importance of these lands and waters, and of the ancestors that once walked where we are standing today. We recognize the Anishininewak, Cree, Dene, Dakota, Métis, Inuit and Anishinaabe nations who paved the way to what is now known as Manitoba – home to all treaty people.

Manitoba, we have come a long way together in just three years.

Three years ago, our province had the worst access to a family doctor in the country. Today, we lead the country in access to primary care.

Three years ago, costs were rising with no help from government. Today, we are saving families money every month.

Three years ago, encampments were growing in Manitoba. Today, our Your Way Home plan has moved 300 people from tents to housing and is backed by a new, historic $1 billion federal investment.

Manitobans will never forget that three years ago, billboards and ad campaigns targeting murder victims and their families threatened to divide us. But we came together as One Manitoba to reject division and search the landfill.

Today, we all walk and learn together on Orange Shirt Day, and First Nations are now watching over the children who were buried on the grounds of the Brandon residential school.

We have accomplished a lot in just three years, but we know there is much more work to do.

We will keep taking steps to improve health care.

After adding 4,725 net new health care staff to the frontlines, we are ready to restore the emergency services cut by the previous government.

The new Victoria ER will open in south Winnipeg next summer and the new ER in Eriksdale will open in the Interlake next fall.

And this year we will take the next steps to reestablish new ERs at the Concordia and Seven Oaks hospitals.

We will build a new mental health and addictions hospital in Winnipeg to help people who are struggling and take the pressure off our emergency rooms.

Working with Opaskwayak Cree Nation we will help fund the first phase of the Egg Lake treatment centre.

We continue to implement permanent security measures in health care centres to keep nurses, allied health professionals and all staff and patients safe.

We are making Manitoba the most seniors-friendly province in the country with an Independent Seniors Advocate and a new legislative assistant dedicated to improving seniors' care.

As we build four new Personal Care Homes, we will also help seniors stay in their homes longer with a pilot project starting in west Winnipeg to expand homecare. The pilot project restores a program cut under the previous government.

Our new northern mobile MRI has completed 1,534 scans serving communities like Thompson, Flin Flon, The Pas, Tataskweyak Cree Nation, Pimicikamak Cree Nation, and Gillam and we are investing in sustainable staffing in our northern health care centres.

Après avoir reçu le rapport du groupe de travail sur le renforcement des soins à l'Hôpital Ste. Anne Hospital, nous mettrons en œuvre un plan pour doter Sainte-Anne d'un hôpital régional.

This winter construction will begin on a new CancerCare headquarters so patients and their families get the very best care.

We will expand the scope of practice for midwives so they can administer current vaccines to newborns.

When flooding in the Parkland closed the Dauphin Emergency Room, we challenged those who said it would take years to re-open. Working with the community and our partners, we did the impossible. We restored services in just a few short weeks, and reopened the ER by Labour Day.

We take that same spirit of determination into every health care challenge we face.

We will do more to lower your costs.

Today our government is saving families hundreds of dollars a month on housing and rent, gas, childcare and more.

Next year, renters will get even more help with a new $675 cheque for renters to help you pay the bills, and new legislation to strengthen rent control. And seniors will save more than $1,000 off their rent. Plus we will put a stop to the use of AI images in real estate.

We led the way with our first-in-Canada grocery study, our ban on predatory pricing and our outlawing of anti-competitive property controls and we inspired the federal government to follow our lead. In the next year we'll introduce legislation that requires stores to list unit prices so you don't end up paying more for less.

We are saving families money every month while creating the next generation of bus riders with free transit for youth.

In the last three years we've built over 500 social and affordable housing units with thousands more under construction. A new partnership with the Manitoba Métis Federation will help us build affordable homes over the next five years, starting with the seventy we have already committed to.

We lowered pharmacare costs by making birth control and HRT free and now are going further, making the shingles vaccine free for seniors starting in July.

We are lowering costs for producers by freezing Crown land leases for a fourth year in a row and restoring the path to lease renewals.

With free child care for the families who need it most, more help for new mothers, and record investments in adult education, we are doing more to help families find a path out of poverty. This year, our new benefit for young adults leaving the child welfare system is helping more young people find independence and stability as they enter adulthood.

We will end homelessness by 2031 and make communities safer for everyone.

Our Your Way Home program is on track to reach our goal of housing 350 people next year.

Now with the largest investment of federal funding in over four decades we will build thousands of new housing units and we will end chronic homelessness in our province by 2031.

Supporting the arts and culture through initiatives like the revitalization of the Pantages Playhouse and the Junos makes Manitoba's downtown safer as we bring people together to celebrate the arts.

A 24-7 safe space is open for women, girls and 2Spirit people in Brandon, with work underway to open two more in Winnipeg and Thompson.

We have added 40 more police to the streets in Winnipeg and Brandon and invested in community safety patrols across the province. In rural Manitoba, we have added 151 RCMP officers to enforce bail provisions and brought in a new cattle inspection system and a Cattle Cop to help protect property in rural communities and attract more investment for our beef producers.

Under our leadership, law enforcement in partnership with other agencies, executed a targeted meth sweep in municipalities and First Nations across Manitoba. This was the first province-wide enforcement campaign targeting drug trafficking at the street level.

With our machete ban, we've seen a dramatic decrease in knife crime and a decrease in violent crime.

But we know there's more work to do to keep Manitoba families safe.

In the coming year we will hire more for both policing and prevention, and our new Minister responsible for First Responders will make Manitoba's presumptive coverage the best in Canada.

For years under the previous government vacancies for Crown attorneys grew, but since taking office, we've hired 28 net new crown attorneys, decreasing the vacancy rate by 12 per cent. And we will hire even more over the next four years.

We are already implementing the recommendations from the Police Headquarters report and will create a new white collar crime unit within the prosecution branch to go after fraud and corruption, and to make sure your taxpayer dollars are respected.

We are building more spaces for rehabilitation within our justice system. Construction is underway at the Dauphin Centre for Justice and we will create new space to support our corrections system at the Manitoba Developmental Centre in Portage la Prairie.

We will help our kids grow up happy and healthy

From our universal school food program that is feeding 97,000 kids daily, to our new 'every body every day' policy, we are leading the way in Canada when it comes to educating happy, healthy kids.

Building on this momentum we will proclaim January "I Love to Move Month," encouraging kids across the province to participate in physical activity every day.

We are investing in more recreation for children and families across the province with the Lorette arena opening in the new year and construction starting on the Park Community Centre in Brandon in the spring.

With 964 more teachers in classrooms, literacy screening for the youngest learners, and a new math curriculum, we are improving outcomes for Manitoba students.

We will update the curriculum to teach all students about the fight for French language rights in Manitoba and add Indigenous language educators to after school programs.

We will do more to keep staff and students safe with new investments tailored to school and community needs, and more School Resources Officers.

This year hundreds of new childcare spaces will open in communities like Portage la Prairie, Norway House Cree Nation and East St. Paul. Our historic wage increase for Early Childhood Educators continues to recruit and retain more workers to and we are adding ECE training at the new high schools we are building in Ste. Anne and Neepawa.

We will continue to grow the economy the right way

We are on track to balance the budget, and our economy is growing. We have the lowest unemployment in Canada with over 39,000 new jobs and the second highest private sector growth in the country since October 2023. Our government will match the federal government's "mega-deduction" to ensure businesses can grow and help Trump-proof our economy. And because growing our economy starts with making sure you can afford to pay your bills, our government will bring in a "mega-deduction" for your family with details to be announced in our spring budget.

We are supercharging our mining sector with a commitment to triple critical mineral production and we will get it done working in true partnership with Indigenous nations, and guided by a new Chief Mining Officer from the private sector.

With continued investments and federal partnerships in CentrePort and collaboration with the Major Projects Office and the Arctic Gateway Group to ship more goods out of Churchill, we are restoring Manitoba's position in Canada as a central transport hub.

By engaging northern Manitobans and employers on a northern workforce strategy, we will ensure institutions like University College of the North can deliver training close to home for the jobs we need.

As we build Manitoba, we are training the next generation of workers, adding 130 more apprenticeship seats including 66 in electrical and automotive industries at Red River College.

In the coming year we will work with labour and employers on programs to reduce workplace injuries and keep workers safe on the job. This will include developing a strategy to prevent workplace violence, as well as initiatives to strengthen protections for workers' mental health.

New trade offices in Mexico, India and Europe will help us fight back against Trump's tariffs while our new provincial economic development agency, led by Chuck Davidson, will help existing Manitoba businesses grow and attract new ones.

This year, Manitoba is all in for our funding for the Global Agricultural Technology Exchange building in downtown Winnipeg, helping us market Manitoba grains to the world.

To ensure that Manitoba sees the benefits of federal defense investments, we've created the Manitoba-Canada Defense Alliance. Bringing together post-secondary institutions and the Canadian Armed Forces, we will grow our defense and aerospace sectors and create good jobs.

We are taking the next steps on critical infrastructure projects across the province including the McGillivray interchange, the Wasagamack airport, Highway 2 in Westman, Highway 8 in the Interlake and Highway 6 in northern Manitoba and a final route for twinning Highway 1.

We will do more to protect the environment

We are leading the way in Canada when it comes to growing the economy in the right way, while protecting our environment and our way of life.

We listened to the community and stopped an AI data centre from being built in Île-des-Chênes.

We are working with Indigenous nations, Federal and municipal governments alongside environmental organizations to protect our land, water and wildlife in the Seal River Watershed and the Western Hudson Bay.

We know protecting nature also helps support our thriving tourism industry that brings the world to explore our beautiful province.

Our review of the Environment Act will increase public trust and improve impact assessments, allowing us to give clear answers to communities, Indigenous nations and businesses sooner.

We will bring in legislation with specific targets and accountability to help our province be net zero by 2050.

Our next new investment in renewable energy will be a pilot project for battery storage to learn more about how this critical renewable can support our clean energy grid.

We will incentivize more geothermal installations in new builds, like the 1,000 new homes with geothermal in Southwood Circle.

We are protecting our water with guidance from the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Advisory group and new water action plans to strengthen water security and combat aquatic invasive species. With full funding and a commitment to create good union jobs for phase 3 of the North End Water Pollution Control Centre we will help Winnipeg grow and protect the health of Lake Winnipeg.

With new park licences plates and more cabins at St. Malo and at Camp Morton, we are giving families more opportunities to enjoy our parks.

We will keep listening and responding to all Manitobans

When the worst flood in decades hit this past summer, our government was on the ground to help, protecting homes, and rebuilding highways and roads within days.

As extreme weather events continue to impact our province, we are changing government policy to expand flood relief and growing our emergency management team to give families and communities more support. In keeping with this change, we will provide flood relief for families in Steinbach.

We will create a Digital Services working group that works with municipalities to make recommendations about cell coverage and connectivity and push the Federal government to hold companies accountable.

Pour appuyer les efforts visant à faire du Manitoba une province véritablement bilingue, le Manitoba a récemment participé au 20e Sommet de l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, et il en est devenu membre observateur. Notre nouvelle stratégie provinciale sur le bilinguisme sera publiée au printemps.

We are stepping up supports for families who have children with autism with faster diagnoses, quicker access to therapy and more respite support.

But as the Integrated Adult Services report shows, there is a lot more work to do to close gaps from childhood to adulthood and support people throughout their lives.

Our government is grateful for the work of the late Amelia Hampton and her family, alongside Tyson Sylvester, and the steering committee. We are committed to implementing all thirteen recommendations including creating a provincial disability advocate and we will keep our commitment to increase wages for disability support workers.

We have come a long way in just three years.

Three years ago, Manitobans put their trust in a new government to change our province for the better.

There is more to do but it is clear we are moving in the right direction.

More health care workers and health care services for your family.

Lower costs on groceries, gas, childcare and housing.

A compassionate, coordinated plan that is ending homelessness.

An economy that is growing with good jobs, and on track to balance.

By listening to you, the people of Manitoba, and responding with real action, we are facing challenges together, and making our province stronger every day.

We have come a long way in just three years. And together, we're going to keep building on that work. So that every Manitoban today, and our kids and grandkids tomorrow, can say:

This is who I am. This is where I'm from. I'm proud to be a Manitoban.