



SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

AT THE OPENING OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE 42ND LEGISLATURE

NOVEMBER 23, 2021

Overview

The Honourable Janice Filmon, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba, unveiled the Manitoba Government's priorities for the coming year in Tuesday's Speech from the Throne, which opened the Fourth Session of the 42nd Legislature.

This marked Premier Stefanson's first throne speech since being sworn in as Manitoba's 24th Premier earlier this month. The speech contained several promises to consult Manitobans more often and focused on improving healthcare, offering more support to those affected by COVID-19, and economic recovery.

The Government also affirmed its commitment to working with Indigenous Peoples to advance shared goals and to promote truth and reconciliation. A priority for the Premier is repairing broken relationships on a foundation of meaningful dialogue and engagement with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leaders. Below are some highlights from the speech that will be of interest to our Chamber network.

Speech Highlights and Implications for Businesses

- In its Speech from the Throne, the Government conveyed that economic recovery is a top priority as the pandemic eases. To that end, the Progressive Conservatives have committed to continuing to support businesses so they can produce the goods and services Manitobans rely on and provide jobs to Manitobans. **While this is a positive signal, we will be looking to the Government for details on continued supports to industries and businesses hardest hit by COVID-19.**
- Businesses are experiencing skilled labour shortages and workforce challenges not seen in years. In our conversations with Manitoba business leaders, we hear about the variety of workforce challenges they are facing. In Tuesday's throne speech, we were pleased to see a focus on workforce development. Specifically, the Government has committed to **increasing investments in education and training, with a focus on working with businesses to attract workers from around the world to fill labour gaps.**
- The Government supports closer collaboration between advanced education and training institutions, and Manitoba employers. To accelerate post-COVID economic recovery and advance the economy, the Progressive Conservatives will continue with the recently launched Skills, Talent and Knowledge Strategy: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/mbskills/index.html>



- The Government prioritized immigration in its throne speech by stating that it will collaborate with the federal government to strengthen Manitoba's immigration and provincial nominee programs by: maximizing the number of people coming into the province every year, fulfilling Manitoba's obligation of producing a welcoming new home for refugees, and enhancing recognition of foreign credentials to match professionals with meaningful work. **The Government has recognized that workforce challenges are a critical issue affecting many sectors of our economy and we are pleased to see them make this a priority.**
- The Progressive Conservatives acknowledge that to grow the economy, we must make Manitoba more attractive as we compete for investment and trade opportunities around the world. Access to capital continues to be a challenge for many businesses at all stages of their development. **The Government has committed to proceeding with a venture capital framework and to work with other provinces and territories to ensure investors and business are served effectively by regulated markets.**
- In its throne speech, the Government also included some sector-specific priorities. Northern communities and First Nations have abundant mineral resources on their doorsteps, yet mining activity is not being fully capitalized. The Province indicated that it is committed to strengthening efforts to make Manitoba more attractive for investment with expanding job opportunities. We are pleased to see the Government's willingness to strengthen mining activity for future investment in this speech.

Manitoba Chambers of Commerce Perspective

In this throne speech, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce was looking for a more collaborative tone from this new Premier and a willingness for her government to work with Manitobans in terms of key challenges, including the economy, healthcare, and workforce. We recognize that we are all in this together and when we work together, we are better able to arrive at solutions that directly address the key challenges we are facing.

Overall, the Government spoke directly to businesses in its throne speech on Tuesday. The Province has made it clear that it is willing to listen to Manitobans and it committed to outreach with the business community. The Speech from the Throne demonstrated a definite change in tone, a focus on workforce, a focus on venture capital framework (which has long been needed in Manitoba), and a commitment to investing in Manitoba's economic recovery. We look forward to more detail in terms of how the Government will be able to accomplish these goals, including what continued supports for hardest hit businesses will look like.

Important Links

Speech from the Throne:

https://www.manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/thronespeech/throne_speech_nov_2021.pdf