

Fifth Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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authority of
The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	N.D.P.
BLAIKIE, Bill, Hon.	Elmwood	N.D.P.
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BRAUN, Erna	Rossmere	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
BRIESE, Stuart	Ste. Rose	P.C.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
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DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
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MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
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SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
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WHITEHEAD, Frank	The Pas	N.D.P.
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	N.D.P.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.
<i>Vacant</i>	Inkster	
<i>Vacant</i>	Lac du Bonnet	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 6, 2011

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. 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, 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.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 220—The Justice for Victims of
Child Pornography Act**

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Yes, good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 220, The Justice for Victims of Child Pornography Act, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Goertzen: While child predators face criminal sanctions under the Criminal Code of Canada for creating, distributing, publishing or possessing child pornography, these criminal activities escape responsibility through civil action.

This bill, The Justice for Victims of Child Pornography Act, will allow the Province to sue in civil court those who have been convicted of victimizing children, where those children are unidentified, and the financial awards will be used to help victims and organizations dedicated to reducing child pornography in the province of Manitoba.

While this bill to protect children has been rejected by the NDP in the past, it's received support from organizations combating child pornography in Manitoba, and I'm pleased to introduce it in the House on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? [*Agreed*]

PETITIONS

PTH 5—Reducing Speed Limit

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

Concerns continue to be raised about the number of motor vehicle accidents at the intersection of PTH No. 5 and PR No. 276 and at the intersection of PTH No. 5 and PR No. 68.

The Rural Municipality of Ste. Rose and the Town of Ste. Rose have both raised concerns with the Highway Traffic Board about the current speed limit on the portion of PTH No. 5 in the vicinity of Ste. Rose du Lac.

Other stakeholders, including the Ste. Rose General Hospital, Ste. Rose and Laurier fire departments, East Parkland Medical Group and the Ste. Rose and District Community Resource Council, have also suggested the lowering of the current 100-kilometre-an-hour speed limit on a portion of PTH 5 may help reduce the potential for collisions.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to consider the importance of reducing the speed limit on PTH 5 to 80 kilometres an hour in the vicinity of the town of Ste. Rose from the west side of the Turtle River Bridge to the south side of the access to the Ste. Rose Auction Mart to help better protect motorist safety.

This petition is signed by P. Sigurdson, L. Gagnon and L. Jonston and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with our Rule 132(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to be received by the House.

Auto Theft—Court Order Breaches

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

On December 11th, 2009, in Winnipeg, Zdzislaw Andrzejczak was killed when the car that he was driving collided with a stolen vehicle.

The death of Mr. Andrzejczak, a husband and a father, along with too many other deaths and injuries involving stolen vehicles, was a preventable tragedy.

Many of those accused in fatalities involving stolen vehicles were previously known to police and identified as chronic and high-risk car thieves who had court orders against them.

Chronic car thieves pose a risk to the safety of all Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request the Minister of Justice to consider ensuring that all court orders for car thieves are vigorously monitored and enforced.

And to request the Minister of Justice to consider ensuring that all breaches of court orders on car thieves are reported to police and vigorously prosecuted.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by B. Pogorzelec, B. Lehmann, C. Burdge and thousands of other concerned Manitobans.

Bipole III—Cost to Manitoba Families

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Manitoba Hydro has been directed by the provincial government to construct its next high voltage direct transmission line, Bipole III, down the west side of Manitoba.

This will cost each family of four in Manitoba \$11,748 more than the east-side route, which is also shorter and more reliable.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to build the Bipole III transmission line on the shorter and more reliable east side of Lake Winnipeg in order to save each Manitoba family of four \$11,748.

This petition is signed by M. Wiebe, D. Frost, M. Graafland and many, many more fine Manitobans.

* (13:40)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Flooding and Ice Jams Update

Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Water Stewardship): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

The month of May brought with it precipitation of 250 to 300 per cent of normal in some parts of the province. For example, Brandon normally gets about 50 mm of rain in May but received around 165 mm or 6.5 inches last month. This extremely wet month is resulting in additional crests on the Souris and Assiniboine rivers and is pushing projected lake crests later and at higher levels. Lake Manitoba which is now at 815.78 feet is now expected to crest at around 816.5 feet in July. The continued unfavourable weather is adding to a very stressful time for many Manitoban families who have lost their home or treasured cottage as well as those who are facing an ongoing threat from the high lake and river levels.

Provincial officials are working with communities along the Souris and Assiniboine rivers to ensure they still have adequate flood protection in place. Officials are also working in The Pas to ensure Ralls Island is prepared to handle flows coming from Alberta and Saskatchewan in the coming weeks.

Provincial staff also continue to work with municipalities to assess damages in the areas hit hard by last week's violent storm. On Saturday, residents in the Ochre River and Crescent Beach areas of Dauphin Lake were once again issued mandatory evacuation notices. The Premier (Mr. Selinger) joined the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) in the Parklands region on the weekend visiting Ste. Rose and seeing damage on Dauphin Lake and Ochre River.

The Premier was also in St. Laurent on Friday where he was able to see first-hand the hundreds of damaged properties and very difficult situations residents and cottage owners are facing as a result of last week's storm. Provincial officials continue to work with the RM to establish a re-entry plan for residents wherever possible. Manitoba Hydro also continues to work to restore power to the area and local roads are still in the process of being repaired.

There were approximately 500 people evacuated as a direct result of last week's storm, for a total of 2,058 across the province. There are 40 states of

local emergency in place, almost double the number prior to last week's storm.

The resilience and the resourcefulness of the communities and families in the affected areas is inspiring to all Manitobans. We will continue to be there to support local governments and families during this very difficult time.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): I thank the minister for the latest update on the flood situation.

It continues to be a very challenging situation with respect to flooding and excess moisture in many different regions of Manitoba. For example, over the past few days, steps have been taken to raise the dikes along Ralls Island near The Pas in anticipation of increased flows for the Saskatchewan River. Mandatory evacuations remain in effect for many different communities such as the RM of St. Laurent, the RM of Woodlands and the Ochre River-Crescent Beach area near Dauphin, among others.

I had a chance to visit the Dauphin area on the weekend and to see first-hand the impact of flooding on Lake Dauphin. There was considerable damage sustained to a large number of properties there.

A concerted effort continues to protect properties along Lake Manitoba in places such as the RM of Siglunes. We are very appreciative of the government officials, municipal officials and countless volunteers who are working so diligently on that front.

Last week's storm took a heavy toll on many communities, with basement flooding in places such as Deloraine and McCreary. Road damage was also suffered in numerous municipalities. Many are keeping a watchful eye on the levels of the rivers such as Souris, especially after heavy rains south of the border caused the Souris to rise leading to an evacuation order in Minot, North Dakota, last week.

We again extend our thanks to all those working on the Manitoba flood front. This season's flood fight is by no means over, and a concerted effort is going to be required for many weeks to come.

Once again, we appreciate the ongoing updates on these important issues. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to speak to the minister's statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her update on the situation in flooding and excess moisture in many parts of Manitoba from The Pas to Lake Manitoba to Dauphin Lake to the Assiniboine River to the Souris River and, indeed, elsewhere.

I want to join others in extending sympathy to those who have lost a home or a cottage or who are unable to seed their field this year because of the excess moisture.

I certainly want to recognize the efforts of many often heroic efforts that have been made in trying to deal with this flood situation and the very difficult weather circumstances.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to pay a brief tribute to Bill Comaskey, the former long-time mayor of Thompson, who passed away very recently.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from Iceland, we have Steffan Jonsson, Gunnsteinn Sigurdsson, Gufrun Halldorsdottir, Olafur Arnarson and Unnur Helga Ottarsdottir, who are the guests of the honourable Minister for Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade (Mr. Bjornson).

And also in the public gallery we have from Kelvin High School, we have 23 grade 9 students under the direction of Ms. Katrina Paquin. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard).

And also in the public gallery we have from Elmwood High School, we have 11 grade 9 students under the direction of Ms. Sarah Wowchuk. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you all here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Lake Winnipeg

Government Record on Water Quality

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): I, too, would like to pay tribute to Bill Comaskey and the family of Bill Comaskey on his passing. He was somebody that provided great leadership for the City of Thompson, and he certainly will be missed.

Mr. Speaker, the—Lake Winnipeg is a lake that for Manitobans from all walks of life is a very, very important lake. It is one that provides a life for those who are involved in fisheries. It is an important place of recreation for many, many families around the province of Manitoba.

After 12 years of NDP government, that lake, by the government's own admission, is in worse shape than it has ever been. I want to ask the Premier: How does he account for his incredible failure on the issue of Lake Winnipeg?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, just before I get to the question, again, on behalf of all members of the Legislature, we'd like to extend our condolences to the Comaskey family and honour and recognize the work of Bill Comaskey when he was the mayor. We all knew him when he was the mayor. He did a terrific job for many years.

With the question with respect to Lake Winnipeg, this is the first government in the history of the province that ever put a comprehensive plan together to deal with the nutrification of Lake Winnipeg, and it started with a reduction of phosphorus amounts and an ongoing research program, and, as the research has evolved, we have listened to the results of that and continue to evolve our policies to deal with that.

Members opposite will remember when we put our first moratorium on the expansion of hog barns that followed practices that put too much product on the land that generated nutrients and, specifically, phosphorus that goes into the lake, and the members opposite opposed that.

The member opposite will know that when we requested the City and required the City to upgrade its sewage treatment plan in order to reduce the amount of negative chemicals that go into the lake, that they also opposed that.

Mr. McFadyen: By the government's own admission, Lake Winnipeg is worse today than it was when they started 12 years ago, and that's obvious to every Manitoban, Mr. Speaker, but their record on Lake Winnipeg is one of issuing news releases and then neglecting the problem and failing to get results for Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, the news releases piled up again with yet another promise last week with only eight days remaining in the legislative session. Bringing in a plan with eight days left in the session and the

desperation leading up to an election campaign hasn't fooled anybody.

Will he acknowledge that when it comes to cleaning up Lake Winnipeg, they're all press releases and no action?

* (13:50)

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I reiterate, this is the first government in the history of the province that has put together a comprehensive plan to deal with the nutrification of Lake Winnipeg, and every step of the way the Leader of the Opposition and his caucus have opposed that plan. They have done everything they can to resist it, to stop it, to filibuster it and to bring it to an end. The ones that are causing the problems of Lake Winnipeg are the opposition members.

This side of the House has taken very significant measures. Lake-friendly products have been brought into play. The reduction of phosphorus has come into play. Riparian tax credits have been put into play to reduce the amount of animals that are interacting with the lake, and, as well, Mr. Speaker, we have taken—made very significant investments in sewage treatment all throughout the province.

And, now, again, we require the City of Winnipeg to reduce the amount of dangerous chemicals they are putting into the lake as well as phosphorus, and these measures are intended to respond to the state-of-the-art research which says we need to reduce phosphorus by 50 per cent.

We will do it; they will oppose it.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, and what we oppose is this NDP government's failure to clean up Lake Winnipeg. What we support are results for Lake Winnipeg, not news releases, not photo ops.

This is the party that when it comes to water, on the floodway as an example, Mr. Speaker, 23 photo ops and a flood, and our party, zero photo ops and a floodway. That's the difference between them and us.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to Lake Winnipeg, cleaning up Lake Winnipeg, it's the same thing: the party of photo ops versus the party of results.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask this Premier: Given that the only thing that we know for sure is that 12 years after taking government the lake is in worse shape than ever, how can he stand up today with any degree of credibility and claim to be the saviour of

Lake Winnipeg, when, in fact, the exact opposite is true?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the amount of hypocrisy coming from the member opposite is absolutely astounding. When we brought in the hog moratorium, they opposed it. When we brought in phosphorus regulation, they opposed it. When we brought in measures to improve our wetlands, they opposed it. When we brought in measures to deal with septic fields, they opposed it. Every single step of the way, the members opposite have said they oppose it.

The one election promise that they have made public, Mr. Speaker, is to cancel the upgrade to the sewage treatment plant in Winnipeg. They have said they will cut at least \$350 million out of that plan. That would guarantee that the Winnipeg sewage treatment plant would not do the job of protecting Lake Winnipeg.

If anybody should be ashamed, it's the Leader of the Opposition.

Recommendations on Nutrient Removal

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Mr. McFadyen: Well, Mr. Speaker, I—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Mr. McFadyen: And the NDP leader has had a bad weekend. That's apparent.

But, Mr. Speaker, the reality is this—well, the fact is that the lake, by their own admission, is in worse shape than ever. The reality is this: that we support the scientists, we support getting results, and, in fact, what they have done for the last six years is attack the scientists, attack those who recommended that they go with a phosphates-first policy. They attacked the scientists for six years, and then they admitted at the end of last week that they were wrong for the last six years, and they flip-flopped on the issue of nitrogen removal.

I want to ask the Premier: Given that even as of the end of last week, it's abundantly clear that he has no clue as to what he was doing, why would he spend six years attacking the scientists, Mr. Speaker, only to flip-flop with eight days left in the session?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I would not want anybody to take the characterization of the Leader of the Opposition seriously. That is a complete distortion of the facts.

The facts are the following: Everybody—the entire scientific community as well as the government has always said that the first priority is to reduce phosphorus. They have now said that with the continuing eutrophication of the lake, that a 50 per cent in phosphorus is the primary objective. We have listened to the scientists on that. Doctor Leavitt has been doing the original research on Lake Winnipeg. He's been doing it for five years. We have provided him with the financial support to do that because, unlike the members opposite, we actually like to make public policy decisions based on scientific information.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that information has said, reduce phosphorus. The members opposite, regardless of that information, continue—they continue to resist and oppose all those measures which will clean up Lake Winnipeg. Biological nutrient removal, reduction of phosphorus off of farmland, all of those measures they have opposed and they continue to oppose it.

That is ignorance, Mr. Speaker, ignorance on stilts.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, you know, no amount of shouting changes the fact that for six years—for six years—he opposed the advice of the scientific community. For six years he pursued a path that the City of Winnipeg, that the scientists, that all those who are genuinely interested in cleaning up Lake Winnipeg said they should have done. With eight days left in the session, at the end of last week, he flip-flops on the issue of nitrogen.

It's reported all through the media, Mr. Speaker. Given that that was his position at the end of last week, and then I think he tried to change his position about 12 hours later, given that he's been around for 12 years and he can't decide what he wants to do at this point in the game, why not just acknowledge he doesn't have a clue as to what he's doing, he doesn't have the strength to make a decision and he's a total failure on the issue of Lake Winnipeg?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, anybody in the Legislature that just heard the last argument will know it's had absolutely no substance in that argument. That is exactly what the Leader of the Opposition consistently does. When he doesn't like

the way something's going in the Legislature, he launches into a personal attack instead of dealing with the reality.

The reality is this is the only government—this is the only government in the history of the Province that has put a plan in place to reduce the nutrification and the eutrophication of Lake Winnipeg. We've done it by bringing in a hog barn expansion moratorium, vigorously opposed by the members opposite. We are the province that decided to bring in legislation to reduce phosphorus in all the products that people use in their homes, including laundry detergent and dishwasher detergent. That was a precedent-setting measure in this province which has now travelled across the country, has been embraced by the federal government. The members opposite opposed it.

When it comes to treating sewage in the city of Winnipeg, we have said we need a biological nutrient-removal system that will deal with ammonia, it will deal with phosphorus, it would allow us to adapt to future research as it comes forward, and the members opposite have opposed it.

They are the party of do nothing and opposition. We are the party that's getting it done.

Mr. McFadyen: Well, Mr. Speaker, after six years of criticizing the scientific community for the advice that they got on cleaning up Lake Winnipeg, at the end of last week he finally acknowledges that he was dead wrong, that he was wrong to ignore the scientific advice.

And we've lost six years in the process, six years of delay, six years of denial of what the scientists were saying, six years of phony promises and news releases. The fact is that the promise to clean up Lake Winnipeg is worth nothing more than his phony promise to end hallway medicine.

Why doesn't he acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, he doesn't have what it takes to clean up Lake Winnipeg? Why doesn't he acknowledge that even as of this week he doesn't have any idea which direction he's going on on nitrogen, phosphates or anything else, because after 12 years of failure, what else could Manitobans expect from him?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, one of the great things that we have going for us in this Legislature is an instrument called *Hansard*. And when you look back at *Hansard* you will see that four years ago every single member on the opposition bench opposed the hog barn moratorium. Every single member opposed

reducing phosphorus. For four years and longer, they have done absolutely nothing to move the agenda forward on saving Lake Winnipeg.

Today the Leader of the Opposition likes to position himself as being the person that is concerned about Lake Winnipeg. If he was concerned about Lake Winnipeg, why did he vote against the hog moratorium? If he's concerned about Lake Winnipeg, why does he oppose sewage treatment to the highest standard in the city of Winnipeg? Why does he oppose the inclusion of septic fields under proper regulation in the province?

Every single measure taken by this government to improve Lake Winnipeg has been opposed by the members opposite. The historical record *Hansard* shows it. He can run but he can't hide from his own record.

* (14:00)

Lake Manitoba Flooding Mitigation and Financial Compensation Plans

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, structural experts throughout the rural municipality of St. Laurent, today, are checking out conditions of homes and cottages. It is one of the many areas around Lake Manitoba where heavy property damage was sustained due to flooding. The Portage Diversion continues to run at very high levels, dumping more and more water into Lake Manitoba, which is already very high. These affecting—this is affecting agriculture producers, First Nation communities and property owners around the lake. People with ties to the lake are very fearful about the long-term future.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick) again: What is the timeline to stop these high flows of water into Lake Manitoba? The people affected, they deserve answers.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I again had the opportunity to visit with the people in St. Laurent on Friday morning, and that was the same day that we announced \$3.2 million of additional resources for young people, many of whom have been volunteering their time, to help out communities up and down the lake.

We now have put an employment program in place that will allow each municipality to hire up to 15 young people for 12 weeks to help with flood prevention, to help with cleanup, to help with

restoration, to do all those things to provide relief to the many, many hundreds of volunteers throughout Manitoba, including civil servants, both federally and provincially, and municipally, that are doing everything they can to help the people on Lake Manitoba.

And, in my next response, I will once again outline the record-setting compensation program we have for the people on Lake Manitoba.

Mr. Eichler: The Premier has visited the municipalities along the east side of Lake Manitoba on Friday to look at the damage. I have no doubt that he's moved by the level of devastation that these properties sustained thanks to the high level of Lake Manitoba in last week's vicious storm.

The Premier was cited and stated in the *Winnipeg Sun* last Friday as saying his government was going to keep an open mind on the compensation program for those affected along Lake Manitoba.

I'd like to table this article. The Premier says, and he—and I quote: definitely going to keep an eye on—open mind on what additional measures we can take. End of quote.

Mr. Speaker, can the Premier provide to those affected by flooding on Lake Manitoba an overview of what he meant by this statement?

Mr. Selinger: What I meant by the statement is underlined by the program we've put in place, and the member will know that the program we've put in place has been one that has not been seen in the province before.

We've had unprecedented conditions of excess moisture in that area. We've put a program in place of unprecedented support for the people in that area, and that includes the full costs of doing an engineering study that people may need to do to protect their homes or their cottages. That includes, for the first time ever, structural support for the people that own cottages. That includes, for the first time ever, a record level of compensation for a homeowner, up to \$222,000 if they get sustained damage as a result of the high winds and the high water on the lake.

We are very committed to doing justice to the people that have suffered from this horrendous record amount of unprecedented mitigation in the

province of Manitoba. We have put that program in place. The member knows that. I know the member himself is very concerned about it because he represents people in that area, and we will continue to keep an open mind to other measures that are necessary, such as the Green Team, which we announced Friday.

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, many lives have been turned upside down as a result of the decision to dump more water into Lake Manitoba. There is ongoing confusion arousing who—confusing arising for who will be eligible for compensation and who will not. For example, some farmers around Lake Manitoba, nearby Dog Lake area, aren't quite sure where they will stand with the compensation package or not. Some who lost homes, seasonal properties, also have questions about the level of coverage.

We have said many times before, communication throughout this flood is critical. Can the Premier assure those affected Manitobans that full details of the compensation program will be conveyed as soon as possible? People need answers so they can make those decisions.

Mr. Selinger: I thank the member for the question. The member knows, I'm sure, that we've put a special unit in place through the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation to deal with the compensation issues. They have been seized of this matter. They are working very diligently on it.

If the member has any specific individual landowner or producer or livestock owner or cottage owner that is, in any way, seeking clarification, I recommend that he approach either myself or the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) or the minister—or the member representing the Interlake, and we will assist him and we will assist that individual to get all the clarification we need.

We do want good information made available to people. We want them to be able to make a very simple, easy-to-do application so they can apply for compensation, and I can tell you, we put the compensation program in place in record time and we are processing applications and we expect payouts. Some payouts may have occurred already. If not, they will occur very soon.

So I thank the member for the question and we will work with him to help the members in Manitoba communities affected by this flood.

**Agriculture Industry
Excess Moisture Effect on Seeding**

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): I hope the cheques get out faster than the feed freight assistance cheques that are just coming out today from last January.

Mr. Speaker, the extreme wet spring conditions that we've experienced in the different regions of Manitoba is currently interfering with the seeding. Even though producers have used a number of different techniques to get seed in the ground, it appears that a large number of acres will go unseeded.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Agriculture indicate what type of analysis his department is currently undertaking with respect to the impact of excess moisture on spring seeding?

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): I thank my friend from across the way for his question.

He is right. There is a lot of farmers right now who have their backs against the wall in terms of getting out to do their seeding. We're working with farmers from every part of this province because this is a widespread phenomenon that we're seeing.

My encouragement would be to have farmers in the area maintain close contact with our MAFRI offices so that we know exactly how many acres we will be dealing with. We know that's going to be a big number, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to say, too, we had a very good meeting last week with Mr.—Minister Gerry Ritz. He's fully apprised of what we're up against here in Manitoba, and we're going to work together to make sure that the needs of the farmers are met, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Graydon: Mr. Speaker, the subsoil is saturated. This week's forecast is not favourable for seeding in a number of regions of Manitoba. Good drying days have been few and far between. We're also aware that a lot of crops are not rot tolerant. Producers are modifying their seeding intentions and are changing on a daily basis. Extending the crop insurance deadline with reduced coverage may not be an option for crop rotation reasons.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Agriculture provide us with an update today as to the projections for unseeded acres for Manitoba, and what is his department's analysis showing?

Mr. Struthers: Mr. Speaker, our department's analysis is showing exactly what the member has put on the record here. Due to a whole number of factors, there's going to be a lot of acres in this province that will go unseeded.

Between now and the final deadline for crop insurance, which is the 20th of June, there could be some improvements, depending on the weather. But I think it's pretty clear, there are large sections of this province that will go unseeded and that, given the track record of this government in conjunction with the federal government, farmers can count on us to be there to help them when they need us.

Mr. Graydon: Mr. Speaker, we know that June 15th and June 20th are important crop insurance deadlines. That's why it's so important to gauge the seeding progress.

I understand the Minister of Agriculture has been in discussion with his federal counterpart, Minister Ritz, about a potential AgriRecovery program to support producers who are seriously impacted by excess moisture.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Agriculture provide this House and our producers with an update on his discussions with his federal counterparts about this year's adverse cropping conditions?

Mr. Struthers: Sure, Mr. Speaker. We did have a good meeting, the federal minister and myself and our officials. Our officials continue to meet to talk about the number of acres that will go unseeded in Manitoba.

I do, Mr. Speaker, want to say that in times of these, when you see the kind of efforts that farmers are going to to get their crops in, they need to be commended, all kinds of ideas that have come forward to me in my travels with the—talking with farmers.

I want to also point out that the number of farmers participating in Excess Moisture Insurance has increased last year to this. So farmers are out there taking every precaution that they can to be that first line of defence. They know they have a government here that they can count on for support.

**Southwest Manitoba Flooding
Financial Compensation For Residents**

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Municipalities in southwestern Manitoba have been battling flood waters since mid-April. Last Tuesday night, some

areas saw up to five inches of rain, putting most of the affected municipalities on flood alert again.

In my constituency, Mr. Speaker, residents are watching with disbelief as a 500-acre marsh is growing to a 3,000-plus-acre lake. In the RM of Whitehead one area of flooding is over four miles long and more than two miles wide, and it's getting bigger every day as the water can't clear the area. At least four permanent all-weather roads have been swallowed up by this water mass alone.

Mr. Speaker, more severe thunderstorms with hail have hit parts of southwestern Manitoba. Can the minister responsible assure municipalities by the latest adverse weather conditions that assistance will be available to help them recover?

*(14:10)

Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Water Stewardship): Mr. Speaker, I was touring southwest Manitoba yesterday in the exact area that the member of speaking—is speaking of, and there are indeed very high waters on the Souris River. There is also saturated soil and a lot of water lying on the land, which is why we moved very quickly to talk to producers throughout the areas, talk to, through MAFRI staff—to talk about compensation that will be forthcoming. We are encouraging farmers to get their reports in as quickly as possible so that we can have a very good sense not only of southwest Manitoba but throughout Manitoba.

This, indeed, is a system that is now a multiple set of events. It's not just a spring thaw or a one-rainstorm event. There's a series of events that is creating a very serious situation throughout Manitoba.

Mrs. Rowat: Over the past seven weeks, the RM of Elton in the southwestern part of Manitoba has been working hard to rebuild road access for their residents. They rebuilt 20 washouts and were in the process of completing road repairs on many others. Tuesday's extreme weather reversed all progress that has been made by these—this municipality. All 20 rebuilt roads were once again washed out. All their efforts were lost in a matter of minutes.

The cost associated for infrastructure rebuilding will be at least double, maybe triple to what was budgeted by many municipalities. These costs pose a considerable financial burden.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain what steps are being taken to address the types of ongoing

flood-related concerns being brought forward to us by the municipalities such as Elton? This is not a new disaster; this has been going on for seven weeks.

Ms. Melnick: Mr. Speaker, we are aware of washouts in roads. We're aware of closed roads. Certainly, MIT has been working diligently to maintain roads open.

In the compensation package that was announced by the Premier (Mr. Selinger) some two weeks ago, through DFA there is a hundred-thousand-dollar advance that is available through rural municipalities in advance of DFA claims. It's very important that all municipalities know that this is available to them.

Certainly, on this side of the House, we're doing our best to communicate that. It would be helpful for members in their local areas to also communicate that. We want to make sure that communities know that they can get this hundred-thousand-dollar advance, that it is in advance of DFA claims and that they can claim for it as soon as today, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Rowat: Producers in the Glenwood municipality are also being hit very hard with heavy rains and flooding, Mr. Speaker.

The Edmund family have proudly farmed in the 'glidwin'—Glenwood municipality for 110 years. This spring, their century farm is virtually under water, Mr. Speaker. To enter and exit this farm site, they have to travel through water. I'd like to table some pictures for the House.

In the 110 years the family has had the farm, the Edmunds have never had to face this type of water issues. David Edmund has come to realize that he will not plant a crop this year and he will have trouble feeding his cattle. With this devastating fact comes the added burden of having to move his cattle to safety by trailer because the water is too high for the cattle to move on their own.

Mr. Speaker, the decisions are being made with regard to compensation in several areas of this province. Can the minister responsible give the Edmund family and other 'similarly'—similarly affected families some assurance that appropriate compensation is on its way for this area of the province?

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): And, certainly, the case that my friend from across the way has brought forward is an important one, and there are so many in

that southwest corner, as well as other regions of Manitoba, that we will be taking a very close look at.

Two things: First of all, the Edmund family, if they can't get their acres seeded by the deadline of July 20—sorry, of June 20th—we will be working with them to make sure that they do have a payout. We also have the regular disaster financial assistance program that's available to them.

My advice would be to make sure they have contact with our MAFRI offices to make sure we know exactly what their challenges are so that we can deal with, in a real way, the kind of challenges that this family faces.

We know that there's a lot of families out there who are facing hurt right now, and we know that we have to be there for them, Mr. Speaker, so I would encourage members opposite to share those stories with us.

Violent Crime Rate Government Record

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, under this soft-on-crime NDP government Winnipeg has become the violent crime capital of Canada according to Statistics Canada. Sadly, we see the evidence of this almost each and every day. While the NDP government spews rhetoric and they talk tough here in the Legislature, out in the real world it's a very, very different story.

This weekend another violent stabbing, this time involving seven suspects, four adults, a 13-year-old boy and two 14-year-old girls.

The violent crime in Winnipeg isn't limited by age. It isn't limited by gender. Why has this soft-on-crime NDP government allowed Winnipeg to become the violent crime capital of Canada? And we see the results every weekend, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): You're measured by your actions or measured by your words, and I'll take the actions that our government has taken since forming government in 1999 to deal with violent crime.

As of Thursday's announcement, we've now added 261 policing positions across the province, Mr. Speaker, more than 100 in the city of Winnipeg alone, and what do they all have in common? Not a single one of them was supported by the members on the Progressive Conservative side of the House.

We've also, of course, funded the police helicopter doing its work in the city of Winnipeg solving crimes. We've also, of course, added the police cadet program in partnership with the City of Winnipeg. The successful program had 30 cadets last year, now up to 50 cadets this year, and I understand that a great many of those young Winnipeggers are now looking for careers in policing and law enforcement.

Those are actions, not just words.

Mr. Goertzen: They voted in favour of being the violent crime capital of Canada. We voted against it. They voted in favour, Mr. Speaker, they voted in favour of being the murder capital. We voted against it. They voted in favour of increased home invasions, and we voted against it.

Mr. Speaker, these suspects are ranging in age from 13 years to 20 years. Some were breaching their probation orders which would usually get a Slurpee and baseball tickets from the Attorney General. Some had outstanding warrants.

Children criminals, adult offenders, probation breaches, outstanding warrants, that's today's NDP record on crime. Why won't this Minister of Justice acknowledge he's a failed minister in a failing government, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Swan: Let's talk about some things the members opposite voted against. Let's talk about the 58 new Crown attorneys that every single member of the Progressive Conservative caucus voted against. Let's talk about the \$16.4-million increase in resources for our Crown attorneys, which the members opposite voted against. Let's talk about the Criminal Organization High Risk Offender Unit, which the members opposite voted against. Let's talk about MIOCTF, the Manitoba Integrated Organized Crime Task Force, which took down the Zig Zag Crew in the city of Winnipeg.

The Hells Angels arrived here under the watch of Gary Filmon, of course, the member of the—the Leader of the Opposition. When they were in power, the gangs rolled into town.

We are taking steps to take the gangs out of it, to take away their property, to put them behind bars, and it's a shame, Mr. Speaker, we take actions; their words mean absolutely nothing.

Mr. Goertzen: The NDP voted in favour of giving Slurpees to criminals, and we voted against it, Mr. Speaker. They voted in favour of having

15,000 outstanding warrants, and we voted against it. Then they voted in favour of giving welfare payments to people with outstanding warrants, and we voted against that.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we know they're having a conversion on the road to the election, but they can't run from their record. That's what they're trying to do. They're trying to hide from their record, run from this NDP government—this soft-on-crime government's record, a record that has made Winnipeg the violent crime capital of Canada.

Why doesn't he just face the fact that after 12 years of soft-on-crime policies we have come to the point where Manitobans can't take it anymore? They need a government that'll get tough on crime and back up their words with actions, Mr. Speaker.

* (14:20)

Mr. Swan: And we will debate our balanced approach to crime prevention and take you on crime in the province of Manitoba anytime.

And there's the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) opposite who proposed just last year to cut \$500 million out of the budget, and what's interesting is he wouldn't tell anybody where it would come from, and we know it would come in some measure from Justice. There'd be fewer police on our streets. There'd be fewer Crown attorneys in our courtrooms. There'd be fewer probation officers and who knows what they'd be doing with the corrections system.

Now, let's take a look at things like The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act, which is now successfully taking away proceeds of crime, taking away property obtained with proceeds of crime. But what did the Leader of the Opposition say when we brought in this bill? He said, well, this will never have any impact on crime in Manitoba.

There's more than 9 million reasons why the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Steinbach and everyone else sitting over there is wrong, wrong, wrong.

Lake Winnipeg Phosphorus Level Reduction Timeline

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick). I look forward to seeing her rise in the House today to answer it.

The NDP has been promising to fix Lake Winnipeg for 12 years now, and for 12 years now they have not. The minister's little-action, sit-down approach to water stewardship has, by even the NDP's own admission, seen phosphorus levels higher than Lake Erie when it was described as dead. Indeed, it has taken five years after the evidence was in for the government to set a reasonable 50 per cent target for phosphorus reduction, but no target has much validity if it doesn't have a time frame.

I ask: By what date will the government's plan achieve the 50 per cent reduction in phosphorus for Lake Winnipeg?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, again, the member opposite who raises the question today was also one of those who voted against the moratorium on expansion of hog barns and environmental practices which add to the eutrophication of Lake Winnipeg. So, to be high and mighty, to be pious today after four years ago voting against measures which have made a difference really rings hollow.

We have gone with the best research that we can find, and we've supported that. Dr. Leavitt has come forward and he said, in spite of the measures that have been taken by this government, for the first time in history additional measures have to be followed up on to achieve a 50 per cent reduction in phosphorus—which is why we brought in the bill we brought in. We will see if the member opposite votes against that bill as well.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the Premier knows full well that I've been right at the forefront of the fight to clean up Lake Winnipeg, proposing measures, many of which his government has actually now started to think about adopting, but the government has not set a date for achieving the 50 per cent reduction in phosphorus for Lake Winnipeg, and a target without a date is meaningless.

Does the government plan to achieve this in five years, in 10 years, or is it going to take a hundred years? Indeed, the government's plan, presented last week, a press-release plan, is full of empty promises and lacks real commitments with a plan in which the expected reduction from each measure is provided.

I ask the Premier: When will he provide a real plan which specifies the specific reduction to be achieved from each measure and shows us how the combined reductions will achieve the 50 per cent

reduction of phosphorus needed? When will the Premier present a real plan?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we have said in the document we brought forward last week that we will keep hog manure out of Lake Winnipeg by banning any new hog industry expansion that does not use environmental-advanced environmental practices in that hog operation. We have said, in addition, that we will put supports in place to support the most advanced environmental practices. So this is an attempt on our part to help the industry evolve to the point where they're not putting hog manure and the contents of hog manure into Lake Winnipeg.

We have also said we need a state-of-the-art sewage treatment facility in the city of Winnipeg, biological nutrient removal, which will not only reduce-remove phosphorus but will allow it to be recycled. It will also allow us to meet our objectives on reducing ammonia in Lake Winnipeg, which is a killer of wildlife, particularly fish habitat. Those measures are very concrete measures. We're going to put them in law.

In addition, we're going to put in law a ban on winter spreading of manure. Those are concrete measures. We will see if the member opposite votes for this bill-

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, you know, when the government brought in a target for reducing greenhouse gases, it at least presented the target, the date and the expected individual reductions from each measure. You know, of course, the Auditor General tore huge holes in the government's plan for greenhouse gas reduction and showed that it wouldn't achieve the goal that the government had actually set.

But with Lake Winnipeg, the government has not even provided a real plan with a target, with a timeline and with the estimated reduction from each measure so that we can see that they actually add up to 50 per cent.

Did the government produce such a weak plan for reducing phosphorus on Lake Winnipeg because it was just a plan to get votes in the next election, not a real plan to reduce phosphorus in Lake Winnipeg by 50 per cent?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I think I detected a note of cynicism in the member opposite.

And I must say, if he's not cynical he will decide whether he's voting for this bill, because this bill will reduce-eliminate winter spreading of hog manure. This bill will require hog barn expansion to use advanced environmental practices. This bill will require biological nutrient removal in the North End plant, which has already been implemented in the West End plant, which has already been implemented in Brandon, which has already been implemented in every major western Canadian city in Canada, no question about it.

So we will see how sincere the member is, whether it's a note of cynicism or whether he's prepared to make progress by putting his vote where it counts, on new measures to reduce phosphorus, to reduce nitrification and to save Lake Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Cuthbert Grant Portrait

Ms. Sharon Blady (Kirkfield Park): Mr. Speaker, the St. James-Assiniboia Pioneer Association is unveiling their new Cuthbert Grant historical painting at Grant's Old Mill this Saturday, June 11th.

Born in 1793, Cuthbert Grant was one of the first leaders of the Métis nation, as well as a veteran, sheriff, magistrate and warden of the plains. He worked for the North West Company and took part in the 1816 Battle of Seven Oaks. After the North West Company and Hudson's Bay merged in 1821, he led the settlement of 2,000 people in the area which was originally known as Grantown in his honour, but which is now known as St. François Xavier.

Cuthbert Grant is an innovative-was an innovative thinker. He constructed the first water mill for wheat production in Manitoba. Grant's Old Mill stands reconstructed today and it will permanently house this three-foot-by-four-foot portrait. This portrait is all the more important because there's only one surviving picture of Grant. St. James artist, Jill Sellers, who also created the murals on the Main Street Manitoba Hydro building, was commissioned to do the portrait.

Grant's Old Mill is a hub for Manitoba Métis history. Roughly 1,000 visitors from Canada and the US visit the old mill each summer, and the Pioneer Association hopes that this new portrait, together with Cuthbert Grant family tree that still is in progress, will draw even more visitors.

Cuthbert Grant was an influential Métis figure, and I'm sure the addition of Grant's portrait to the mill will be a big success. Thank you to the St. James-Assiniboia Pioneer Association and to the artist, Jill Sellers, for continually creating opportunities such as these to honour the importance of Métis history in our province.

D-Day 67th Anniversary

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to rise today in recognition of the 67th anniversary of D-Day.

On June 6th, 1944, thousands of brave Canadian soldiers and sailors and airmen-women participated in the Normandy landings during the Second World War. They left behind loved ones to defend Canada and our Allies, and many not to return home.

The D-Day invasion was the largest single-day seaborne invasion in military history, opening the path of Allied forces to Germany from the west. It was the first day of the Battle of Normandy and occupied France by Allies that eventually led to the liberation of Europe. Hundreds of thousands of Allied troops from Canada, the United States, Free France and the United Kingdom were involved in the invasion. Of the 90,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who fought on the invasion, 5,000 made the ultimate sacrifice. The forces conquered incredible odds that ultimately led to the end of World War II.

Each year, Canadians remember the sacrifices that our veterans made in this invasion and many others throughout the war. The bravery, the courage, the sacrifice of these veterans, many of them teenagers at the time of the war, must not be forgotten. They are heroes of our nation. We remember for them for their service.

Yesterday, June 5th, was Canadian Forces Day, a day to celebrate Canadian Armed Forces for their heritage. It is important to remember that Canadians still serve in Afghanistan and throughout the world and are placed in dangerous situations everyday. On Canadian Forces Day, we thank those who are currently serving in foreign countries, and remember those who have lost their lives to bring peace to the world.

* (14:30)

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire PC caucus, I wish to extend my gratitude to the Canadian Forces who served overseas on D-Day, and their families.

Many soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice on this day, and for that we are truly grateful. They worked to deliver a better future for us all. I wish to express my gratitude to all Canadian veterans for their contributions to our country. As well, Canadians who are currently in serving our nation proudly, our thoughts and prayers as we anticipate their safe return home.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Assiniboia Spring Cleanup

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors): Mr. Speaker, a healthy community doesn't happen on its own. Volunteers who participate in events such as the Assiniboia's annual spring community cleanup go a long way to taking care of our neighbourhood.

Our tradition of spring cleanups started several years ago when our Girl Guides, Brownies, Boy Scouts, schools and church groups decided to get involved. Each year, we spend a few days in the spring cleaning different neighbourhoods and sometimes we focus on a particular issue or area. One year, a Winnipeg police officer and a representative from a document-shredding company participated in the cleanup and talked about the importance of protecting personal documents and information. Graffiti is another concern we keep tabs on as it appears in the neighbourhood. Through this cleaning drive, we make sure we have products on hand to remove graffiti and it does definitely show it.

Our volunteers know that the secret to having fun at any task is to have friends along to share it with. This year, we cleaned our streets of several truckloads of garbage over three days in May. Some of the youth who took part were Daniel, Ethan, Jordan, Cody, Marshall, Cameron, Erik, Brittney, Jessica, Lacey, Murray and Dezarae. Some of the adults who helped supervise and haul bags were Fred, Dave, Linda, Don and Tom. Along Saskatchewan Avenue and Sturgeon Road, in particular, a youth soccer team and some of their friends helped us pick up garbage. They were Jenny, Kara, Melissa, Lauren, Shanli, Chantelle, Dallis, Erika, Shivonne, Lisa, Dylon and Jeremy. Thanks to everyone who came out. Each of you did a fantastic job. It's truly appreciated.

All the volunteers, and the youth in particular, were generous and fun to work with and had a great attitude. After the event, we celebrated with a community barbeque, which one of our volunteers

named Har do runs every year to make sure our hot dogs are cooked to perfection.

A huge thanks to everyone who took the time to participate in the Assiniboia spring cleanup. It's great to see people taking pride in their community and everyone can now take—can now, in turn, take pride in a job well done. Thank you for making our community a better place and a nicer place to live.

Canadian Environment Week

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to rise today to recognize Canadian Environment Week. June 5th to the 11th marks the 40th anniversary of this important celebration and allows Canadians the opportunity to show their appreciation for the extraordinary country that we live in.

The theme of—for this year's Canadian Environment Week is "Preserving Our Forests, Protecting Our Future," which coincides with the United Nations 2011 designation of the International Year of Forests.

Protecting Canada's environment benefits all Canadians in a number of ways, including strengthening the economy and maintaining health and quality of life.

Canadian Environment Week overlaps with a number of recognized days that take place throughout the week. The Commuter Challenge is also taking place this week and Manitobans are encouraged to use alternative forms of transportation in an attempt to limit the use of single-occupancy vehicles. Healthier and cleaner modes of transportation, such as walking, cycling, transit and carpooling can be used to reduce our carbon footprint.

Yesterday, June 5th, was first established in 1972 as World Environment Day. The day is one of the ways that the UN raises global awareness of environmental issues to encourage positive environmental action. On Wednesday, June 8th, we will celebrate Clean Air Day where attention will be focused on activities that promote clean air and good health across the country to reduce our environmental footprint.

Manitobans can make a difference in protecting our environment, whether their efforts are big or small. From composting and recycling to planting a tree and reducing our water use, Manitobans can make a difference in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all Manitobans to take the time to enjoy Manitoba's outdoors, whether it be our forests, parks or lakes during Canadian Environment Week. As Canadians, we are fortunate to have incredible natural surroundings in our own backyards. It is important to respect our environment to ensure that future generations are able to enjoy their surroundings as we have today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Joey Johnson

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Local Government): It's an honour today to stand to give a member's statement about Joey Johnson. Mr. Speaker, Joey Johnson is one of the province's most accomplished athletes.

Today, I would like to congratulate Joey on his recent success, once again demonstrating his talent and dedication to basketball. Joey was very recently helped—sorry, very recently helped the Men's National Wheelchair Basketball team bring home another gold medal. Last month, Canada defeated France in Manchester, England, to win the 2011 Paralympic Cup.

From Lorette, Manitoba—and Joey has been a member of Team Canada since 1995. He's also travelled around the world with wheelchair basketball. He had played professionally in Australia and is the team captain for the German national team. But Joey knows where his roots are. Each year he returns home to play in Manitoba in the Wheelchair Basketball National Championships. Among many athletic accomplishments, Joey has helped Canada win numerous Paralympic World Cups.

It comes as little surprise that Joey is once again been selected to represent Canada on the national team. Joey and his teammates will represent Canada at the 2011 Paralympic Parapan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico, this November. This year's competition is exceptionally exciting as it will double as Canada's opportunity to qualify for the 2012 London Paralympics.

Joey, who has a degenerative hip disease, is known as one of the best power players in the world. Joey's quiet leadership has made him a role model for his younger teammates as well as for his three children, Owen, Kamryn and Brody. Joey says the toughest part of his career is being away from his kids and his wife, Missy.

Once again, I'd like to congratulate Joey in bringing home another gold and I wish him and the national team the best of luck this fall and, hopefully, in London next year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on House business?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on House business.

Would you call second reading on Bill 48, followed by Bill 49 and 45, please.

Mr. Speaker: We'll be doing second readings on Bill 48, 49 and 45.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 48—The Planning and Land Dedication for School Sites Act (Various Acts Amended)

Mr. Speaker: So I'm going to be calling second reading of Bill 48, The Planning and Land Dedication for School Sites Act (Various Acts Amended).

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Local Government): I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald), that Bill 48, The Planning and Land Dedication for School Sites Act (Various Acts Amended), be now read a second time and be referred to the committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lemieux: Mr. Speaker, there are many indications that Manitoba is building itself into a great place to live, work and play. More and more people are choosing to make Manitoba their home, and that is welcome news. We all have the responsibility to play in ensuring that this choice is followed up with conditions that truly make families know they are welcome, supported in their lives they choose to build in the numerous communities of our great province.

All Manitobans benefit from well-planned communities that take into account the facilities, services and amenities needed to accommodate current and future residents. Public schools are a pivotal public service for communities that—

should be fully integrated into the residential planning and development process.

Currently, school divisions are consulted at the discretion of the developer regarding school sites and are often—and often do not participate—sorry—in the planning for new residential development to any significant degree. Unfortunately, this present level of integration between the planning processes for schools and the planning processes for residential development is inadequate. The consequence of this disconnect is that new communities are planned and developed but too often without appropriate consideration for school sites and future school sites. In some cases, this means that communities that need schools may not have suitable or affordable land to accommodate them. In other cases, school sites have been identified in locations where there is no intention to build schools at all. Particularly in Winnipeg, some developers and their agents advertise in their promotional material the sites they have notionally identified for schools without consulting school divisions, creating home purchaser expectations for school construction that don't reflect the actual division's plans. In both scenarios, residents of those new communities aren't receiving accurate information about their community. This leads to frustration for homeowners, school divisions, municipalities and developers alike.

* (14:40)

Mr. Speaker, this legislation, The Planning and Land Dedication for School Sites Act, will rectify these problems by ensuring that school boards, municipal governments and property developers work co-operatively together to the benefit of Manitoba communities. It's about transparency and consultation and clarity at the front of the process, instead of at the end, thus ensuring respect for developers, municipalities and their development plans and school boards tasked with providing the pivotal public service of educating our youth.

With this bill, we are introducing several changes that significantly improve the current scenario for school site planning and dedication. Currently, there are no requirements in The Planning Act or the City of Winnipeg Charter for the involvement of school authorities in the residential planning process. The proposed legislation makes consultation and collaboration between the planning authorities and school authorities a mandatory part of the development plan process. Both in Winnipeg and outside of the city these changes will ensure that the

school site needs are anticipated early on and inform future development decisions. It will also ensure that the land identified for school sites is suitable and appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed legislation also makes it—significant changes related to how land for school sites is acquired by school boards. Currently, there are no mandatory requirements to dedicate land for schools in existing planning legislation. Currently, school planning authorities must participate in negotiations based—process with developers which make it difficult to undertake effective capital and service planning and to ensure a community's future school needs will be adequately met in new residential developments.

Under the proposed legislation, as a condition of subdivision approval, applications for the subdivision of four or more lots will trigger a mandatory requirement that a portion of the land be sold to the respective school board at a set price. The price, Mr. Speaker, that the school divisions will be required to pay will be based on the assessed value of the property prior to the proposed development to ensure fair treatment for both the school division and the developer. The changes also give the school board the option of requesting cash in lieu of land equivalent to the specific price of the land that would have been sold to them.

The bill also includes changes to ensure that prospective homebuyers in new residential areas have the most accurate and transparent information available on the location of potential future school sites, and that unrealistic expectations will not be created by the misleading advertising of potential school sites in locations where a school has not been approved. Under the proposed legislation, developers will be prohibited from advertising any site as a school site unless it has been approved by the Public Schools Finance Board and subject to a substantial fine if they fail to comply with this prohibition.

Additionally, a school division will be required under the changes to The Public Schools Act to give public notice when it intends to dispose of land it received for a school site and make presentation on its disposition plans at a public meeting.

Mr. Speaker, each of the changes being proposed in this bill will help bring consistency, transparency and clarity to this process, and everyone, including developers, municipalities, school boards and, most of all, homebuyers will benefit from this. We understand that buying a home is as important part of

raising a family for many Manitobans as anything. Everyone, including developers, municipalities, school boards and homebuyers will benefit from the increased transparency of this process. These changes underscore the importance of the services offered by our public schools and allow Manitobans to have confidence in the communities they live in and will—sorry—and they live in will have the public services they need.

I am proud that this bill is being considered by the House, and I look forward to debate on and passage of this important legislation.

We have heard from the Manitoba School Boards Association and how they are pleased that the government of Manitoba has responded to the concerns they have raised about school site acquisitions and development procedures. The MSBA president, Robert Rivard, said that this legislation, quote: That this legislation will help bring transparency to a complex process. This bill will ensure that school boards, property developers, municipal governments and the Public Schools Finance Board work co-operatively together to benefit—to the benefit of Manitoba students.

We look forward to others—sorry, we look forward to others to comment on this bill and seek to enshrine transparency, consultation and clarity and proper communication, so that our growing and building communities can truly be places we are proud to live in and raise our families.

Thank you and merci, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put a few comments on the record here. It's been apparent for quite some time that there was a need to have a planning process which ensured that there was schools where there was new subdivisions created, and it's a little surprising that the government has taken 12 years to come forward with this.

But, at the same time, I realize that this is fairly complex, and we've got to get it right, and I'm looking forward to some helpful comments from people at committee stage. I mean, this bill requires, first of all, that the land in question be four or more parcels, that it creates one or more new public roads, and that the person is the owner of the land that's proposed to be subdivided.

And it seems to me that while these may be useful criteria, that it could be very easy that you find conditions where a school is needed which don't

meet this criteria, or conditions where a school is not needed where these criteria are met. And so I'm concerned that we have a process which gets it right in terms of ensuring that we have area for the school—land for the school when it's needed, but without having land for the school when it's not needed.

I'm also a little bit concerned about the option here that the government is saying, well, you know, we recognize there's a need for new land, but there's an alternative that the developer can provide money and that money can be used for school buses. It's almost as if the government is saying, well, we like—we want land, but we're not sure that we really want land and so you can provide school buses instead of land.

And so I think that the intent here really needs to be to make sure that there is adequate school space, that there is adequate primary and secondary schooling in the neighbourhoods that people are living in, where there's subdivisions—new subdivisions created, but it's not made to create a loophole so the school divisions can say, well, we'll just buy school buses and that will solve it, because, you know, we've seen lots of circumstances where people are being bused long distances because there was a failure to make sure that there was a school in the area where the school was actually needed.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the comments coming from people at committee stage because, although the goal of this legislation is laudable, that we've got to make sure that the implementation of this is right and that the government is not just, well, trying to gain credit for ensuring that there's school space, but actually setting it up so that students may get buses instead of school space. Let's get it right. Let's not, you know, create a piece of legislation which has got loopholes and problems right from the start.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): I move, seconded by the member from Turtle Mountain, that debate now be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 49—The Employment and Income Assistance Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade (Mr. Bjornson), that Bill 49, The Employment and

Income Assistance Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aide à l'emploi et au revenu et le Code de la route, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Administrator has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

* (14:50)

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Attorney General, seconded by the honourable Minister for Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade, that Bill 49, The Employment and Income Assistance Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Administrator has been advised of this bill, and the message has been tabled.

Mr. Swan: Mr. Speaker, this bill will accomplish two major things. First, it will amend The Employment and Income Assistance Act to withhold or reduce income assistance benefits for people who have an outstanding warrant for a serious criminal offence under the Criminal Code of Canada or the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. Exemptions will be made where a person or family might face significant hardship as a result of reduced benefits.

These amendments provide for the following: first, if a person who is receiving employment and income assistance is identified as having an outstanding warrant for a prescribed offence, financial assistance will be reduced, suspended or discontinued until the warrant has been dealt with; secondly, an application for benefits will be denied if an individual is identified as having an outstanding warrant; third, regulations will set out exceptions when application can be accepted or assistance can be paid if significant hardship would result. For example, if a person with an outstanding warrant for a prescribed offence has dependent children, an application could be taken and benefits could be reduced rather than suspended or discontinued. Manitoba Justice will provide information on warrant status to the Employment and Income Assistance Program on an ongoing basis to identify individuals with outstanding warrants in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I'm aware of at least one other province which has moved somewhat in this direction. Unfortunately, in that province, they rely on the word of the applicant, and I think it's basic common sense that where an individual has

outstanding criminal charges and warrants stemming from those charges, there's no reason to believe they will act in good faith when applying for employment and income assistance.

Secondly, this bill would also amend The Highway Traffic Act to allow the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to refuse to issue or renew a driver's licence, permit or vehicle registration for a person who has not dealt with an outstanding arrest warrant again for a serious offence under the Criminal Code or the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. This follows successful legislative measures to assist in the collection of outstanding child and spousal support using the MPI and DVL system as well as successful measures to improve the collection of fines by withholding registrations or driver's licences.

The amendments provide for the following. First, a Manitoba Justice official will be designated by the Attorney General to provide notice of the outstanding warrant to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. Only warrants issued for certain offences under the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act that are prescribed by regulation will be included in these amendments. Upon receiving notice from the designated official, the registrar is authorized to refuse to renew and accept payment for a person's driver's licence. The registrar is required to notify Manitoba Public Insurance to refuse to accept payment for driver's licences or registrations.

Now, when the outstanding warrant has been dealt with, the designated officer will notify the registrar, who in turn must notify Manitoba Public Insurance that they can then issue the driver's licence and accept payment.

The intention of these amendments is to encourage people with outstanding warrants to take personal responsibility for their actions in their lives and fulfill their legal obligations with respect to the outstanding warrant. The intention is also to improve public safety as part of this government's larger strategy to deal with those with outstanding warrants who truly pose a risk to public safety. I look forward to the full support of this House in having this bill passed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 45—The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2011

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister for Labour and Immigration (Ms. Howard), that Bill 45, The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2011; Loi corrective de 2011, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Swan: This is a building which has many, many fine traditions. Perhaps this bill is a less exciting but necessary tradition. It is a typical bill which is brought in each year to correct minor drafting, typographical and translation errors in the statutes of Manitoba as well as minor substantive amendments.

Although many of these are simply some correction of minor errors, I would like to bring two matters in the bill to the attention of honourable members.

A minor substantive amendment is proposed to The Teachers' Pensions Act. This act currently allows teachers on maternity leave or adoptive leave to accrue service during the period of leave on a shared-cost basis by continuing to make employee contributions during the period or purchasing a service after the end of the period of leave. The entire period of a maternity leave and the first 17 weeks of a period of adoptive leave qualify for this benefit. This amendment extends the benefit provided to a teacher on adoptive leave to any teacher on parental leave.

This bill would also repeal The Mennonite Educational Society of Manitoba Incorporation Act, which is a private act, and, certainly, there's no intention to do anything negative for Mennonite education in Manitoba, and, certainly, we're pleased that CMU, Canadian Mennonite University, is now up and running in the city of Winnipeg and doing a great job. I will put on the record that the request for the repeal of this private act was actually received from the Mennonite Educational Society of Manitoba itself.

I certainly will be pleased to discuss the bill in more detail further at the committee stage.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): I move, seconded by the member for Carman (Mr. Pedersen), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on House business. Would you call bills 46, 24 and 47 for second reading.

Mr. Speaker: We'll deal with second reading, bill 46, 24 and 47.

Bill 46—The Save Lake Winnipeg Act

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Minister of Conservation): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Howard), that Bill 46, The Save Lake Winnipeg Act; Loi sur la protection du lac Winnipeg, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Administrator has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Minister of Conservation, seconded by the honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration, that Bill 46, The Save Lake Winnipeg Act, be now read a second time, and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Administrator has been advised of the bill, and the message has been tabled.

Mr. Blaikie: I'm very pleased to speak to second reading of Bill 46, The Save Lake Winnipeg Act.

Water in Manitoba is the lifeblood of this province and Lake Winnipeg is therefore at the heart of the province. However, as relayed in the recently released report by Dr. Leavitt earlier this week, Lake Winnipeg is at a tipping point. It is our responsibility as not only government but as citizens of Manitoba to stand up and work towards immediate solutions to save this precious resource.

Lake Winnipeg is the sixth largest fresh-water lake in the world. When looking at a map of

Manitoba, the lake stands out as a jewel that is worth all our efforts to try and save, protect and conserve into the future.

To date, this government has undertaken a number of initiatives to work towards reducing nutrients in the lake, such as a regional ban on building or expanding hog facilities and expanded powers for water officers, measures, Mr. Speaker, which the opposition voted against.

However, we now know that we must go further and faster. Through Bill 46, The Crown Lands Act, the environmental act, The Planning Act and The Water Protection Act are all amended as part of this government's action plan to protect Lake Winnipeg.

First, the bill will amend The Crown Lands Act to allow the government to protect provincially significant wetlands. We know that wetlands can act as filters for our lakes, that they help to prevent flooding and that they help protect drinking water sources and water quality. Wetlands surrounding Lake Winnipeg and other Manitoba lakes, as well as coastal wetlands, will see greater protection due to this bill.

* (15:00)

Bill 46 next amends The Environment Act in a number of ways. First, the bill extends the prohibition on confined livestock areas and manure storage facilities for hogs to be province-wide. From now on, any new hog industry expansion in Manitoba will have to use environmental practices to protect water. The bill also enshrines in the act the ban on winter spreading that is to come into effect November 2013.

And, finally, environment—The Environment Act is amended to strengthen restrictions on the use of disposal fields that may result from new subdivisions within the Red River corridor.

The Mines and Minerals Act is then amended in order to put in place a two-year moratorium on the issuance of quarry permits and leases for peat. Manitoba's boreal peatlands are among the most carbon-rich wetlands in the world, which is why Manitoba is currently working towards a peatland strategy.

The fourth part of the bill amends The Planning Act and is aimed at ensuring that sorts—short-sighted planning mistakes in the 1990s cannot be repeated. These amendments ensure that the development plan process in the high-growth, environmentally

vulnerable Capital Region incorporates consideration of the capacity of and impacts on water and waste-water services. It also allows the minister to require drinking water plans and waste-water management plans in other municipalities where such plans are required because of factors such as environmental vulnerability and high growth.

Finally, the bill amends The Water Protection Act in order to help modernize sewage treatments in Winnipeg by requiring the City of Winnipeg to replace its North End sewage treatment plant with a full biological nutrient removal plant to keep pollutants out of our water and out of Lake Winnipeg. The City must also comply with specified nutrient limits on effluent discharged from the plant, as well as ensuring its nutrient removal and recycling methods comply with provincial requirements.

With Lake Winnipeg under stress, now is not the time to cut corners on needed upgrades, Mr. Speaker, and I therefore call on the—on all members of the House and all levels of government involved in this debate to see that now is the time for some vision when it comes to Lake Winnipeg. We need to embrace the opportunity to create a state-of-the-art waste-water management treatment facility in the north end of Winnipeg so that years from now people will look back on this House and this age and say, they did the right thing by Lake Winnipeg. They didn't try to cut corners. They didn't try to do it chemically when they should have done it biologically.

And the government of the day, Mr. Speaker, the record will show, was willing to put the lake first, to put the argument about nitrogen aside in order to get on with the job of doing phosphorus properly, both in terms of removing it and recycling it, of doing ammonia properly. The debate about nitrogen can continue, but what can't continue is the impasse and the resistance to building a state-of-the-art process for sewage treatment in Winnipeg.

So we're saying, get on with the job, but let's build a state-of-the-art process, biological nutrient removal, the same kind of process that we have in the west end and in the south end, in Brandon, in Prince Albert, in Regina and other—you know, why is it, Mr. Speaker, that somehow Winnipeg, when it comes to these kinds of things, has to be a second-class city? Why can't we do the proper thing when it comes to sewage treatment? Why can't we do the state-of-the-art thing?

But they've never seen a state-of-the-art process that they could bring themselves to be for on the other side, Mr. Speaker. You know, state-of-the-art Hydro building, against it, don't build it. But we built it. State-of-the-art stadium, they're against it, but it's being built. We are building it. State-of-the-art MTS Centre, they were against it. We built the MTS Centre, a state-of-the-art facility, so we could bring back the Jets, and we're going to build a state-of-the-art sewage treatment facility so we can bring back Lake Winnipeg.

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Springfield, that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 24—The Innovation Funding Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 24, The Innovation Funding Act, second reading.

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade): I move, seconded by the honourable Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 24, The Innovation Funding Act; Loi sur le financement de l'innovation, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of the House.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Minister for Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade, seconded by the honourable Attorney General, that Bill 24, The Innovation Funding Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been advised of this bill, and the message has been tabled.

Mr. Bjornson: Innovation is one of the cornerstones of Manitoba's five-year economic plan. New ideas, new products, new processes, new markets and new jobs, these are the things that build Manitoba's economy and provide a brighter future for all Manitobans.

With the five-year economic plan entering its second year, the time is right to renew our commitment to supporting innovation as a key driver of future growth. And as we accomplish the goals we set out to achieve, we continue to chart a path to move Manitoba forward.

The next stage of Manitoba's innovation strategy will be business oriented and focused on promoting

the successful commercialization of new ideas. To that end, Budget 2011 introduced the first new programs that will be launched to support commercial innovation and provide support when it is needed through a venture's life cycle, from start-up to market expansion. It did this by committing \$30 million over the next five years to support entrepreneurship, commercialization and business development.

The new Commercialization Support for Business Program provides broader and increased support for a full range of activities. It strengthens support for early-stage market and corporate development of new ventures. It is open for business as we speak. Applications and program guidelines can be obtained through the single-window network or found on our website and the business portal.

This program will grow the Manitoba economy through new business development, expanding existing firms and attracting foreign investment. This program will strengthen Manitoba-based private sector capacity to commercialized research and innovation, and this program will enhance innovation activity through partnerships with private sector companies, universities and research institutions. It will create a one-stop shop for innovation, entrepreneurship and business development, and streamline application and approval processes, making it simpler to apply and faster to get a response.

Our investment builds on thoughtful advice and feedback received from the Manitoba Innovation Council, the Premier's Economic Advisory Council and Manitoba entrepreneurs and business leaders. And I want to thank them, each and every one, for their very important contributions to this legislation.

This bill establishes the program in legislation, sets out the purpose of the new program, provides provisions for the appointment of advisory committees and their terms of reference. A unique feature of the program is that it allows the Province to share in the incremental revenues generated by a company's commercialization success, without compromising a company's ability to access additional debt capital.

Business support agreements made under this new program, may, by the mutual agreement of the Province and applicant, require the repayment of all or part of any financial support. This bill enables government to capture any repayment of financial assistance provided under the program, credit it to an

innovation trust account and dedicate the funds in that account to supporting Manitoba's entrepreneurs in their future innovative activities. We believe this provides a level of risk and benefit sharing, and the opportunity for successful ventures to help support future Manitoba entrepreneurs.

I look forward to debate and passage of this legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few comments at this stage.

While I'm in general support of the concept of improving the ability to fund innovative projects in Manitoba, I have some concerns about the legislation, which, hopefully, can be looked at very carefully at the committee stage.

The comments of the minister, first of all, with respect to these programs, don't make it clear whether these—the funding here—is grant or loan or equity. I gather there is a provision so that the—no, they could perhaps be different things. But I think it would be very important to be clear right up front, just what kind of a fund this is. Is this a grant fund? Is it a loan fund? Is it an equity investment fund? And so—how it operates, what sort of sizes of funds would be available? Up to what kind of limits?

*(15:10)

You know, I think that the—I also have some concerns about the advisory committee. We have—the minister may appoint one or more advisory committees to provide specific or general advice and recommendations to the minister about the business support program or the administration of the act and about any specific application for financial support under this business support program or any existing proposed commercialization project.

I think it's important that there be some assurance of appropriate expertise here. We've seen too often where this government has appointed their friends, rather than appointing people who are—really have the expertise in the area, and we want to make sure that whoever is appointed has actually got expertise, and we have no assurance here that that will be the case.

Second, in my experience, one of the things which is very important, when we're talking about business support programs, is that it be clear up front, in terms of what's happening when there is any conflict of interest between somebody who is on a

panel and somebody who is applying for a support under this program. It would be highly desirable, it would seem to me, to put such conflict of interest statements, guidelines, rules, right in the legislation so that there are not problems arising down the line. All too often, if you're not careful, you're going to get people with conflicts and, you know, they may be glossed over as too remote, but they may turn out to be very important down the line.

And so I think that it would be very smart to put that in legislation, rather than trying to get into situations down the road where you've got problems with conflicts of interest in relationship to this, and I think that that should be looked at very clearly.

The third thing here is, this is described as a business support program, business commercialization support for business program. It's also described as an innovation fund or trust account. I think that the—one of the issues here is whether this support actually has to be for a project which is innovative, or whether, you know, what the definition of this is. In my experience, that this is very important to set out in advance, what you're talking about in terms of, and what will apply here.

To what extent does it have to be an innovative project as opposed to any project. If, as we—the government seems to be suggesting, that it has to be an innovation project, well, what are the criteria that this is innovative? These are not necessarily simple things, but it's very important that you set them out ahead of time or you are likely to get into some real problems.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that we're going to have some people come forward who got some experience in this area and who can make helpful comments because I believe, although, the general thrust of this legislation is reasonable, that there are a lot of pitfalls here with this type of legislation which, from my looking at this bill, the government hasn't fully anticipated and hasn't fully allowed for. I think the government may have got caught up in its enthusiasm and its desire to put something forward before an election, but I think it's very important that if one is going to do this that it be done well and it be done right.

Thank you.

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): I move, seconded by the member from Emerson, that the debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 47—The Accessibility Advisory Council Act and Amendments to The Government Purchases Act

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities): I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services and Consumer Affairs (Mr. Mackintosh), that Bill 47, The Accessibility Advisory Council Act and Amendments to The Government Purchases Act; Loi sur le Conseil consultatif de l'accessibilité et modifiant la Loi sur les achats du gouvernement, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Minister for Labour and Immigration, seconded by the honourable Minister of Family Services and Consumer Affairs, that Bill 47, The Accessibility Advisory Council Act and Amendments to The Government Purchases Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been advised of this bill, and the message has been tabled.

Ms. Howard: Mr. Speaker, and before I launch into speech about the substance of the bill, I want to recognize a few individuals who were honoured here at the Legislature on Friday receiving Accessibility Awareness Week awards.

Those individuals are Vic Pereira, who is a long-time volunteer for people who are visually impaired with the Canadian Council of the Blind and others, and a posthumous award awarded to Don Amant, who some of us in this Chamber know was actual—an actual constituent of mine who worked for many years for Ten Ten Sinclair and worked in a volunteer capacity with the Canadian Paraplegic Association and who was just a tireless advocate and champion for independent living, and he is sadly, sadly missed.

We also recognized the achievements of REES, the Reaching E-Quality Employment Services, who for many, many years has been helping to support people seeking employment, and once they get employment, helping to support them as well as employers in making sure that the workplace is accessible.

We also recognized a couple of workplaces who are doing their best to be accessible and welcoming for people with disabilities, one of which is the Keg

Steakhouse, who has been so accommodating for people with accessibilities. They had an employee come to work with them who is deaf and the entire team who worked with that employee learned American Sign Language so that they could communicate with the employee and make sure that everybody was able to work together.

We also recognized an institution I know the member for Gimli (Mr. Bjornson) is well aware of, the new Icelandic museum, who also provides employment opportunities, particularly for people with intellectual disabilities in their first jobs as part of the First Jobs program.

Following the awards, Mr. Speaker, we went and we took a picture commemorating the event on the ramp outside the front of the Legislature, and it was another moment when I was reminded, and not only of the practicality of that ramp, because we've many, many people here who used that ramp and who are proud to come into the front door and take part in the awards ceremony, but also the very powerful symbolism of that ramp in being able to say to all Manitobans that you can come in through the front door of the Legislature.

It's also been an important project, I think, when I go out to talk to other people about making historic buildings accessible and hear, you know—it takes a long time, it's very expensive, we're going to damage the look of the building—and I'm able to point to the success of the legislative ramp that's won awards, that blends in very nicely with one of the most historic buildings in Manitoba and also achieves its goal of making the building more accessible.

This piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, is one of the steps on the road to making Manitoba more accessible. It is by no means the final destination or the silver bullet that is going to make Manitoba a fully accessible province, but it is another step in that journey, and along the journey I want to thank those who've given us very good advice, who pushed us to go farther and people who've been very open to the idea of making their businesses more accessible.

We heard from a number of people—representatives of municipalities; representatives of industry, particularly retail and the restaurant food services and hotel industries; representatives of people with disabilities; people with disabilities themselves—about the importance of the legislation and also about the importance of doing this legislation in a way that is extremely consultative, that consults not only with the end users who are

people who require accessibility, who, I must say, Mr. Speaker, I'm reminded often, are not only people with disabilities, but also those of us who are aging. Everybody—everybody, should they live enough, are going to require accessible buildings and accessible programs. And so—and mothers pushing babies in strollers and fathers pushing babies in strollers also benefit by this legislation.

* (15:20)

So I think it's important we remember that accessibility is a broad goal, but it's also a broad benefit. It's something that we all benefit from.

So this legislation takes its cue from the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, which many Manitobans worked very hard to ensure ratification. And it puts in place an advisory council made up of representatives of people with disabilities, as well as representatives of those organizations who have responsibility for removing barriers to accessibility. And that council has a lot of work to do in the next 12 months.

One of the things that they're going to be looking at is further legislative approaches to accessibility, and we want them to look at the concept of a full accessibility act, as is in place in Ontario, as is in place in the States. And we want them to do that in a way that they're consulting with people who will be affected by that act. And we also—I'm going to ask them to do the work of putting together a model accessibility standard, one that would apply to government, but could also apply to the public and private sectors, that will lay out what we mean when we're talking about accessible public services and accessible services for other people. And I hope that, in that exercise, we'll be able to demonstrate what accessibility looks like, what accessible—accessibility standards look like and that we can achieve this in a way that is practical.

Some of the features of the legislation that I hope will ensure that is a discussion of what we mean by barriers, that we mean, by barriers, anything that hinders someone's full and effective participation in society because of long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments.

And we also set out some principles for them to use in doing their work, that they look at the principle of access, which we've talked about; that we look at—that they take into account the principle of equality; that they take into account the principle of universal design; and they also take into account

the principle of systemic responsibility, that the responsibility to prevent and remove barriers rests with the public or private organization that is responsible for establishing or perpetuating the barrier.

Now, we also put in place in the legislation that we also expect that in doing this work, people who are—the council—who are doing it and the sub-committees that they may establish, will have regard not only for the nature of the barriers but also the technical and economic considerations that may be associated with identifying and preventing or removing a barrier. I think we recognize, Mr. Speaker, that preventing barriers in either new buildings or new programs is easier than addressing ones of the past. And so we want to make sure that people have a long time period to do that work and that we are not causing anyone to have an undue economic burden who is involved in doing that.

I believe that, as I said, this legislation is a next step, not the final step. There will continue to be those, particularly those people representing people with disabilities and seniors and all people who benefit from a more accessible province, who push us to go farther and faster, and we respect those voices. We also know it's responsible to move forward in this, which is a new realm of government regulation. We have to move forward responsibly and in doing that, we have to make sure that we're talking to other levels of government, that we're talking to the private sector and the public sector, but that we're also taking into account all of those with disabilities.

I recently had a very good meeting with the Canadian Mental Health Association, and they raised a number of issues about how this legislation would impact people who live with mental illness, and those issues, I think, we're—are going to require that we take some time and address them.

So I look forward to further discussion of this legislation, and I look forward to being able to have it moved to committee, so we can further it and, hopefully, put it in place and take that next step on the road to a fully accessible Manitoba.

Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I rise to put several comments on the record in terms of Bill 47, The Accessibility Advisory Council Act and Amendments to The Government Purchases Act.

First of all, I wanted to say that I have supported for many years actions to move Manitoba to become a barrier-free province. I think that we need to be moving in this direction for a whole variety of reasons, partly because it is right that we do this, partly because, with an aging society, this is becoming more and more important for seniors who become disabled, and partly because, when we are out front and we do this ahead of time, we save a lot of money as opposed to when we have to retrofit after the fact. And the sooner we do this, with an appropriate planning horizon, the better we are.

And, certainly, that by being ahead of the curve instead of behind, we will be producing the products and services that go with a barrier-free society, and I believe that that's also very important because that positions our private sector ahead instead of behind in a number of these areas.

But we need to move, and it's important to recognize that—you know, I've heard from a number of groups already on this legislation. They feel that although it is a step forward, that in the context of what could have been done it's really a very small step. And I will certainly support this as a step forward as it makes its way through the Chamber, but I believe that much more is needed and much more could have been done.

Indeed, you know, as I see it, we have had, essentially, under this government, a decade of discussion of this area with very little action, and what we need is a decade of action rather than more discussion. And, certainly, from what has happened by example under the NDP, I think that, you know, Manitobans should look to the party which has been ahead on this curve. And, if we want action for the next 10 years, then the best option really is a Liberal government, because under an NDP government we're just going to have more and more discussion and more and more committees. And who knows? We'll probably be just about this same place 10 years from now.

I think it's important that we have, at the committee stage, people coming forward, because this is an opportunity for people who have concerns in this area to present their vision of what needs to be done, what actions need to be taken to provide a barrier-free province. This should be looked at as an opportunity for people to come forward and put concepts, ideas on the record.

I think it is important in this context that we be looking at not just physical disabilities but mental

disabilities when we're looking at making it a barrier-free province and that people with mental disabilities should be coming forward and talking about the barriers that currently exist and how they can be overcome, because at present there is quite a bit of difference between the treatment of people with physical disabilities versus those with mental disabilities. And we should be moving much more quickly on those who have mental disabilities and those who have, in a broader sense, brains which are—provide handicaps and in one way or another that people who have brain conditions which may or may not be called mental illnesses, but they may have neuro-developmental problems, they may have brain injuries, they may have developmental issues. And, certainly, there is a lot, as I have seen, in terms of, for example, fetal—children with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders that we could look at and ask the question: Are there things that we can do to reduce the barriers to those with conditions like FASD in our society?

I also think, and I've had representation in this respect, that when we're looking at a barrier-free province that one of the things that we need to be looking at is seniors and seniors with disabilities, because we would like people to be able to stay in their home longer, and making barrier-free homes that will allow people to stay in their homes longer is going to be very, very important. It is a step that we must take. Too many people right now are being, you know, locked out of their homes or unable to live in their homes because it is not barrier-free, it is not somewhere where they can stay adequately as they get more disabled or more infirm as they age. And, certainly, that is something that I hope we get representation and discussion on as we go to the committee stage.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I look forward to some stimulating discussions at the committee stage and being able to move this legislation forward.

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Brandon West (Mr. Borotsik), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

* (15:30)

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on House business. Would you call debate on second readings on Bill 31, bills 36, 40, 41 and 43.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 31—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: We will resume debate on second reading of Bill 31, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, and it's standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris.

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to put a few words on the record in regard to Bill 31. I want to, first of all, recognize that it was the former MLA for Lac du Bonnet, Gerald Hawranik, who was the Justice critic in 2008, who first brought forward a private member's bill which—this was prompted by a string of incidents involving death or injuries involving stolen motor vehicles. And the bill was to eliminate MPI benefits paid to car thieves.

At the time the government was quite critical of that, calling it a malicious bill, and said that it was—we were only introducing that bill to gain attention, Mr. Speaker, and that it was a mean-spirited bill. And really, we've now seen very much of a flip-flop on this. Actually, I did reintroduce the bill again that the member for—former member for Lac du Bonnet had introduced. We introduced it again this spring, and the government chose to ignore that bill and bring in another bill, this bill.

But it's interesting that they changed their tune, after March 15th, when CTV broke a news story about auto thieves collecting benefits from MPI, where a freedom of information report indicated that MPI spent, or had paid eight convicted car thieves about \$41,000 over the last few years. And what happened after that, there was a huge public outcry, in that the public thought that this was not the right way to go. So, consequently, we've seen a major flip-flop on this—with this government, and now they support Mr. Hawranik's original legislation and, Mr. Speaker, so.

Just a few things that I would also like to say is that in comments that have been made about this bill, the government has blamed the Tories for bringing in a bill in 1994 which brought in no-fault insurance, Mr. Speaker. But the intent of the legislation, of course, of no-fault insurance in 1994 was meant to ensure that Manitobans be covered, regardless of

who was at fault in an accident. It certainly wasn't intended to provide benefits for criminals, who, through their own criminal activity, would become benefactors of their—beneficiaries of their own actions. That was certainly not the intent of any legislation.

Then—what happened in 2004, Mr. Speaker, when the NDP introduced amendments, they introduced amendments in 2004 to the act denying benefits to some of these offenders, but that was because, in 2004 or probably even just a bit earlier than that, Manitoba became the car theft capital of the country. And, certainly, car thieves escalated over that time, and not only that, we saw crimes that we hadn't seen before with people running into joggers or people chasing—cars chasing each other, high-speed chases and chasing after—purposely chasing after police vehicles. The intensity and the level of criminal activity escalated around that time.

So what we have—what we had done, Mr. Speaker, is introduce our own bill, again, as I said, to call for elimination of benefits being paid out to car thieves or people that steal vehicles or people that take vehicles without people's consent, and this would be—this bill would be—would require that car thieves not be compensated through Manitoba Public Insurance—not talking about the health benefits, but through Autopac insurance benefits, they not be compensated. And then, if they were found innocent, then they certainly would be reimbursed for their expenses with interest but they would not receive benefits before any conviction or lack of conviction.

So it's interesting as well that Saskatchewan just recently passed a legislation as well, Bill 173, which, like our private member's Bill 229, said the same thing. It would allow insurance benefits to be withheld from occupants of stolen motor vehicles until disposition of charges, Mr. Speaker. So Manitoba—the Saskatchewan government actually has adopted similar legislation to what we had proposed and not what the government here has proposed, and, in fact, then the NDP opposition in Saskatchewan voted for that bill, saying there's no question about our support for this particular piece of legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those comments I think that I'd once again like to first of all just reiterate and thank the member from—the former member from Lac du Bonnet who saw fit to first bring this to the government's attention in the form of a private member's bill, and, again, at that time they did not

feel it was an important bill and, in fact, ridiculed it and now have flip-flopped and brought in similar legislation. So I look forward to seeing—passing this to committee and seeing what Manitobans will have to say about it.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I have some questions about this legislation and how it would operate, and, hopefully, the minister can, during the course of the committee hearings or at other occasions, clarify some of these.

This is written as the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation must terminate the victim's compensation in respect of the accident. Now, if—this sort of implies, it would seem to me that, at the time of the accident, you know, which, say, was within a stolen car, that there wasn't an appropriate screening process so that somebody started receiving compensation even though it was known to be a stolen car. And it is, I suppose, certainly possible that an individual, you know, is convicted a year afterwards for stealing the car, and that it would seem to me very important that, as part of this legislation, that an individual who is in an accident who might fall into this category be given very clear information before they start relieving—receiving any help and any compensation, that they may be asked to reimburse it all.

* (15:40)

I think that the concern here is that, depending on how this works, that you're going to end up with somebody who has, in this example, stolen a car, and it would seem to me most logical to not provide the compensation in the first place, you know, where there is adequate evidence that the individual has stolen the car, rather than trying to at some future point when you finally have a conviction, you know, make sure that the individual—or ask the individual to reimburse money which that individual has likely spent. And, certainly, what you're doing is providing an incentive for somebody who has stolen a car and gets compensation to spend it very quickly so that they, you know, won't have any money that they could possibly reimburse this with, and rather than trying to achieve the objectives that you really want here, which is to send the message right at the time of the accident, that there won't be compensation.

So I think that the concern here relates to the details of how this would apply in a way that is fair, doesn't, you know, put people in the position where

they are not aware of this legislation to start with and then all of a sudden they're asked to repay a lot of money. I think it needs to be clear in the legislation that an individual is informed right from the start of the situation or doesn't get reimbursement or compensation until this legal matter is clarified. And, if they are not convicted, then, fine, they should be getting the compensation, and that can be made retroactive. But I would suggest to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan) that there are going to be some problems and some potential problems.

Now, the other thing is that suppose that you have somebody who is already receiving Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation compensation for a previous accident, and they are then convicted. That—the way I read this is that there may be an ability to terminate the compensation that is ongoing at that point from a previous accident, but it's not entirely clear, and I think that this needs to be spelled out so that there is no problems in interpreting this.

For example, I mean, we are dealing with an individual—is convicted under any of the following provisions, right, for street racing. Now, suppose you have an individual who is getting compensation for a previous accident and then is in a subsequent action which is street racing. What is the situation in terms of having to have their compensation based on the initial accident or the earlier accident? Is that terminated or is it not terminated? Does the money have to be paid back for the previous time? Exactly what the situation is.

I think this needs to be very clear and that this needs to be communicated very clear to people because I think that, you know, whatever the circumstances, that this legislation needs to be—is designed, right, to prevent accidents, to prevent people committing crimes, and you need to have a widespread communication to people so they understand the ramifications of being in accident in relationship to a crime or whatever the circumstances may be, precisely, in which they could end up having to repay or to have their compensation terminated.

And so I would hope that at the committee stage, or at some other point, the minister would make sure that these items are very clear even if that means bringing in amendments to clarify these.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading on Bill 31, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act.

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

Bill 36—The Adult Abuse Registry Act and Amendments to The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 36, The Adult Abuse Registry Act and Amendments to The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act, and it's in the name of the honourable member for River Heights, who has 29 minutes remaining.

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for River Heights?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? The honourable member for River Heights will speak now, okay?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I just want to put a few additional words on the record here.

I believe that it is important that we have an adult abuse registry act and that this information is part of an adult abuse registry, but I think that we need to be, you know, careful in certain respects in terms of adult abuse and how it's classified and what is included. And I think that it is important that, when we are looking at adult abuse, that we build on the experience that we have had in, for example, personal care homes.

You know, in recent times, as we are all too aware, there has been an escalating number of complaints of abuse in personal care homes, and there has been a decreasing number of investigations of such abuse. And it's going to be very important to have, you know, in having this act, that you actually have a much better process for doing investigations of abuse, of being able to look at what is happening with seniors and what is abuse.

I have, for example, had quite a number of people come to me and suggest that the prescription of certain antipsychotic meds which there are health warnings for, very strong health warnings from Health Canada and the same in the United States, very strong warnings against the use of such antipsychotic meds in seniors in personal care homes. And there—is a recent report, I believe, that was released just a few days ago in

British Columbia, and in that report it was found that there were very high levels of use of such antipsychotic drugs in personal care homes. And—*[interjection]* That's in British Columbia. In British Columbia, it was approximately half of all the people in all the personal care homes in British Columbia, as I recall, who were on antipsychotic drugs, and this, you know, this is a very disturbing finding.

And it is very, you know, important that, as we move this forward, that we have an understanding of what is abuse, of what is not abuse, and that, you know, we have, you know, this as an important step in preventing abuse of adults and that when we have individuals in personal care homes who have Alzheimer's disease and other conditions that we have appropriate support, right? And appropriate locations and appropriate situations and environment for such individuals, because, you know, it is—we are dealing with individuals with Alzheimer's disease who may have, you know, very different characteristics than they exhibited, you know, before they started to have Alzheimer's. They can become, you know, frustrated. They can become aggressive. They can become—you know, change personality, and we've already seen examples in Manitoba where a tragedy has occurred because an individual with Alzheimer's disease wasn't put in the right sort of environment, and the tragedy happened, of course, to another person in a personal care home.

* (15:50)

And we want to, you know, make sure that we are moving forward in this area, but I think we have to make sure that we get this right and that we recognize that, you know, the approach to abuse in personal care homes is tremendously important. We don't want our elders, our seniors, our parents, our grandparents in personal care homes to be abuse—abused in any way, shape or form.

At the same time, we want to make sure that before we start putting lots and lots of people on a adult abuse registry that we know what we're doing, we got this sorted out. We don't want to be putting people, lots of people with Alzheimer's, on an adult abuse registry when they weren't in the right sort of environment.

So let's make sure we get this right. It is an important step, and I think at the committee stage it's very important that we hear from people in this area and have the expertise and discussion that we need to have to make sure that we get a bill which moves us forward here and makes a significant contribution

and effectively reduces the abuse that occurs in personal care homes, but does it in a way that, you know, doesn't, for example, put a lot of people with Alzheimer's disease on an abuse registry because they're not in the right environment and because, you know, the things weren't approached properly.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 36, The Adult Abuse Registry Act and Amendments to The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act.

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

Bill 40—The Condominium Act and Amendments Respecting Condominium Conversions (Various Acts Amended)

Mr. Speaker: Bill 40, The Condominium Act and Amendments Respecting Condominium Conversions (Various Acts Amended), standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu).

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, that's been denied.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): Mr. Speaker, Bill 40, The Condominium Act and Amendments Respecting Condominium Conversions, a rather omnibus bill just by the sheer size of it, and I think it's unfortunate that the government picks the dying days of this session to introduce and bring in a bill of this size, and it makes it difficult as legislators to really understand all the aspects that are in here and to get feedback from various organizations that are involved.

But there is some 20 parts to this bill that it relates to, and so I'm certainly not going to try and cover all these, but, certainly, the highlights of the bill do bring in some substantive changes in regards to condominiums, which are not only in the city of Winnipeg but are throughout Manitoba. And it's now—some of the changes—proposed changes within this bill include requiring two major building upgrades instead of just one if the building is into a whole building rehabilitation. The amortization

period for cost of major repairs is—will go to eight years instead of six years.

Cooling-off periods extends from 48 hours to seven days, and this in regards to people buying condos to inspect what they have—what are potentially buying, and ironic that they're—the cooling-off period goes from 48 hours to seven days and yet we've got less than eight days to analyze this entire bill. So, obviously, there's not quite the same due diligence that's going to happen within this Chamber.

Better cancellation rights about—the buyer has the ability to cancel a purchase.

Disclosure—better disclosure for reserve funds and making sure there's adequate reserve funds in there.

Changes to—in regards to annual general meetings of unit holders so that people are either able to be at a annual general meeting or so that they actually—the unit can move ahead if there is not interest in people coming to the AGMs.

Better protection. Developers will be required to give buyers a projection of operating costs for the first year after owners begin paying common expenses, and if the projection is too low, the developer will have to cover any shortfalls, so it's obviously better planning within there and also better planning in terms of the reserve fund study. There's quite an extensive program that will be written into this bill in terms of what is required for the reserve fund, and that will have to be reassessed in—I believe it's within a three-year time period.

Better management for the boards to be able to enforce bylaws. Better interest for the boards of directors and whatnot.

And, Mr. Speaker, this bill just goes on and on and on, and, again, I just—I think it's unfortunate that the government is rushing through a bill of this size. That if we're to do our jobs in here properly and analyze legislation coming through, we need to have more time to be able to do these bills. This, I would have hoped would have been on their radar screen for a number of years. They've had a long time to prepare for these things and then to bring this in at the so-called eleventh hour is poor planning on the part of the government, but we will see what happens when it goes to committee and if there's any presentations there.

Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just very briefly, I'm aware of a number of concerns that have been brought forward to me in terms of condominiums, and it is important to bring forward some changes to the act. But, at this juncture, I will just wait for comments from people at the committee stage and look forward to hearing what people have to say and whether this act has got the right sort of balance that it should have.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading, Bill 40, The Condominium Act and Amendments Respecting Condominium Conversions (Various Acts Amended).

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

Bill 41—The Liquor Control Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 41, The Liquor Control Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Brandon West.

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): I'm very happy to be able to stand and put a couple of words on the record with respect to Bill 41. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I should say that a couple of weeks ago we had a committee meeting with MLCC. The minister was there and it was a very good meeting actually. We talked about a number of things, and I recall talking to the then—the CEO, Mr. Ken Hildahl, and suggesting that perhaps the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission could be a little bit more progressive in its views as to what's happening here in Manitoba and the liquor laws.

I find it strange that at that point in time, perhaps, that the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission didn't explain or at least give us some little bit of insight as to what the MLCC were planning with changes to their own operation. It could have happened. This isn't something that just hit the table yesterday or the day before. This has been in the works for quite a while actually.

The proposed changes, for the most part, are positive. It sort of takes Manitoba and its liquor control laws from 50 years in the past to now about 10 years in the past. We do know that there are other jurisdictions in this great land of ours that are much more progressive in its—in their delivery of liquor

services to their constituents. In some jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, you can apply for permits for special occasions online. I understand that this may well be coming, but we don't know about that in this legislation. It may well be coming.

We do know that in other progressive jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, that they, in fact, do have standardized hours for socials and other events, and that comes in this legislation which is very positive. I'm very happy to see that there are going to be some progressive changes. However, when we put some changes in place, there are other people and other businesses that are being impacted.

As a matter of fact, when I left that meeting, I suggested to Mr. Hildahl that perhaps they could expand the private wine stores, not only just in the city of Winnipeg, but as one of my pet projects is to have Brandon treated with equality, that there be another second city in this province that could, in fact, have a private wine store that there are in the city of Winnipeg at the present time. But that wasn't part of this legislation, and, certainly, it wasn't a part of what Mr. Hildahl and the MLCC thought was necessary at the present time here in the province of Manitoba.

* (16:00)

But, as I said, when you put in some changes, others are affected by it. I've had comments made to me by a number of other individuals here in the province of Manitoba. We do know that the private wine stores have some concerns with respect to the boutiques that are being proposed by the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission.

I should put on the record, I was talking to a few of my friends over the weekend and it seems that they feel that these boutiques are similar to what you can find in other places that they visit in the US. Particularly, when you put a wine and spirit store or a beer store in a grocery store, which is being proposed by MLCC, my friends thought you could just simply walk in, pick it up off the shelf, walk to a cashier and then leave the store. That's not what—that is not what's—that is not what is happening. As a matter of fact, what is happening is it's going to be an MLCC operation within a grocery store, a boutique operation managed by MLCC, staffed by MLCC staff. So it's not quite the simple thing that people are anticipating happening, and I do hope that the minister put that on the record, that, in fact, what is being proposed is not what people are thinking is what's being proposed.

We do know that some restaurateurs are concerned, Mr. Speaker, maybe legitimately concerned. We have some hoteliers who are concerned because of their beer vendors and their hours of operation, and also the beer vendors are concerned, obviously, with the expansion of MLC operations in the boutique stores. We do have some cabaret nightclub licensees who are concerned about some of the new regulations that are being proposed in this legislation as to do—as to how these individuals have to control their own patrons and where that control goes, whether it's within their own premise or how far outside of their premise that control is. So there are some concerns, and I so hope that these concerns will be voiced at the committee. That's where it should be.

And, as I said, I congratulate the minister and MLCC for making small baby steps. I do congratulate them.

We talk about—one thing I forgot to talk about was brew pubs. Very positive, extremely positive. Not new; quite the opposite. Brew pubs are here in Canada and have been here for quite a while. But in Manitoba, we're just making that baby step now to try to develop those brew pubs. But in the legislation I see an awful lot of control and an awful lot of regulation that has to have some flexibility built into it, Mr. Speaker, so the brew pubs are going to actually work in the province of Manitoba. There's no sense putting the opportunity to have a brew pub if the regulation is not going to allow that to happen.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to spend too much time on this. I do know that we will have additional time in third reading, and I do know that we'll have opportunity at committee to be able to put other amendments, perhaps, on the table.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

The honourable member for River Heights, to speak?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, briefly, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that people have talked to me about on a number of occasions is, in providing for the establishment of brew pubs and places where one can purchase liquor, that there are a number of other jurisdictions which have looked at questions of urban design and whether there are or should be any stipulations relative to proximity to residential areas

just with respect to this act and whether that should be looked at as part of this act. So I look forward to any discussion of this item which may occur at the committee stage and to see what is recommended.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 41, The Liquor Control Amendment Act.

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

Bill 43—The Real Property Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 43, The Real Property Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Carman.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): The Bill 43, The Real Property Amendment Act—and, first of all, I want to thank Mr. Barry Effler, the Registrar-General, if I—that's not the correct term. He knows what his title is and he knows his job and he does a very good job. And I had a long conversation with him. And, having had some experience of—with title transfers over the years, I had a—somewhat of a knowledge, but dealing with this, this does make some changes. It's requiring a lawyer now to be involved, or another professional purpose—person if a lawyer is not available in terms of remote areas and whatnot. But to witness land transfer or registering mortgages, and this is to prevent fraud, whether it be elderly fraud or property tax repossessions type of fraud, whatever. So that's a point in this bill.

There's some other minor changes to development schemes. The developer will be able to do one filing with the title—Land Titles, rather than having to do individual title—titles registration with each individual property, in terms of requirements within the development. So these changes are seen as positive. There are some concerns from one particular agency. I understand they will probably be coming to committee, so we'll look forward to hearing their side of the story on there, and from there we'll let this bill go to committee.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 43, The Real Property Amendment Act.

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

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on House business. I would like to announce, in addition to the bills previously referred last week, that Bill 31, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, will also be considered at tonight's meeting of the Standing Committee on Justice.

Mr. Speaker: It's been announced, in addition to the bills previously referred last week, that Bill 31, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, will also be considered at tonight's meeting, on June 6th, of the Standing Committee on Justice.

The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Ms. Howard: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on further House business. I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Wednesday, June 8th, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 17, The Cooperatives Amendment Act; Bill 30, The Change of Name Amendment Act; Bill 35, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Cell Phone Contracts); Bill 36, The Adult Abuse Registry Act and Amendments to The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act; Bill 39, The Grieving Families Protection Act (Various Acts Amended); Bill 40, The Condominium Act and Amendments Respecting Condominium Conversions (Various Acts Amended); Bill 41, The Liquor Control Amendment Act; and Bill 43, The Real Property Amendment Act.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, it's been announced that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Wednesday, June 8th, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 17, The Cooperatives Amendment Act; Bill 30, The Change of Name Amendment Act; Bill 35, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Cell Phone Contracts); Bill 36, The Adult Abuse Registry Act and Amendments to The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act; Bill 39, The Grieving Families Protection Act (Various Acts Amended); Bill 40, The Condominium Act and Amendments Respecting Condominium Conversions (Various Acts Amended); and Bill 41, The Liquor Control

Amendment Act; and Bill 43, The Real Property Amendment Act.

The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Ms. Howard: Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you please call to continue debate on second reading of bills 32, 34, 23, 20, 21 and 38.

Bill 32—The Essential Services (Health Care) and Related Amendments Act

Mr. Speaker: Second reading, resume debate on Bill 32, The Essential Services (Health Care) and Related Amendments Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

What is the will of the House? Is the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Pembina?

* (16:10)

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? It's been denied. Do we have speakers?

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): We're looking forward to having the public input on Bill 32, so we're looking forward for that to happen in the next few days.

Mr. Speaker: Ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 32, The Essential Services (Health Care) and Related Amendments Act.

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

Bill 34—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Presumption re OFC Personnel)

Mr. Speaker: Bill 34, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Presumption re OFC Personnel), standing in the name of the honourable member for Pembina.

What is the will of the House? Is the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Pembina?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: It's been denied.

The honourable member for Lakeside, to speak.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Again, I look forward to hearing public consultation on Bill 34, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act, brought forward by the honourable member in regards to the amendments that's been proposed, and we're certainly pleased to see that these amendments have been brought forward and, of course, any time we have public input to make sure that legislation does move forward in a timely manner, we want to make sure we do hear from the public on this.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 34, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Presumption re OFC Personnel).

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

Bill 23—The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 23, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

What is the will of the House? Is the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Pembina?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. It's been denied.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, Bill 23, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act, again, that's been debated in the House. We have, you know, a few concerns in this particular Bill 23. That's to make sure that we have enough people here to have committee and get the debate and the public feedback.

I know with the flood, certainly in my area, in the—around Lake Manitoba, we want to make sure that those people, in fact, do have an opportunity to be able to come in and present their views on this particular bill. Because I know that this past weekend I was out around Lake Manitoba and a number of businesses out there have some concerns, you know, with the flooding. They may not be able to come in and have debate on committee because of the time factor with regards to the flooding. But, certainly, we hope that any information that they have, they'll be able to send it in so that the public will have an opportunity to have their voices heard on this particular bill.

It is a significant bill. It does make some changes and, of course, any time you have an employer that has changes, that they want to make sure that we have the opportunity for their voices to be heard. So I know a number of those particular individuals around Lake Manitoba does have an awful lot on their plate at this time and they want to make sure that, in fact, that whenever they do have an opportunity to appear before committee, that those concerns be brought forward.

So I do want to make sure that I try and get out to that area. I know that the government wants to move forward on this particular bill in a fairly timely manner of course. But I will endeavour to make sure that, in fact, the people in that area are notified of it so they make sure that their voices are heard in committee.

Because, at this point, we're not really sure when committee will be brought forward on this particular piece of legislation. It might be tonight. It might be tomorrow. It might be Thursday. It might be Saturday. It might be Sunday. It might be 10 days. No, we'll be gone in 10 days, won't we? No—the 16th, but, well, we may be back—I don't know. There's another opportunity that maybe the bill will be held until the fall session. We don't know, but by moving it onto committee, we can have that opportunity for feedback in order to make sure that it does get debated, of course, in this House.

So, with those few words, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to moving to committee and, of course, for that feedback that we always like to hear from those great Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading, Bill 23, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act.

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

Bill 20—The Defibrillator Public Access Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 20, The Defibrillator Public Access Act, is standing in the name of the honourable member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat).

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Minnedosa?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, it's been denied.

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to rise and put a few words on the record with respect to this bill, and I think it's important because I know that the member for Minnedosa worked very hard and met with many members in the community with respect to public access for defibrillators in the province of Manitoba. I know she did a great deal of work, and she put her own bill together and brought it forward into the Legislature. I don't think, unfortunately, it had a chance to get debated, but I know that this bill that the government has brought forward is very much as a result of all of the hard work for the member for Minnedosa, and so I just want to congratulate her on all the work that she has done.

And, certainly, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the bill moving on to committee, so that we can hear from various members of the public to ensure that many people have the opportunity to show and to give their stories. And, of course, this is not a story that we really want to hear about because we hope that, moving forward, that defibrillators will have an opportunity to save many, many more lives in Manitoba.

I know, there was—one of our friends was caught and actually passed away as a result of not having a defibrillator machine there, and it was a very, very sad day for their family and their friends. And it just so happened that they were caught out in cottage country in Manitoba. They were on an island and, unfortunately, didn't have a machine there, but they do now, Mr. Speaker, and it's just one of those things that—it does save lives in our province, and it's very important, I think, to support this legislation.

But, again, Mr. Speaker, I want to give the credit where credit is due, and I think all too often in this Manitoba Legislature, we have brought forward bills and resolutions where the government, the NDP government, has taken those ideas and run with them themselves and tried to pat themselves on the back. And I think that it's important in the case of this case that we give credit where credit is due: the member for Minnedosa who went out and met with so many people in the community to ensure that a bill was brought forward into this House. So I want to congratulate her on all of her efforts.

And, again, we look forward to moving this through to committee to hear from those members in the public who believe very strongly in this bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 20, The Defibrillator Public Access Act.

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

Bill 21—The Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Day Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay, we'll now go on to Bill 21, The Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Day Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Charleswood.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I'm actually standing in support of Bill 21, the Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Day, where we will see that the Tuesday of the full last week in April of each year will be designated as Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Day. And I've had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to rise on a number of occasions over the past years and talk about this issue and the importance of donations for organs and tissues, and I think it is a critical issue.

* (16:20)

I think governments in Manitoba and across Canada have been working over the last number of years to try to improve this, and there's still more work that we can do, but it is good that we are seeing this issue move forward over time. I think it's really important that we have a day like this, because I think there's a lot of people that, once they had an opportunity to learn more about it, to talk more about it, we may find that organ donations go up more.

It's certainly a challenging area for families to address this issue, and it's important that it happens while everybody, you know, is still able to identify to their family members what their wishes are. And I think one of the ways we can increase that is to encourage the public to talk more about this, to encourage families to sit down and talk about the importance of organ and tissue donation and what their family members want, should something happen to them. And I know it's probably a very difficult thing for families. It's hard to even think about it, you know, to talk about it on a personal level, but it is something that we have to do, and I think having an awareness day to move that along will certainly help.

I know that as a nursing supervisor I was once in a position where I had to approach a family, and their loved one was actually on the verge of passing on, and it was in an intensive care unit at the hospital. And, because I was a nursing supervisor, I was in the position of having to go and talk to the family and ask them if they would consider allowing organ and tissue donation to be considered. And it was certainly not a comfortable time for any of us, and it wasn't something that was easy for any of us to do, whether it was the nurse or the family. So, if we can get ahead of those things and we can have families actually have those discussions ahead of time and make those decisions ahead of time, it wouldn't end up in a situation where, you know, on—at the last minute some of these discussions are happening at a very tough time, at a very intimate time for families. And it's a time when you don't really want to be thinking about it. It's too hard to be thinking about it. The family is already going through enough challenges with the fact that their family member is passing away.

So it's really important for—whether it's the family or whether it's, you know, the health-care professionals. I think it's something that we need to focus more strongly on and do everything we can ahead of time to try to make a patient's wishes known.

It is critically important that people think about this because organ and tissue donations can make such a huge, huge difference to people, and it can actually give somebody life if you can have a lung transplant or a heart transplant or any other organs, for instance, that could be transplanted. We know that organs which can be transplanted include kidneys, heart, liver, lungs, pancreas and small bowel. Those are ways that a donor can actually give a gift of life, as they say, to somebody else and change somebody's whole life by donating parts of their body to somebody else who's in dire need. Often what we see happen, though, is people don't get a transplant early enough and they aren't well enough when an organ might be available, and they miss out on that opportunity. So it just goes to speak to the fact that we really do need to do something more in advance of the situation being in the critical stages.

We know there are about 4,000 people waiting for a life-saving or life-enhancing transplant in Canada, and there are always about 170 Manitobans ready to receive a kidney transplant and another 300 being evaluated for receiving another transplant.

So there are many opportunities for people to give that gift, whatever that gift would be, whether it was a heart or lungs or eyesight, and I think this day will probably be a very good way to increase awareness about it.

And I would like to acknowledge the work of Manitoba's transplant team, who, I understand, have looked around the world at countries with the highest organ donation rates to identify the best things that we could do here in Manitoba to increase our rates. And they have certainly been working hard to bring forward to this government ideas about what can be moved forward. I think this is one of those good ideas, and we look forward to hearing more discussion from the public on this, and then we look forward to having this as legislation in Manitoba so that we can actually move forward in making a big difference in many people's lives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 21, The Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Day Act.

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

**Bill 38—The Regional Health Authorities
Amendment Act
(Accountability and Transparency)**

Mr. Speaker: Okay, and we'll call Bill 38, The Regional Health Authorities Amendment Act (Accountability and Transparency), standing in the name of the honourable member for Charleswood.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): When I saw this bill hit the Order Paper, I have to say that it was quite a surprise to see this government talk about regional health authority accountability and transparency, because for almost 12 years they've done very little in this area, and then on the eve of an election we see a government that wakes up and realizes that they need to do something with this issue. This bill should've been called conversion on the road to Damascus or conversion on the road to an election, because they have done very little over almost 12 years in moving in the direction to strengthen accountability and transparency with our RHAs.

And, when I look at some of the changes that they're recommending in this legislation, the first one was that RHAs are required to keep their corporate costs within prescribed limits. Well, isn't that rich, Mr. Speaker, after they've allowed the RHAs to increase their bureaucracies beyond anything that they were in 1999, where they've allowed the bureaucracies to go and grow and where we now see, that we know of, \$144 million being spent on administrative costs in the WRHA and other RHAs in Manitoba.

It becomes kind of disingenuous, I think, for this government, after allowing everything to run amok, to all of a sudden on the eve of election wake up and realize, oh, we're way behind public sentiment; we haven't been listening to what the Progressive Conservatives have been saying for how many years.

We've asked this government, when they became government, to actually put in place a review process to review RHAs. For 10 years this government refused to review RHAs, and we said, if you don't do it they're going to entrench bad habits, and that's exactly what happened. They also entrenched incredible growth in RHA bureaucracies. This government didn't do anything about it and, in fact, they waited 10 years before they even looked at doing a review. And the review was totally controlled by this government in terms of what they wanted to find out and what they didn't want to find out, so they put their criteria in place that would make it easy for them to try to deal with some of them.

But, when we do look at what Dr. Jerry Gray did and that other committee, what they did in terms of reviewing RHAs, their report is actually quite scathing of this NDP government. This NDP government basically ignored that, and, in fact, I wrote a letter to the minister quite some time ago asking her for an update on the progress on all those 40-some recommendations from that review committee and I wrote that letter months ago, four or five months ago, and I haven't heard anything from this government in terms of whether or not they're moving on it.

So, Mr. Speaker, for the government to come forward now is—on the eve of an election is almost laughable. They've missed the boat on this whole issue for 12 years, and now we see that they're going to try to use all of their spinners out there, including the six spinners that the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) has put into her office. She's doubled the

number of political staff in her office and, basically, what they're trying to do now is control all of the RHAs, control all of the message and try, as they are—have been doing for almost 12 years now, is live within a bunker mentality to control the spin and to control the message. This government is so far removed from a commitment to accountability and to a commitment to transparency that it is actually laughable.

* (16:30)

All we see, as a really good example of that, is what happened when Brian Sinclair died. We had a Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) that went absolutely AWOL. She was missing in action for at least a week. She was hiding from the media and hiding from any accountability. Well, if that's the kind of leadership that this government puts forward, why should we expect much better from anybody else in health care when you've got a Minister of Health who isn't even accountable herself?

Mr. Speaker, interesting, too, that within this legislation, the government is now saying that RHAs must be accredited by an approved health accreditation body. Where have they been for 12 years?

I note I put that on the Order Paper for a private member's bill last fall. I guess what the government did over the winter is decide, oh, oh, better not let the Tories get in front of this one with a good idea. And now we see that encompassed in their legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I would also say that another aspect of this legislation is that the regional health authorities are required to make periodic public reports on matters relating to patient safety and the quality of health services provided. Again, where have they been for 12 years? I put forward a private member's bill last fall. What has the government done? They have now taken all of that and incorporated it into their own bill.

It just shows you, after 12 years, they are tired and they're looking all over for ideas from everybody else, and what they're doing is taking some good ideas that are before them and now they are incorporating it into their bills on the conversion on the road to an election.

Now, another aspect of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is that regional health authorities must develop a declaration of patient values and a process for resolving patient concerns. Where have they been for 12 years? Why has this government not put in

place a proper process for resolving patient concerns?

I know I've heard many stories over the last number of years where patient complaints are not listened to by RHAs or by this government, and now on the eve of an election, the government decides, oh, they're going put in place something about patient values and how to resolve patient concerns. Where have they been? That should've been the basis for providing health care for the last decade and, again, now, we see this government deciding that they are going to bring something like this forward.

Mr. Speaker, the other interesting part of this legislation: they refuse to do anything with addressing administrative costs in the RHAs. And we've been saying, year after year, in fact, it was in our last election platform in 2007, to put administrative costs—put a cap on them and cap them at 3 per cent. And that was something that actually came out of discussion during the Kirby Senate review and this government ignored it. They couldn't be bothered with it.

Now, it is interesting. Now what the Minister of Health is doing, and she's put it into the legislation, is to indicate that the WRHA has to keep their admin costs capped at 2.99 per cent, and that's where we get into a little bit of petty politics, Mr. Speaker. She's got to try to best us by a 0.01 per cent, and it just shows the pettiness that in all of this what this government has forgot about is the patient.

And, with this government, health care has all become political, and I'm seeing it every day with this Minister of Health. Everything is now about politics, and this government after 12 years is so tired that in everything, in all of their spin, why do they have 14 spin doctors at the WRHA? Why? Why does the minister have six spin-doctor political staff in her office?

And it is all about government spin. It is all about making health care political. And what they've done in that process is they have forgotten about keeping the patient at the centre of everything and making the commitment to the patient and not to themselves.

And I'm glad to see though, Mr. Speaker, they woke up after their long snooze; they realize they've been asleep at the switch. They've been totally out of touch with public sentiment about administrative costs and they have also been out of touch with what

front-line health-care professionals are saying about RHA administration. And, unfortunately, with this government, they have turned a deaf ear to a lot of people that are working very hard on the front lines.

And, Mr. Speaker, so when I see this legislation come forward and it's talking about a commitment to accountability and transparency, I have to say that it was certainly something that astounded me, because they have just not been there for the last dozen years.

And another perfect example of where they're missing in action is performance agreements. Where are the performance agreements with all of the RHAs? They don't have any. None exist. And so you have to wonder. This government doesn't really know how to manage RHAs. It's really become more and more apparent after the last dozen years and basically comes down to an issue of no leadership is what it all comes down to, Mr. Speaker.

So they, because of their lack of leadership, they go into a bunker mentality and, Mr. Speaker, I think Manitobans will recognize what this legislation is all about, and I don't think they're going to be able to fool the public, fool the patients or fool anybody with what they're trying to do now. They didn't buy into it for the last dozen years, why should we believe them now? It's just like going to end hallway medicine; they didn't do that. Well, I'd be surprised if they truly, really even cared about this legislation. It's just desperate, last-minute government trying to show that they're doing something when they've failed to do this for the last 12 years.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I want to put a few comments on the record here. The first thing I want to say is that in discussing this bill with a number of others with knowledge in the health area, first question came up is, you know, why wasn't this done 12 years ago?

Many of the measures here are eminently reasonable and certainly could have been done much earlier, and many presumed that they were going to be done, but it was never really followed up, in spite of the fact that we were told that there would be strategic plans and so on, on the regional authorities' websites. And—but it never really happened in the way it should have done. And, certainly, we were led to believe, on a number of occasions in the last 12 years, that the NDP would look at making sure there was a process for resolving patients' concerns. There should be, you know, health care 101. There

should be a rather basic element of being able to deal with people who have concerns. And you have to legislate this because it's not being done, and because the government can't get it done properly, certainly says something about the shortcomings of the last 12 years.

I want to make a few comments on each of the areas which are discussed. The requirement to keep corporate costs within prescribed limits is reasonable in one way, but the problem, as I see it, is that, as emerged in some of the discussion in Estimates, that there are all sorts of administrative activities which are not going to be included in corporate funds or corporate costs. And so that the extent to which there is a administration or bureaucracy within the WRHA is likely to be considerably underestimated. Not only that, but it provides avenues that the regional health authorities can use to build up administration in ways that don't count as corporate costs. And so I see this as a concern here, is that to some extent this will be, you know, window dressing, seeming to be a—doing a good job but, in fact, we may not know, you know, what's really happening because so many administrative costs can be buried in other ways within the regional health authorities.

And so we will wait and see what happens but, certainly, I don't for a minute believe that this is going to be an adequate answer to, you know, making sure that the, you know, we have what's appropriate in terms of administrative costs without a lot of extra, you know, administration and bureaucracy going on.

*(16:40)

The posting the expenses paid to the chief executive officer to a regional health authority is certainly reasonable; again, something that should have been done quite some ago.

The accreditation of regional health authorities is a good thing, but, you know, in looking and in discussion that's heard to date with regard to accreditation, that it will be a concern that there are individual accreditation of hospitals, personal care homes and so on, but I would hope that this refers to an accreditation which is of the whole regional health authority, including these individual facilities, and ensures that there are not gaps in what the regional health authority is doing.

And that, I think, is something which needs to be done. It's not a guarantee that it will happen that way under this legislation, and perhaps at the committee

stage or later the minister can actually clarify this. We had some discussion in Estimates already.

Resolving patient concerns: This should have been done a long time ago. Whether, in fact, you can legislate this in this fashion is another matter, but there are too many examples where patients have not been able to have their concerns resolved adequately. And, certainly, one of the things that I have found is that it's been vital to have somebody who can advocate for a patient, somebody who is in a facility, because without that advocacy role, things often slide by, and we want to make sure that everybody who's in facilities is getting really good care, and, certainly, in many cases there is excellent care, but there is too many times when I hear of people with concerns, and, sadly, too many of these concerns are not being resolved, identified quickly and resolved in a way that corrects the problem not only within the RHA which is affected, but within the whole province. So there is a lot more to do here in making sure that this actually happens in a way that's effective.

Quality and patient safety: I have talked ever since I was elected an MLA and, indeed, before that about the importance of quality and of patient safety in Manitoba. Certainly, this is an extraordinarily important area, but one of the most disappointing things, recently, was to have a NOR-MAN Regional Health Authority report in which the review committee decided that it couldn't review quality. This is, in fact, you know, unbelievable, that something which is so central to the mandate of a regional health authority could not be reviewed by this committee, and it's—were the standards of quality not available for them to look at and to review? Were there no standardized indicators of quality that could be easily looked at and checked? There, apparently, under this government, has been a huge deficit in work in the area of quality, so that the NOR-MAN Regional Health Authority review team could not even look at this in a feasible and reasonable way. And so while this is here, I am not convinced, at this point, that what's in the legislation is going to do the job that we need in terms of quality and patient safety.

Certainly, what has happened so far leaves a big gap in terms of what's to be desired, and the shortness of the section on quality and patient safety reporting doesn't suggest that we're going to have standardized, regular reporting. It says: make periodic public reports about the matters relating to the quality of health-care services provided and

patient safety. And, you know, at what time frame, in what kind of way? This is all very vague, and it's not at all clear how these guidelines or recommendations are going to be developed or how long it will take. I mean, it's extraordinarily that, after 12 years, we don't have—we're not more advanced and further along in terms of quality, quality reporting and making sure that this is front and centre, one of the most essential and important parts of the operation of our health-care system.

So, with those comments, I look forward to this legislation going to committee stage and then on from there. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 38, The Regional Health Authorities Amendment Act (Accountability and Transparency).

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

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on further House business. Would you call for continued debate on second reading of Bill 42, 22, 26, and 28.

Bill 42—The Caregiver Recognition Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 42, The Caregiver Recognition Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Minnedosa.

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Mr. Speaker, I just would like to put a few words on the record with regard to Bill 42, and it's The Caregiver Recognition Act.

I understand that this bill is looking at declaring the first Tuesday of April as a caregiver recognition day and I have no issue with that and I don't believe anybody in this House would have any issue with recognizing the contributions that caregivers provide in a formal or informal way to family members or individuals within the community who need that care.

With regard to the bill on—and discussions with the minister, I understand that they're looking at creating a committee, and it looks like it's going to be

an appointed committee or board. And when I was asking questions with regard to that, the minister was indicating there'd be, at a minimum, six members on this board, and he gave very little direction in what and how often they would meet or what really this advisory committee would be responsible for. And I guess my concerns would be that we need to know more about the roles of this committee.

If it's just to provide a pat on the back to government, I think that that's not something that would be necessary. I think what we need to do is ensure that caregivers do—are given the tools they need to provide the supports that are required, and I believe what we need to be doing is looking at ensuring that those supports and those resources are in place now, Mr. Speaker. We don't need a bill to ensure that this minister and this government are actually doing what they're supposed to be doing, is providing a service to Manitobans and ensuring that individuals who are looking for support and guidance from this government actually are receiving it.

So I don't believe that the bill, in that aspect, would have been necessary. I think we could move forward and ensure that government does what it's intended to do and should be doing, is providing supports and ensuring that caregivers, when they make a call to government, do receive, you know, helpful information and support.

What I found rather interesting about this was that the minister had indicated there may be a website developed with regard to supports for families. And, my goodness, Mr. Speaker, the provincial government has a website. You know, provide information on that website that is already in place. We don't need to be developing another website. We understand that there's several websites that are being considered by this government that are going to be costing a significant amount of money, \$250,000 or \$300,000 for a Parent Zone website.

So, again, you know, let's be reasonable. We have so many families that are hurting right now in Manitoba with regard to flood issues and that type of thing, Mr. Speaker. Let's ensure that there are resources and supports available for all Manitobans in a way that is wise. We believe that caregivers are—play an important role in Manitoba, but I don't think we need legislation to make government do its job in providing those supports.

Thank you.

* (16:50)

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few quick comments here and, certainly, want to recognize caregivers and the tremendously important role that caregivers provide within our health-care system. This is a—something which is important, and I certainly support recognizing caregivers.

On the other hand, I think that the advisory committee here is a way of setting up more consultations, rather than actually taking any immediate action to improve circumstances with regard to caregivers and the people with whom they care—for whom they care. So I'm looking forward to presentations at the committee stage, in this—with respect to this legislation, and I hope that we might be able to move this a step further than the legislation goes at the moment.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 42, The Caregiver Recognition Act.

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

Bill 22—The Securities Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 22, The Securities Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler).

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Springfield?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, it's been denied.

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and put a few words on the record with respect to the Bill 22, The Securities Amendment Act.

And, essentially, Mr. Speaker, this bill makes various amendments to The Securities Act in order to bring uniformity to various securities regulations and laws against the country. And I know that it's certainly important to maintain our autonomy here in Manitoba, and the ability to make various securities regulations by way of the Manitoba Securities Commission here in Manitoba. But we are—we're happy to—it also makes other amendments, various housekeeping amendments, to the act.

But we, of course, Mr. Speaker, are—would like to hear from Manitobans across the country, to see how it affects either their businesses or it affects various securities holders in Manitoba. And we want to hear from those people at committee, so we're fine with passing this through to committee today.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 22, The Securities Amendment Act.

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

Bill 26—The Université de Saint-Boniface Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 26, The Université de Saint-Boniface Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris.

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): I am pleased just to put a few words on the record in regard to this bill. What this bill does is it enables the collège de Saint-Boniface to become the Université de Saint-Boniface, which I think is a good move on their part because it allows them to market internationally and drop the "collège" name, which is somewhat ambiguous with colleges or high schools, Mr. Speaker, internationally. It also allows them to form alliances with other international institutions. And it's important, culturally, for the French community to have this French university in St. Boniface here in the province.

It also continues the affiliation with the University of Manitoba, and sets out a governance structure, Mr. Speaker. So we're pleased to put this bill forward to committee.

Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface becomes the Université de Saint-Boniface. I think that the one comment that I would make is that in today's world the college—colleges have a very, very important role, and, indeed, the interesting thing is that there are quite a number of students who will go to the University of Manitoba and then decide that they want afterwards to go to Red River College to get the type of courses that will prepare them for getting certain technical positions and that such students have done very well. I have actually had in my employ over the last number of years students

who've taken political science at the University of Manitoba and then creative communications at Red River College.

And I suggest, that in making this change, that we don't want to limit the scope of what can be provided through the—in French at the Université de Saint-Boniface and would hope that there will be some discussion of this question at the time that we have a committee meeting so we can ensure that as the act move forwards that we are not limiting the capabilities of what can be provided in French in terms of the important technical areas that are typically provided at a collège.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 26, The Université de Saint-Boniface Act.

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

Bill 28—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Reporting Bullying and Other Harm)

Mr. Speaker: Bill 28, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Reporting Bullying and Other Harm), standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu).

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, it's been denied.

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain): I will just put a couple of words on the record today in regards to Bill 28. It's The Public Schools Amendment Act, and this particular bill deals with bullying and other harms to students, and what the bill indicates is that a school employee or person in charge of pupils during school-approved activities must make a report to the principal if they think a pupil has engaged in bullying or other unacceptable conduct.

And we certainly hope that this particular piece of legislation will send a message to all Manitobans that bullying and other conduct within schools will not be tolerated. We certainly hope that a lot of this is already being done through various school divisions around the province, and, in fact, that's the indication I'm getting from a lot of the school

divisions and from principals, that this is, indeed, the case.

So I guess this legislation will reinforce what is being done across the province. We certainly look forward to having this legislation move into committee and hear what Manitobans across the province have to say.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I have spoken on many occasions about the importance of reducing bullying in Manitoba, bullying in schools, and I welcome this legislation.

I have concerns that this legislation alone may not be enough to do what has to be done to make sure that the environment that we have in our schools is bully- and intimidation-free. I think we still have a long way to go in this direction, and I look forward to ensuring that we have a good discussion at the committee stage.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 28, The Public Schools Amendment Act.

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

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The Government House Leader, on further House business.

Ms. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you canvass the House to see if there's a will to call it 5 o'clock?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will to call it 5 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 6, 2011

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

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/index.html>