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PROCEEDINGS

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 22, 2014

The House met at 10 a.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 and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name, and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Good morning, colleagues. Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Mr. Speaker: Are we ready to proceed with Bill 203?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? Move on to—are we ready to proceed with Bill 204?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? I hear a no. Are we ready to proceed with Bill 206?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Bill 206—The Cyberbullying Prevention Act

Mr. Speaker: All right, we'll now proceed to call Bill 206, The Cyberbullying Prevention Act.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I move, seconded by the member from Steinbach, that Bill 206, The Cyberbullying Prevention Act; Loi sur la prévention de la cyberintimidation, now be read—now read a second time and be referred to a committee of the House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ewasko: It gives me great pleasure to stand today and put a few words on the record in—regarding Bill 206, The Cyberbullying Prevention Act, which originally was thought of and brought forward by the honourable member from Steinbach.

Mr. Speaker, bullying is nothing new. However, with the pervasiveness of the Internet and the advent of social media, there are many new mediums in which bullying activity can now take place. Due to technology, the traditional forms of bullying have given way to new and indirect forms of bullying which are harder to monitor.

Since every child deserves the right to feel safe, optimizing their developmental capacities, an enhanced cyberbullying program needs to be created and implemented in Manitoba and explicitly to schools. Although bullying is the No. 1 non-academic issue most educators and students face, many educators have never taken a professional development course about bullying. However, Bill 206 is all-encompassing. It is not limited only to students; it will affect all Manitobans engaged in or victimized by bullying, both children, teenagers and adults. And Bill 206 is also not limited to schools. As the Internet has no jurisdictional boundaries that end at the schoolyard, either does Bill 206. In this regard, cyberbullying activities can be monitored and enforced, no matter where in the community this bullying activity is taking place.

Canada has seen some recent and very tragic circumstances of cyberbullying. These tragedies, culminated in the studies—in the suicides of Amanda Todd in 2012 and Rehtaeh Parsons in 2013. Although precipitated by physical and alleged sexual assaults, the two victims were continuously victimized electronically by their peers, resulting in the loss of life for two beautiful and young Canadian girls.

According to a 2004 study by the Canadian Public Health Association, 41 per cent of students reported being involved in relational aggression and 32 per cent reported being involved in physical bullying. Furthermore, according to the Canadian Council on Learning, bullying has deleterious effects on schools as safe learning environments and has been linked to a number of undesirable outcomes, including delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse and psychosocial illness, such as low self-esteem, social withdrawal, anxiety, insecurity, patterns of aggressive reaction, all of which carry steep social and economic costs to society. The above study also

found that students bullied weekly are almost twice as likely to experience physical symptoms as those not bullied.

The negative effects are not limited to the victims. Perpetrators have been shown to have higher rates of substance abuse, aggressive behaviour and poor academic achievement. Between 6 to 8 per cent of students bullied avoid school. Bullied students report difficulties with attention and focus, attaining lower academic achievement and requiring greater mental health assistance. Forty-seven per cent of parents reported that they had a child who had been bullied, while 16 per cent reported bullying as a frequent occurrence. On an international assessment of 35 countries, Canada had the ninth highest rate of bullying amongst 13-year-olds.

Technology is enabling new forms of bullying behaviour to persist, and we need to take steps to address this, Mr. Speaker. In this regard, Bill 206 works to create a tort of liabilities for bullies and parents whose children are knowingly bullying others. This will work to legally hold bullies and those parents who may be enabling their behaviour to account.

Mr. Speaker, as many of us are parents, the Manitoba Progressive Conservative caucus believes that all Manitobans, especially children, deserves to feel safe. For this reason, we, as the Progressive Conservatives, are proposing Bill 206, Cyberbullying Prevention Act, in order to allow victims to combat online bullying behaviour, ensuring that enforceable rules are formalized throughout the courts.

There are four commonly recognized categories of bullying that are pervasive today. These are verbal, social, physical and cyber. Today's cyberbullying is seen as one of, if not the most prevalent, form of bullying. This form of activity has snowballed recently due to the growing use of Facebook and Twitter and the increase in those accessing the Internet on smartphones.

Mr. Speaker, when we take a look back at the most recent Olympics in Sochi, we have a—there's many, many reports on cyberbullying, and the one that I'd like to reference in particular, is by Craig and Marc Kielburger, titled *Cyberbullying is Not an Olympic Sport*. And they talk about British speed skater Elise Christie, who had her eyes set on gold—and I'm quoting from the document—when she tried to pass Italian skater Arianna Fontana on the inside of the Sochi short track. The pair collided, tumbled and took out Korea's Park Seung-hi. In the aftermath,

however, it seems Christie's biggest mistake did not happen on the ice; it happened the day she logged on to Twitter. Elsie Christie had a deluge of abusive tweets, including death threats, which all bombarded Christie. Much of the fire came from angry Korean fans. For the sake of her sanity, Christie was forced to shut down her Twitter account.

During the Sochi opening ceremonies alone, there were an estimated 10,000 Olympic-related tweets per minute. The 2012 Summer Games in London generated more than 150 million tweets in all. Basically, Mr. Speaker, the reason why I raise this document—or this report, is the fact that we know that cyberbullying allows aggressors to target their victims both at school and in the community, making it the most far-reaching and indirect method of bullying available.

*(10:10)

The rates of cyberbullying generally increase in elementary school, peaking in grades 6 to 8, where teenage students may be the most vulnerable to these types of repeat attacks. Mr. Speaker, essentially this act will provide safer communities and schools by creating the administrative and court processes that can be used to address and prevent issues of cyberbullying.

Bill 206 emphasizes a strict and enforceable definition of cyberbullying, allowing the justice system and victims to hold bullies to account for their actions. Under Bill 206, a person found to have committed an offence of cyberbullying is deemed to have committed a tort against the victim. To apply to the courts for a protection order, the application must name a respondent, and this respondent must have ownership or use of an electronic device engaged in the bullying behaviour. Although, if the respondent is unknown, an applicant—application can identify an IP address, email address or other identifier, allowing police to deduce the source and culprit of the cyberbullying.

If a court order is granted, the protection order may consist of the following: a provision prohibiting the respondent from engaging in cyberbullying; No. 2, a provision prohibiting the perpetrator communicate with or contact the victim; No. 3, a provision prohibiting the perpetrator communicate about the victim; No. 4, a provision prohibiting the perpetrator use a specified electronic medium; No. 5, an order of confiscating electronic devices from the perpetrator; No. 6, an order requiring the perpetrator discontinue services with a registered

Internet service provider; or, No. 7, any other provision that the justice deems necessary.

Mr. Speaker, if granted, these protection orders cannot exceed one year in length unless an application for a new protection order is made. This renewal process can only take place if a protection order has expired or is set to expire within 30 days or if the justice believes there is a continuing need.

Furthermore, the court can also award damages to the plaintiff, including special, general, aggravated or punitive damages. However, the court can only issue remedies after all relevant circumstances are taken into account, such as any vulnerabilities of the victim, the conduct of the defendant and the nature of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

Basically, Mr. Speaker, this puts some onus not only on the perpetrator, but also on the parent, and that as well adds various components to where the courts or the police can now, through Bill 206, then actually go to the parent and make sure that somebody is held account for the bullying actions.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that given the interconnected and technological world that we live in today, the cyberbullying must be actively pursued and combated. Bill 206 will create enforcement mechanisms allowing victims to pursue justice and closure while creating the environment for greater parental oversight. I know that the school program, Kids in the Know, have actually benefited many, many students throughout the school system. But the problem with Kids in the Know is that it is not a mandatory program; it is up to various schools to enact and to take that program to the various grades, ranging from elementary all the way through graduation.

Again, as this bill is about the protection and preservation of Manitobans and vulnerable children, I ask that all honourable members today stand with us and support this worthy and required legislation. We as Progressive Conservatives are committed to building a strong future for all of Manitoba's children, and we recognize and promote Bill 206 as a crucial step towards doing just that.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

Ms. Nancy Allan (St. Vital): It's an honour to be here in the House this morning and talk once again about our government's commitment to bullying and cyberbullying and the prevention of cyberbullying.

It became very clear to us just last week how important and how complex this very issue is when we saw the charges that were laid in the Netherlands against the individual that was involved in this extortion of Amanda Todd in British Columbia. Of course, our government's commitment around Bill 18, the genesis for that legislation was when we were all shocked in 2012 at the death of Amanda Todd in British Columbia, and I think we all realized how important it was that we took action here in Manitoba on a provincial level to prevent these kinds of situations from happening. And then we saw the situation that occurred in Nova Scotia with Rehtaeh Parsons. There was a beautiful article in The Globe and Mail just in the last couple of weeks about the beautiful bond between Carol Todd and Mrs. Parsons in regards to losing children from cyberbullying, and they've become very close friends because they share an amazing bond because of losing their children and their daughters to cyberbullying.

We believed at that time that we needed to do something here in Manitoba, and Bill 18 was the genesis that—it was the genesis from Amanda's death. And we will watch what's happening very closely in regards to the charges and whether or not, in a situation like this that is international and global legally, whether or not we—those charges will be able to be laid and whether or not they will be able to find some kind of justice around Amanda's death. But at the end of the day, we felt very strongly that our laws needed to keep up because of social media, and we know that we believe that Bill 18 was an appropriate response to what's happening globally around the world.

Bill 18 does strengthen the definitions around bullying and cyberbullying, and it means that schools can now take action, and they are—be able to be proactive, not just within the school but outside of the school. If there is a situation where someone feels that there is an incident of bullying or an incidence of cyberbullying outside of school, school divisions can now take action. And they need to take action because we need to be able to stop what's happening, not just within a school, on the playground, on a field trip, but on cyberspace. And it is happening throughout our society, and this legislation is going to help us to protect young people, Mr. Speaker. And we were very, very—I was very proud of all of my caucus colleagues who stood in this House and supported Bill 18.

This bill also requires all schools that are funded by the Province of Manitoba to develop human

diversity policies and to accommodate student groups that promote safe and inclusive schools, including gay-straight alliances. And we know, and we've seen, that there is a vulnerable population of young people in our society that are, unfortunately, still victims of bullying and cyberbullying, and we felt that it was very important that we have legislation that protect all students in our schools.

And I was never more proud when I was in the Bill 18 committee hearings and Reece Malone was in that committee hearing, and he came forward to speak in support of Bill 18. Reece brought his Bible to that committee hearing, and he sat that Bible down on the table when he spoke, and he had a suicide—his suicide note in that Bible, and he said that he was at risk of killing himself. And he was in school, he had written that suicide note, and one day, someone said a homophobic comment in that classroom, and the teacher at the front of the room turned to the whole class and said, I will not accept those kinds of comments in my classroom. And that classroom turned into a gay-straight alliance because that teacher at the front of the classroom realized that that young person was in trouble and that all students need to be respected, and Reece said very, very clearly, in his presentation to Bill 18, that that teacher saved his life. And we heard very, very clearly from teachers all across this province, that gay-straight alliances save lives.

And that is what Bill 18 is all about. It's about protecting young people in classrooms. It's about protecting young people on—in the Internet. It's about protecting young people in our society that are being cyberbullied, and they are being bullied.

* (10:20)

So I'm very, very proud of Bill 18, and I believe that the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko)—I know he didn't support Bill 18, and it's unfortunate. One of his criticisms about Bill 18 was that we were moving forward with this legislation and we didn't have any research. Well, I guess he had never—I hope he would look at the Bill 18 presentations that were being made and he would look at Dr. Catherine Taylor's presentation on Bill 18. She is a renowned researcher, and she is renowned for the work she—that she has done across Canada. She has done that work with Egale Canada, and there is a documentation of her research. It's called, in every classroom: homophobia and transphobia. She presented on the last night of committee, and those comments and that research are in Hansard for the

people who wanted to criticize Bill 18 for not having any research or any data done; that research, that data, had been done, and, in fact, she has done further research here in Manitoba with the co-operation of teachers from all across this province, and we are going to have even more localized data in regards to what is happening in our classrooms to keep young people safe. And that is what Bill 18 is all about: keeping all of our students safe from bullying and cyberbullying.

I'm very proud of the work that we have done with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, Lianna McDonald. The work that we are doing with her is going to help us protect young people. The Canadian Centre for Child Protection, I'm very proud to say, was set up by this—in co-operation with Lianna McDonald. We have a long, rich history of working with them. They are—this is the centre for Canada around cyberbullying, and we fund them through the Department of Justice. And I'm very proud of the work that we are doing with Lianna MacDonald, and we are hosting our second annual Safe Schools Forum on the 9th of May, and we are doing that forum around cyberbullying and in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection because we are going to continue to up our game. We are upping our laws, and we need to up our game because we all know how difficult cyberbullying is, Mr. Speaker. It's very complex, it's very difficult, and we need to ensure that young people are kept safe on the Internet. And it's our privilege to work with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection in regards to how we can keep young people safe.

We want to make sure that, at the end of the day, there are no more deaths—there's no more deaths like Amanda Todd's; there's no more deaths like Rehtaeh Parsons. We want to ensure that we have legislation here in the province that continues to meet the complex issues of cyberbullying and ensures that all of our young people, regardless of who they are, regardless of where they're being bullied or how they're being bullied, we can have laws that are introduced. And, at the end of the day, we would like to end bullying, all forms of bullying, because that's what's important to us as a government.

So, once again, I would like to thank all of my colleagues who supported Bill 18 and who are continuing to do the work around cyberbullying. The new Minister of Education is working hard with our partners to ensure that all young people are kept safe in school, because if we can keep young people safe

in school, they can reach their full potential. And that's what this is really all about, is making sure education is the equalizer, and if we can keep all young people in school and they can get an education, they can participate in our society, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate?

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): I expected a few more folks on the other side of the House to maybe want to add a few words of support for this bill, but I can appreciate that this is a kind of an awkward moment for the opposition, putting forward a bill on cyberbullying that, in fact, is from another Legislature, from another time and, really, Mr. Speaker, reflects a kind of an analysis of the opposition that it's kind of johnny-come-lately to the party; too little, too late. They had their opportunity to stand against bullying and to stand against cyberbullying when we debated, fully, last year, Bill 18. And when the time came, what happened? They voted against that most important bill.

And I want to just take a minute, Mr. Speaker, or just a few seconds anyways, to pay tribute to my colleague from St. Vital, my predecessor as the minister of Education, but the one who brought Bill 18 to this Legislature, who heightened awareness and consciousness among many disparate groups in the province in order to make sure that our kids are safe and secure in schools. And as I said many times about the member from St. Vital, she not only brought human rights right to the doorstep of schools, she brought it right into the classrooms of Manitobans and across Manitoba. And so I think all of us in this Legislature owe her an extraordinary debt of gratitude for her determination, her commitment and her unqualified courage in the face of some very small but aggressive opposition.

Mr. Speaker, since Bill 18 was passed last year, our government has been active in making sure that bill—the intent and purpose of Bill 18 is implemented and to making sure that our kids are as safe and secure as humanly possible. I do want to say, just parenthetically, that our government takes a more comprehensive approach to this issue than simply the narrow version put forward in the bill tabled by the member. We think of this as not only, when we talk about bullying and cyberbullying, as not only in a punitive sense, like the kind of law-and-order agenda

that's often brought to all public policies issue—public policy issues from across the floor.

We actually think that it involves education, understanding, dialogue, conversation, an opportunity to come to a greater understanding of how we interact with one another, how kids interact with one another and how we can reach a kind of accommodation so that we can understand the difference between us, so that we can recognize difference between us and ultimately, Mr. Speaker, that we can celebrate difference that exists between us, so that each of us, whether they're members of this Legislature or whether they're students in a classroom, have the ability, ultimately, to choose to be themselves, to be who they are and not to be bullied, not to be persecuted, not to be shamed in any way for being different than someone else but no less valuable for that—in fact, more valuable.

And that's what we try to do, Mr. Speaker, is we try to make sure on this side of the House that this is a more comprehensive process. And so that's why we have—for one thing, we've piloted the Tell Them From Me survey, which of course the member from St. Vital was instrumental in making happen, because we wanted to hear directly from students about bullying and help them make schools safe for them and for all students. Last fall the survey was taken from grades 4 to 12 students in over 550 schools across the province. And Tell Them From Me, while being an anonymous survey, allows students to provide input into school safety and school improvement. And this is what I mean about ours being a more comprehensive approach than the one tabled by the opposition. We actually want to learn from students. We want to listen to them. We want to hear what they have to say and then we want to work with them to address those very issues that cause some pain, some torment, some grief inside our classroom.

So it's not enough to just say to the—to a child who is suffering from bullying or cyberbullying to say, well, listen kid, we'll get you a protection order. Well, no, Mr. Speaker, we need a much more comprehensive approach than that. Sure, there should be consequences, and I'll talk about that in just a moment [*inaudible*] but it can't just be a law and order kind of version of how you understand—that's make no sense in a school classroom where class—where dialogue and debate and understanding is what we seek to achieve. And so the Tell Them From Me survey is a classic example of working with students, trying to understand where they're coming from so

that we can work together to address issues of bullying in school.

* (10:30)

Mr. Speaker, the opposition had a chance to support Bill 18, as I said, last year, and didn't, as we all know. But just recently we put out a safe caring—a Safe and Caring Schools, a resource guide for equity and inclusion in Manitoba schools. We call that, euphemistically, Manitoba MyGSA, and we work with Egale Canada to do that. It's a very comprehensive guide to how you support a GSA within a school. As you'll recall, in Bill 18, schools are required to accommodate students who want to form equity groups, student groups, including gay-straight alliances, if it's requested. And so the resource guide, MyGSA, features information tailored to youth and educators on topics such as challenges frequently faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer youth and their families, and best practices for counsellors working with LGBTQ youth.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we unveiled MyGSA at the Red Cross Day of Pink where I was honoured to be with the member from St. Vital, and we were in a gym full of enthusiastic students and teachers and parents, and Obby Khan from the Bombers was there sharing his stories of a very big centre, as Bomber fans will know, a fearsome competitor in his own way, but he put his testimony before these kids about his experience of being bullied as a newcomer to Canada, in one sense, and then of his own experience on the other side of that.

And what we learned from that particular experience—although we see it in classrooms everywhere we go, and I'm sure my friend from Point Douglas would agree with this—there's a consciousness among students already. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that kids are way ahead of the opposition. They get it, they understand it, and that's what we saw at the Red Cross Day of Pink. And I note just that it was kind of interesting that on that day there was a few folks on the opposition side wearing pink, and I was glad to think it.

But, Mr. Speaker, you can wear pink, but you actually have to think pink. And when the members of the opposition voted against Bill 18, they actually showed what their true colours were, and they weren't really about pink at all.

So, that's two things already. We have the Tell Them From Me survey, Mr. Speaker, Safe and

Caring Schools, MyGSA—a fabulous document. And then, in addition to that, we do have a code of conduct that we released not so long ago, and we did that to ensure that there are strong consequences for bullying and that teachers and principals have the support that they need; the new provincial code of conduct that sets out a range of appropriate disciplinary consequences that all schools will be required to follow.

And we're—in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, because cyberbullying is an important issue, as the member from St. Vital so properly put it earlier, we're also working to develop bring your own device, the BYOD guidelines, to our schools, and these guidelines will help ensure that students learn to use technology in a safe, responsible manner and avoid being victims of cyberbullying.

So, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we can say that we have put together a comprehensive package of actions designed to address bullying in schools, whether it be inside the classroom, on the playground or on the way to school, and that's because, at the end of the day, providing safe and secure spaces for our children is what the intent of the member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan) was from the get-go, and from this government as well.

As the member from St. Vital said so eloquently, Mr. Speaker, education is the game-changer for kids. Kids need to be—feel safe and secure in their environment; they need to be themselves. That's why we, on this side of this House, supported Bill 18.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I hope that you had a great weekend along with all the staff of the Assembly and all the members of this colleague—or of my colleagues in the House celebrating the holiday this past weekend.

I'm thankful for my colleague, the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), bringing forward this bill because it's an important debate. It's an important debate about how do we ensure that young people in our schools can remain as safe as possible, Mr. Speaker. That's always what it's about: how do we keep young people from being bullied as much as we can?

We know that there's no absolute surefire way to prevent bullying. If we could bring forward such a thing, it would have been done already, I'm sure, across the jurisdictions in Canada, Mr. Speaker. But we do know there's much more that could be done. In fact, we had resolutions and amendments that came

forward here during the last session. In fact, we had a number of resolutions—or a number of amendments—that I thought were positive amendments, that I think would have made a difference in our schools. In fact, we heard from a number of educators and those in the administration who supported those amendments.

One of them I would bring forward today, Mr. Speaker, is the issue of anonymous reporting of bullying. We've seen in certain jurisdictions like British Columbia, California, other jurisdictions in Canada, where the ability to report bullying online anonymously is something that is positive. It's something that, ultimately, allows people who—and young people—who might otherwise not report bullying because of the peer pressure that they might face or their concern that they might be considered somebody who is telling on somebody else—and we all know what that is like sometimes, going back when we were younger—but it gives them the opportunity to report something anonymously.

This government voted against anonymous reporting of bullying. I don't understand why that is, Mr. Speaker. So many in the education field and other fields think that that would be a positive thing, but the government decided not to support that. But we hope and are always optimistic that there might be an opportunity for them to support it in the future. In fact, the now-former minister of Education did say publicly in the newspaper that she did support that initiative, not enough to vote for it, but we hope that the government will, in fact, bring forward that initiative at some point. We don't know why they would wait, because all the days that go by, all the months that go by without an initiative like that is time that goes by where you might be saving a young person from being bullied.

We also saw amendments come forward about the consequences for bullying. And this is one of those things when you talk to parents, when you talk to educators, they almost uniformly say that you need to have consequences for actions, Mr. Speaker; there has to be something there.

We've asked the now-new Minister of Education about those consequences for bullying, how many instances of bullying there are in our schools. He has no idea, doesn't keep statistics, either isn't interested in finding out or doesn't have the ability to find out under the current system in Manitoba, and that's disturbing, that we wouldn't be able to quantify how significant the problem is in terms of bullying. We know that it is a problem. We know that it is

significant. But we don't know exactly how bad it is, and because of that, we don't know if things are getting better or if things are getting worse.

I know anecdotally when I think about my own constituency office—and we track the kind of cases that we have coming in, constituency cases—that actually the reports of bullying have gotten worse over the last year, Mr. Speaker, and that's unfortunate. I know in dealing with parents who've got—come in and they—sometimes they bring their sons or daughters in—often they don't—and they just describe what's going on in the schools with their sons or daughters. They can't believe that we don't have certain provisions in place to ensure that there's protection. In fact, many of them thought that there was an antibullying bill last year that, in fact, would have helped them, and they're hurt, in many ways, to find out that it doesn't. It doesn't do anything to protect them at all. And those cases have gone up in the last year, not down, as we would have all hoped and would have aspired to.

But there were certainly things and there are things that can be done and this bill is one of them. This bill points us into the direction of how do we ensure that there's a mechanism for parents to go to, to try to find support, to try to find some sort of resolution to the bullying that they might not otherwise.

Now this bill would deal with the most severe kinds of bullying. This bill would deal with the most egregious kinds of bullying because it does involve the legal system, Mr. Speaker, but it certainly deals with that form of bullying. It also points to the issue of needing to have consequences for other kinds of bullying that don't reach that same severity. It does point, I think, as well, to the need to have a reporting mechanism that doesn't involve children having to go and necessarily say to an adult that they have seen something because they often feel intimidated by doing that. It also points to the idea of having teachers more involved and parents more involved in these situations. I don't think that we have parents involved enough when it comes to the issue of bullying.

Because bullying, it's been around ever since there's been schools, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, but the forms of bullying change not just because of the Internet or because of social media, although that is clearly one of the changes of bullying—bullying has become more pervasive. It's not something that's

confined to the schools or the schoolyard. It now can happen 24-7 as a result of social media.

* (10:40)

But bullying itself has been around in one form or the other for many, many years, and so we need to look towards mechanisms that can be flexible, that aren't just about containing one kind of bullying, but can ensure that for the various sorts of bullyings that happen within our community and our society that there is a mechanism for parents to find out about these things and to be educated as well. Because the kind of bullying that a parent may have experienced when they were in school is very different than the bullying that a young person would be experience—or could be experiencing today. The outcomes might be the same and the emotional distress and trauma that comes from it might be the same, but the form of bullying is different.

And so engaging parents more broadly in that discussion about what to look for, how to approach a young person about bullying, we still know that there are many parents who simply, not because of any bad intentions or any kind of malice, but they simply don't know how to deal with the issue of bullying. It's not enough to say, well, you know, maybe just tell a teacher, although that's a good thing at times. Or it's maybe not enough just to say, well, you have to just deal with it and get through it. Those—there are other mechanisms to deal with these sort of things. There are other ways to deal with it and there are more fulsome ways to deal with it.

So my hope is that this government will look to other jurisdictions that have had broad-based initiatives on bullying that would incorporate the ideas that have been brought forward by the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) that gives some legal framework for the most severe kinds of bullying, but that we need a broader approach. That we need an approach that deals with the different kinds of bullying, the different severities of bullying, the different pervasivenesses of bullying and the ability for people to be able to report things in different ways.

And the good news is—the bad news, of course, is that that's not happening in Manitoba now, and, in fact, I would say bullying is getting worse not better because of this government's inaction. But there is good news in this, Mr. Speaker, and the good news is there are models out there that work. There are no models out there that eliminate bullying altogether and I doubt there ever will be a model out there that

will eliminate bullying completely. But there are models out there that do make a difference, that are quantifiable. There has been research done that show that bullying, as a result of different kinds of initiatives, can actually be reduced.

So my hope is that the government looks at this. I know that the former minister of Education did say publicly that out of all the things that they voted against that there were many good ideas in there. I won't get into the questions of why somebody would vote against something if they thought it was a good idea. Maybe there are political schemes and political reasons that I can't understand or can't fathom. It makes no sense to me why somebody would vote against something that would not only protect children but also, I think, make things better in the long run and that you actually support. So I don't understand what that political scheme might have been. Maybe someday they'll explain it to me.

But I do think that this is an opportunity. This is an opportunity to move forward. It's an opportunity to bring in some legislation that would deal with the most severe forms of bullying and allow an opportunity for a broader discussion on consequences, on reporting, on ensuring that there are mechanisms to ensure that we have flexibility in how we deal with the different forms of bullying.

So I hope that the members opposite take these words to heart. I hope that they live by their word that they gave more than a year ago, that they wanted to support some of the amendments because every day that goes by, every moment that goes by is a moment that we are not taking all the steps that we could to protect a young person in school.

So with those words, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the government will see fit to move this bill to committee, to have it go before a committee and we could have more input there. I'm sure there are experts who'd like to speak about this bill and we could learn from their words of wisdom and hopefully pass this bill before the session ends in June.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon): Yes, I just have to say, probably one of the proudest moments of being in politics and being part of this legislature was the passing of Bill 18. I want to thank the former Education minister and member from St. Vital for introducing a bill that is a very inclusive bill for all Manitoba students.

And I know the minister from Steinbach said bullying's been going on for years, different forms, different shapes, and I'm glad that this legislation and that pass and we're recognizing the problems that resided from bullying.

I also want to say that I had a dream. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I had a dream that all the members on this side of the House, the NDP, would stand with the members on—from the Conservative side, would stand together in the passing of this bill. I had a dream that the good-looking member from Flin Flon would stand shoulder to shoulder with the good-looking member from Lac du Bonnet, and we would stand together and pass Bill 18 together. Of course, I was disappointed that didn't happen.

Being a teacher, you know, there was a few days I wondered, is politics the game for me? I was very disillusioned; I was very disappointed. Because as a teacher for 33 years there was many examples of bullying. Some of them did end up in death, whether it was bullying or whatever, very confusing. It was—they didn't feel that they were part of the school population or part of their friends or just part of society, and so with the passing of the bill, Bill 18, I felt that this is a step towards this not happening. I know it's naive to think it will stop everything, but it's a step in the right direction and I feel honoured to be on this side of the House, that we voted for Bill 18. We stood up. We stood up for the students of Manitoba. We stood up for the people of Manitoba with the passing of Bill 18.

I feel bad for the opposition because I know that many of them—many of them—wanted to stand up, but party politics is party politics and they didn't. So they come with this bill hoping to justify their moves. I think, you know what, all it says is that, you know what, they believe in Bill 18. This is just something else they would like to quiet down to get the people thinking that they were behind it, but they weren't behind it.

So I think we have to recognize what Bill 18 is doing. Bill 18—in my school division I had teachers come up to me and they said, you know, Clarence, that this is so important not just to the students of Flin Flon, but the students throughout Manitoba. It's important because we've all been teachers for many years and some of even the new teachers said that this bill recognizes that we have to make sure and realize that there is differences in school, in society and we recognize that we want to help some people that maybe don't fit into the boxes, and that's what

Bill 18 does. It recognizes that there is different people and there is different parts of society that we have to recognize. Some of them you might not agree with, but we have to have an inclusive society. It cannot be exclusive.

So I really honour the ministers of Education, past and present, working towards this. I honour my party for recognizing—and, you know, it wasn't a hard decision for our party. Because it was a right decision it was easy to make. We recognize that we, the NDP party, represent all parts of Manitoba. We recognize that NDP are for all different stripes of Manitobans, and so it was easy decision to pass Bill 18 and I was so proud to stand there with my colleagues, a little sad that the members opposite didn't recognize that.

I also want to say that having been a teacher for many years, there's many examples where after the years have gone by that you recognize, what could we have done differently? What could we have done to help this particular student that was maybe being picked on, maybe just being left out? What could we have done? So this bill recognizes that. This bill is saying, you know what, let's look around as teachers, as principals, as parents, as a society and say we all got to work together. School should be a safe place to come. School should be an education learning centre. School should be an institution talking about the differences in society and working together so that all parts of society are happy living together, and I think that is so important that we recognize that.

* (10:50)

We have immigration into Manitoba from different parts of the world. We've got to recognize those differences, and I think this all works in together with the passing of Bill 18. Bill 18, a safe and inclusive schools act, was passed in regards to this. I know the former minister of Education came and our caucus meetings and it was so proud to see that she—when she was making this bill, she was so proud working on it and saying this is the right thing to do.

There was no argument. We realized it was the right thing to do. Are we going to change some things or 'tweak' it here and there? Of course we're going to. We're always working to better society. And then, you know, being part of the NDP, that's just natural. We want to make society better. We don't want to ignore or not look at different parts. We want to make sure that we're there for all people.

We're the party of we; they're the party of me. We've said that before. We know that.

And sometimes, like I say, my friends on the other side forget that. They forget that Manitobans is a diverse society and you got to represent all Manitobans. You can't just pick on the south. You got to look at the north, south, east, west. Remember Martin Luther King had a dream and that was great when he said he had a dream for all the little black children, little white children would go to school together, would come—their differences would be cast aside, and he stood up for those differences. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that we too have to stand up for the differences and make sure that all students in Manitoba can walk to school hand in hand and make sure that they feel safe.

They're going to get educated and they also will recognize that you know, people have differences. They'll also recognize that there's different colours of skin. They'll also recognize there's people from the north, south, east, west, that we have differences within our province and we will work together.

And I know, as our party, the NDP, we're always looking at how we can help different parts of our province, how we can work together. And I know that the member from Lac du Bonnet is leaving right now and that's fine, but, you know, I know he feels bad that he didn't stand up. *[interjection]* Okay, thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I want to caution the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Pettersen), please. Please take your place. Thank you.

I want to caution the honourable member for Flin Flon, we're neither to make reference to a member's presence or absence from this Chamber during our comments here, during debate. So I'd like the co-operation of the honourable member for Flin Flon, please, in that regard.

The honourable member for Flin Flon, to continue with his comments.

Mr. Pettersen: Thank you, thank you. I am sorry.

The love train's always on the tracks. The love train's always on the tracks, and alls you have to do is get on board. Get on board the love train. Thank you. I mean, if I can bring everybody here together on the train of love, going down and holding signs of we passed Bill 18, that would be one of the proudest moments—thank you—one of the proudest moments in my long political career.

And I just have to say that with Bill 18, I think everyone recognized the importance of it, either side, and I'm proud that our government passed it. I'm proud of the Education ministers that worked on it and, Mr. Speaker, we'll even work to make it better. Thank you.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Mineral Resources): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak on this bill. I want to take a bit of a different angle in my approach to this particular bill because I think it's very important that we consider all perspectives on this. And you know, some of my comments may seem to be trite, but, in fact, they're quite important.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding that members on the other side of the House had said things like, if you're being bullied in cyberspace, don't go there—simple as that—despite that, I think that there's been a fair bit of education by all members. Unfortunately, members opposite voted against groundbreaking legislation in the form of Bill 18.

But I want to turn to the other aspect of this, and this is that, in fact, Mr. Speaker, what's really important—and we know it happened over the weekend, and, in fact, criminal charges were laid in the Netherlands against a gentleman—I wouldn't call him a gentleman—against an individual who was—who may be responsible for some of the—at least one of the suicides in Canada. And it shows the importance that criminal legislation can play in matters like this, and it indicates how important the Criminal Code is to matters of this kind. And it indicates a major gap, a major gap in Canadian legislation as it deals with cyberbullying.

There is a bill on the Order Paper, Mr. Speaker, from the federal government dealing with cyberbullying and, in fact, for all Canadians and given interjurisdictional questions with regard to cyberbullying. It is the time to have this kind of power and strength in the Criminal Code. I've said it many times. We protect cattle in the Criminal Code. We protect cattle in the Criminal Code, but we don't—haven't brought up to date our protection of children and cyberbullying. That's what is called for.

This particular—I don't feel any great comfort saying to someone with regard to the bill, the bill that's before the House right now, saying, oh, by the way, you have the protection of tort law. You have the protection of tort law. Well, Mr. Speaker, it might be good for lawyers. And I know members opposite love giving work to lawyers. They do a lot

of work for lawyers. They will do, you know—there's more work for lawyers, members opposite, than every time I see in history. They'll run to the courts on any issue. And yes, tort law is one way of dealing with it. I'm not demeaning tort law, but it doesn't solve the problem. It doesn't solve the problem that you have to go to a lawyer, and then a lawyer has to go to a judge, and a judge has to do an order that might prevent something. What's needed is something more.

And there is an act before the federal Parliament, Bill C-13, that implements many of the recommendations that we've asked for. It provides for improvements to police investigative powers of cyberbullying and behaviour that rises to the level of criminal conduct. And we know this behaviour rises to the levels of criminal conduct, unfortunately, including uttering threats, criminal harassment, et cetera.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is a classic example where we in the Legislature ought to be working, and I'm glad our Attorney General (Mr. Swan) has worked with the other attorney generals to urge that we have Canada-wide criminal legislation dealing with this matter. In fact, I understand that this matter is on the agenda of the Council of the Federation this year. And I know that many premiers, and our Premier (Mr. Selinger) amongst them, have been leaders in speaking out on this issue.

And as important as this issue is, and as I think the member's bill is well-meaning, Mr. Speaker, it falls far short. It falls far short of what's necessary in this regard, particularly after we put in place probably the most effective cyberbullying legislation in the country with respect to Bill 18.

What is now necessary, Mr. Speaker, is for us as one voice to speak to Parliament, to have Parliament enact legislation, legislation that'll bring these matters in front of the Criminal Code, that'll require—that will give powers to police and other individuals to deal with these issues in a more efficient and effective manner.

And no—Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, there's no better example than what has happened only over the last few days with respect to criminal actions in the Netherlands concerning action taking place in Canada. Our jurisdiction as a province, unfortunately, doesn't allow us to go that far, but federal Criminal Code legislation would, indeed, in fact, do that. It's been urged for some time.

So I ask members to consider supporting that type of initiative, to consider talking to their cousins in Ottawa and saying, do something on Criminal Code. We'll support you. They did not support us in Bill 18; that's their problem, Mr. Speaker. But the idea and the issue of cyberbullying and its absence from the Criminal Code is all of our issues. And I'd urge them to get together and to talk to their federal cousins about dealing with this issue.

We're prepared to work on it. We're prepared to help them. I know our Attorney General will take a lead. I know our Premier will take a lead at the meeting of the premiers the—this summer, Mr. Speaker. And I urge members opposite to consider—

* (11:00)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Chomiak) will have four minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 12—Canada Post Eliminating Door-to-Door Delivery

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 11 a.m., it's time for private members' resolutions, and the resolution we have under consideration this morning is entitled Canada Post Eliminating Door-to-Door Delivery, sponsored by the honourable member for Maples.

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): I move, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino),

WHEREAS on December 11, 2013, Canada Post announced the decision to eliminate door-to-door delivery services without consulting municipalities or the people who will be most affected; and

WHEREAS the cancellation of home postal service will hurt many Manitobans and is particularly concerning for seniors and Manitobans with disabilities; and

WHEREAS an eliminated 8,000 out of 50,000 jobs with the Canada Post are expected to be lost nationwide including job losses in Winnipeg, Brandon, Neepawa, Flin Flon, The Pas and Thompson; and

WHEREAS 12,500 addressees will be among the first homes affected in Winnipeg, including parts of West Kildonan, Garden City, The Maples and Margaret Park; and

WHEREAS everyday small businesses depend on door-to-door delivery service to correspond with their clients; and

WHEREAS postal workers and letter carriers provide a range of services that contributes to local neighbourhoods and to the overall sense of community through mail delivery on special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas and other joyous celebrations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba affirm its support of Manitobans as they make their dissatisfaction known to their members of Parliament against the rapid implementation of drastic cuts to Canada Post's door-to-door delivery services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the federal government to properly consult with the stakeholders openly and transparently before resorting to such drastic changes to postal services.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Maples, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park,

WHEREAS on December 11th—dispense?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

Is it the pleasure of the House to consider the resolution as printed in today's Order Paper? [Agreed]

WHEREAS on December 11, 2013, Canada Post announced the decision to eliminate door-to-door delivery service without consulting municipalities or the people who will be most affected; and

WHEREAS the cancellation of home postal service will hurt many Manitobans and is particularly concerning for seniors and Manitobans with disabilities; and

WHEREAS an estimated 8,000 out of 50,000 jobs with Canada Post are expected to be lost nationwide including job losses in Winnipeg, Brandon, Neepawa, Flin Flon, The Pas and Thompson; and

WHEREAS 12,500 addresses will be among the first homes affected in Winnipeg including parts of West Kildonan, Garden City, The Maples and Margaret Park; and

WHEREAS everyday small businesses depend on door-to-door delivery service to correspond with their clients; and

WHEREAS postal workers and letter carriers provide a range of services that contributes to local neighbourhoods and to the overall sense of community through mail delivery on special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas and other joyous celebrations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba affirm its support of Manitobans as they make their dissatisfaction known to their Members of Parliament against the rapid implementation of drastic cuts to Canada Post's door-to-door delivery services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Federal Government to properly consult with stakeholders openly and transparently before resorting to such drastic changes to postal services.

Mr. Saran: Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to rise on behalf of the constituents of The Maples to respond to Canada Post's decision to eliminate door-to-door delivery services. Our postal service is a public service that is essential to the unity of our province and country due to their vast sizes and dispersion of population.

As a Crown corporation, Canada Post has a public service mandate. It reaches more than 5.3 million addressees, operates the country's largest retail network and offers affordable and reliable service with convenient pickup and return options for online shoppers. Canada Post is the country's leading provider of electronic commerce and customer communication solutions. It has a long history in Canada and has operated profitably for 16 consecutive years. The postal needs of Canadians are evolving and Canada Post currently delivers a high standard of service that Manitobans expect.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned for my constituents who have entrusted me to ensure proper consultation has occurred in this and other matters, which, at this point, has not happened. Our most vulnerable constituents who are on fixed incomes—pensioners, in particular—rely on postal delivery for important notices, information and their government-issued financial support from the government, including payments from the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security. Our government takes pride in standing with Manitobans and listening to their

concerns, especially seniors, postal workers, the disabled, not-for-profit organizations and entrepreneurs. The cuts to this public service will affect them in many ways.

Other groups, including Winnipeg city councillors, have raised concerns about the security of community mailboxes, space issues in older neighbourhoods and accessibility during the winter when boulevards are used to store snow. When implementing drastic policy changes, listening to all stakeholders involved is not a strategy, but a duty. However, this principle was ignored by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, the cancellation of home postal service will not only hurt those in The Maples but all Manitobans. Canada Post's decision to eliminate door-to-door delivery service was made without proper consultation either with municipalities or with the people who will be most affected. Eliminating door-to-door mail delivery will be most harmful to seniors and persons with disabilities. This is a federal government that claims to care about people and job creation, and instead they're cutting vital services that people count on and killing jobs. An estimated 8,000 out of 50,000 jobs with Canada Post are expected to be lost nationwide. Here in Winnipeg, 12,500 addresses will be the first homes affected. They are in West Kildonan, Garden City, Margaret Park and The Maples. Like, I'm really surprised why the federal government and Canada Post will pick up first The Maples, because there are vulnerable people, and maybe they think they won't speak up because they are a majority of low-income people—low-income people or the immigrants.

This has not happened a first time. It happened also with the immigrants when the federal government imposed stricter conditions of applying for citizenship. They don't want them to become citizens as soon as possible. They want them to contribute to the economy, but they don't want to become citizenship and take part and, according to them, because people can only know their rights or their responsibility in English. People also do not think in the English language too. They can think about it in Punjabi. They can think about it in Tagalog. That was another attack of the federal government on the immigrant community.

I think this time it's a very good chance for the opposition to support this resolution because in the past they made a mistake when they did not support the resolution about protecting immigration services.

Instead, the opposition stood with the federal government to take the jobs away from the Manitobans. I hope this is a time to stand with the ordinary people.

Mr. Speaker, mail delivery is a part of our history. It's part of our communities and we want it to be of our future. Many grandparents cherish getting a painting or letter in the mail from grandchildren they don't often get to see. Many of us still take the time to send birthday or Christmas cards to the people we care about. As parents, nothing beats seeing the excited look on our children's faces when they get a package in the mail. The decision to eliminate door-to-door mail delivery will particularly hurt those with accessibility barriers such as seniors and people with disabilities who rely on dependable door-to-door mail service in their daily lives. Many persons with disabilities and seniors do not want to become dependent on other people's availability to be able to get their mail.

Laurie Beachell from the national co-ordinator for the Council of Canadians with Disabilities expressed similar concerns, arguing that this will seriously disadvantage people with disabilities. Couple that with access issues and climate issues, it will further isolate people making them dependent upon family and friends to pick up their mail.

These community members as well as municipalities, businesses and postal workers were not asked to give input or to suggest alternative solutions before this decision was announced. The rapid timeline to begin implementing the new system of community mailboxes by this fall is particularly concerning for families in Kildonan, St. Johns and The Maples. The City of Winnipeg has expressed concern on this topic as well and said that they were not consulted before this decision was made.

*(11:10)

Mr. Speaker, in December, Canada Post announced major planned reductions to its services, including eliminating home delivery and raising prices that will result in thousands of job losses. They are talking about cutting many Manitoban jobs of hard-working postal workers—not just in Winnipeg or The Maples. We are worried to hear that there may be Canada Post job losses here in Manitoba, including in Winnipeg, Brandon and Neepawa, Flin Flon, The Pas and Thompson. Such a significant job loss would hurt our economy, and it will hurt families and workers across our province. These

people are our neighbours, our friends and family members and they deserve better.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers has called for innovation, not cuts and rate increases, as a way to improve Canada Post. They are also calling for open and transparent consultations with stakeholders before resorting to such drastic changes to postal services. We want more Manitobans to have more good jobs, not fewer. We are concerned about the possible economic impact of losing good jobs here in Manitoba. Postal workers and letter carriers, and the range of services they provide, contribute to our neighbourhood and to our sense of community.

Mr. Speaker, our government, unlike some Conservative governments, has a great history of protecting seniors and understanding their needs. This is done through careful consultation and feedback from senior groups across Manitoba. We would not make such a drastic change to our postal services without careful review and consultation with all stakeholders rather than just focusing on the bottom line. I think the federal government, for Canada Post, they are using—there are already more boxes over there, but they are deceiving people by counting the door box which are in apartments. So in the apartments you don't have to move outside. You are inside, and that cannot be counted.

There are many—considering our weather, there are many people who will be affected and, also considering the weather and the snow amount, and I think it will, if it's—if we are to clear snow, it will cost more money to the city. On the one hand, they're thinking they still save money, but the burden will be transferred to cities. To think about the whole picture, not just think about that way that we will make, federal government will make money—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to rise this morning and speak to the honourable member from Maples' resolution concerning Canada Post eliminating door-to-door delivery. I listened with great attention to the member's comments and I'd like to take a look at the member's resolution as it stands.

I note the member, in his resolution, makes the comment about the decision to eliminate door-to-door delivery service without consulting municipalities or the people who will be most

affected. A very valid comment that the member is making about the importance of government consulting with stakeholders, with taxpayers, with affected parties, when they make policy decisions, when they make changes, to the delivery of services, when they make changes to, say, tax structures. Governments make all sorts of decisions, Mr. Speaker, and so consulting with those individuals is an important part of that process.

Now, it's a bit passing strange that the member didn't expand or extend his logic of the need of consulting affected parties to this government's—this NDP government's decision to, say, expand the PST to insurance. Passing strange, Mr. Speaker. Didn't feel the need to talk about the need to consult with affected stakeholders when we talk about expanding and extending the PST to, say, haircuts, you know. Other personal services—again, it was never mentioned, you know. The big daddy of them all, the increase, the illegal increase, the PST from 7 to 8 per cent, I don't recall any kind of consulting on that project or on that policy.

Mr. Speaker, it's also interesting—I remember I was in budget lockup that day and I remember reading the budget and seeing that the government and the former Finance minister, the minister—or the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), had indicated that the PST would be rising from 7 to 8 per cent in his budget speech, and I remember asking one of the staff in the room about, well, how is the government going to do this? I mean, there's that consultation piece in the legislation called a referendum, a little thing we call a law, a little thing the NDP would call a road bump and nothing that they couldn't get through without ramrodding the appropriate legislation through. That being said, the staff person at the time, in response to my query—is how would—how is the government going to do an end run on that consultation required for illegally increasing the PST without a referendum, simply stared at his shoes and said, well, you'll have to wait until the minister responds to it.

Now we know, looking back, minister—or, Mr. Speaker, over the last year we saw what this government did in terms of consulting with taxpayers when it came to the 14 per cent increase in the PST. They didn't consult, despite literally hundreds and hundreds of Manitobans coming to speak to the legislative committee. They just turned a deaf ear to those Manitobans and their concerns. And a great number of those Manitobans not only had a concern, obviously, with the 14 per cent increase and that

impact it would have on them as a family—which only adds, since this government was re-elected in 2011, that \$1,600-a-year tax burden that this government has imposed on every single Manitoba family. Not only were they concerned about that increasing financial impact that they and their family would have to bear because of this government's inability to control its own finances, but they also had very serious concerns about the process; a process laid out in legislation, a process that was very clear, that was not in any way ambiguous.

In fact, in politics we talk a lot about greys, Mr. Speaker, and I've encountered that many times over the years, but in this one instance the balanced budget, taxpayer protection and fiscal accountability act had no greys; it was black and white. You are legally allowed to raise the PST, to raise income tax and raise the payroll tax—the legislation is very clear. It's just that there is a part B to that, should you wish to proceed on that, you need to call and hold a public referendum and allow Manitobans, taxpayers, stakeholders, the ability to be consulted with—those very people that are affected.

So it is interesting that the minister talks about lack of consultation when it comes to Canada Post and yet, you know, has no comment about the lack of consultation on the single biggest policy decision and tax change this government has encountered since, actually, this government last was in office and decided to raise the PST from—I think it was from 5 to 6, to 6 to 7 per cent.

The other comment, Mr. Speaker, is how the cancellation of postal service—home postal services will hurt many Manitobans, in particular, concerning for seniors and Manitobans with disabilities. And, again, as an individual—and I had the great privilege of working with an organization and running an organization for the past three years, an organization dedicated to helping persons who self-identify as a person with a disability or a health condition, and our goal was to help these individuals find employment.

I don't recall the member for Maples ever getting up to defend that organization when it came to this government's constant and regular funding cuts to that organization. In one particular project, it was minus 4 one year, it was zero the next year; another project was minus 1, minus 6, minus 6, I think there might have been a minus 2 in there as well. I mean, it was regular and ongoing cuts, Mr. Speaker, that we, as an organization, had to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, as well, not only did we have to deal with the cuts being imposed by government on our organization, we also had to deal with the increased costs imposed by government. In particular, obviously, the aforementioned expansion—or application of the PST to insurance products that we, as an organization, had to pay, as well as the application increase, the 14 per cent increase in the PST, to all products to our own organization—which, you know, was not particularly a large organization. We had a staff that fluctuated between 15 and 18 persons. This cost our organization literally thousands of dollars a year. Thousands of dollars that would be far better served, from our organization's perspective, to helping Manitobans with physical disabilities and health conditions.

I can only imagine the number of bus passes and bus tickets we could've provided to our clients to allow them to not only attend appointments with their employment counsellors but, more importantly, attend, say, job interviews and get—and move off from, say, social assistance or—you know, or minimum—or jobs that they wanted to transition from, Mr. Speaker. But in many instances we just simply didn't have the revenues to provide maybe more than one or two tickets. And I remember saying to my staff at the time when they would say, you know, well, I have this individual, they've started a new job, it would be great if we were able to provide them those services—in particular, obviously, services for persons with disabilities—and provide this individual who obviously isn't going to get paid for two weeks, they could really use a bus pass, they have no financial means.

* (11:20)

You know, Mr. Speaker, it was an absolute challenge for us every day, as an organization, dealing with the cuts and increased costs imposed by members across the way, including the member for The Maples (Mr. Saran), and having to say, you know, we can't. We can't give this individual a bus pass for the two weeks, because if we do that in this instance we're going to have to do that in every instance and it would simply—we would run out of that very small allocation that we had for Winnipeg Transit tickets and passes for our clients in a matter of several weeks as opposed to—trying to—you know, as we could as an organization stretch it out. We often found ourselves actually looking to other, you know, say, foundations and other organizations within the city of Winnipeg to actually help

supplement us when it came to Winnipeg Transit tickets.

So, again, a bit disheartening that the individual talks about the impact of the Canada postal service and the changes Canada postal service and how it will have that, as he puts it, a negative impact on persons with disabilities. But, again, I've never heard the member rise, and if he has, then I advance—and apologies if he has risen to decry this government's, this NDP government's cuts to services to person with disabilities, organizations that provide services to individuals that have physical disabilities and such.

I also noticed, Mr. Speaker, that there is another WHEREAS where they talk about how every day small business depend on door-to-door delivery services for—correspond with their clients. Again, I had the great fortune of running said—one of those organizations, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, an organization that I believe the former premier, Mr. Doer, referred to as a one-winged bird. But, again, those kind of comments disparaging organizations whose sole function is to literally represent those members was nothing uncommon. I encountered it many times over the years.

But, again, the member opposite never comments or references in this House or in his resolution and in his comments—which I listened to quite attentively—the other costs and challenges that small businesses within our communities, within Manitoba face as a result of this government.

I mean, just last week we debated a very important resolution put forward by the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) asking this government to take a look at the regulatory count, regulatory burden that small businesses face, I mean, to the tune of costing our provincial economy upwards of \$800 million. Again, we just heard constant cries across the way of, next thing you know, we're going to have The Simpsons' three-eyed fish swimming in our streams if somehow we reduce the regulatory burden on small business.

So to suggest that small business will be made or broken as a result of this one policy decision, really, is such a narrow perspective—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): It's always a pleasure as part of my job as a legislator to be able to

speak and put in a few words on such issues that really seem to be out of this world. Why would a federal Crown corporation try to render public service by cutting it?

Home delivery of mail has always been a tradition that people in the rural areas as well as the urban centres have come to rely on. When I was first receiving the mail from the mail carrier who was assigned to my street, the same mail carrier was a very personable human being. He was always with a smile. And for me when I was receiving the mail, instead of him putting it on the mail box I would usually try to be there, right at the front of my house and speak to him, and that's the human-to-human contact that will be lost. It's the human-to-human contact that some of us seniors have come to relish every time it happens. Because for those who are not as fortunate as I am, still able-bodied and could still sandbag, there are those whose only contact with another human being is with the mail carrier of Canada Post. And friendships are developed between the mail carrier and the people that he serves. And for those who are homebound, it is a very important aspect of their day, when people are really looking for that human contact, that human interaction, that happens over a piece of mail.

Now, door-to-door delivery will be substituted with an impersonal—what do they call it—box, or where it will occupy space, where people will have to walk towards that particular box. And even during the wintertime, people will be forced to walk and retrieve their mail. The difficulty is if I were disabled, and if I had to use either a cane or a walker, and there's an inch or so of snow, it will be very difficult and accidents could happen.

The difficulty, even for those who are disabled, is multiplied for those who have kids at home that they're taking care of, kids who cannot be left by themselves, which means that the caregiver, who happens to be the one who might be the mother or the father who's not working at that time, will have to go and retrieve the mail.

Now, there are certain job losses that will be caused by this change of the system of delivering mail. But it comes with that particular uniform pattern, that whenever the federal government wants to scrimp on money, they would usually scrimp and cut employees. There's roughly 8,000 out of the 50,000 Canada Post employees who will be affected. That's 8,000 families.

And for me it boggles the mind that when the delivery of the mail is one of the sacrosanct duties of public service, the reliability of the delivery and the safety of the mail and the security of the communication between people to people, that's one of the Canada Post responsibilities, and it will be gone. Because now, there will be boxes that could be looted by some people who are up to no good, and take—especially during those days or periods of time when the Child Tax Benefit and the tax refunds are coming in through the mail. And I foresee and I forecast a lot of problems for families in my constituency, especially in Weston and Brooklands. My constituency relies heavily on door-to-door delivery.

* (11:30)

Now, the decision to eliminate door-to-door delivery was made without consultation. It was done in a roughshod manner and it was done in a way that says, we don't care about you. We'll just do this and we'll do it because we think we can, and it's a rough idea of how we have come to be so impersonal in our dealings with our people.

We have to ask Canada Post to reconsider and we have to ask Canada Post to take a closer look at doing it, doing what they intend to do and achieving their goal by doing something more economical but not cutting door-to-door delivery.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): I want to rise to talk about the Canada Post eliminating door-to-door delivery brought forward by the member from The Maples and follow up on the member from Tyndall Park and what he was referring to. Do it because we think we can. And that's exactly what has happened with this government. They do things because they think they can.

And every time they make a decision, they talk about this consultation process and here they are today. You know, they go with their cap in hand every time they want something from the federal government. They poke them in the eye with their stick and they say, you're doing it all wrong. We can do things better. We can do things a whole lot better than you, and we know that the government does things because they think they can.

Like the PST, for example. They went out and they said they consulted. They said they consulted with the public and it was a tough decision, a tough decision to have to make that decision. But what did

they say at the door? What did they say at the door? They said very clearly that this was not going to happen. It was ridiculous. In fact, the First Minister said it was nonsense, and then what do we find out? We find out through freedom of information that this government had decided it was really going to go at 9 per cent, not 8 per cent. So it's just a matter of time because they think they can, according to the member from Tyndall Park. They feel they have that right because they think they can.

They also went out with several other changes in their role as government in regards to amalgamations with the municipalities. What did they do? They announced at their annual general meeting that they were going to force amalgamations of municipalities, some hundred of them. We know that there's about 80 of them that were in the works, and they've done, you know, I think a probably real good job at the ones that wanted to merge. And by the way, we're all for amalgamations but within the confines of each municipality working together in harmonization as what's best for their community.

That's not what this government's done. They have forced municipalities to join forces without any consultation, without any input from them, and yet they were supposed to table a plan by May the 1st which is just right around the corner, which some of them haven't done yet, by the way, Mr. Speaker. So it's going to be interesting to see what this government does because they think they can, but it's not going to play out well. Those municipalities that are forced to amalgamate when they don't want to and there's no need to—and by the way, some of these municipalities are very well managed, very well managed.

They're going to see their taxes go from a 30 mill to perhaps a 52 mill or 58 mill depending on the municipality. In the consultations that I've had with a number of these municipalities, we find very clearly that the information they've been provided by this government is limited at best, and so what is their alternative? They really don't have one because they've been told by this government that they will be forced to amalgamate whether they want to or not. That's the government's plan.

And so we look at the overall picture, coming back to Canada Post. So is this going to help those municipalities? I don't think so. I don't think this resolution fits. I don't think the government took the opportunity to have a sober second thought. They just wanted to get their sticks out and start poking at

the federal government, saying this is an issue that we can resonate; this is an issue that we can really go out and reach the voters and say this is what's really good for us. We're finding that what this government does is backward thinking. They're not thinking forward about the impacts of those decisions. This is one of those decisions that I think that the government has missed the boat on once again.

We talk about the New West Partnership, an opportunity where Manitoba could reach out to British Columbia, to Alberta, to Saskatchewan and make the province of Manitoba a better place. And we brought forward several opportunities for this government to do exactly that, where we could see jobs. We could see growth, we could see harmony about working with our partners to the west. It's an opportunity that I feel this government has missed out on big time.

What we've also seen is that this government thinks because we can do these things, as a result this government has gotten to the point where they feel they know best. And, again, not using my words, as the member from Tyndall Park that feels this is an issue that they want to go to the hill on, and good for them, if that's what they want.

But let's look in our own yard first before we start pointing fingers at really what's happening. We're looking forward at this dam project, the Keeyask and Conawapa. The government's done very little consultation on that. Really, they haven't even let the PUB do their work. The NFAT committee has had the opportunity to look at certain presentations, but what does the Minister of Hydro do? He goes out, starts awarding contracts. The Clean Environment report hasn't been finalized. We spent over a billion dollars just on Bipole III, and then less than two weeks ago yesterday, the Minister of Hydro awards a \$1.4-billion contract. And so where was the consultation on that? Are they going to get their mail? Maybe they're going to go back to the mail that way. Maybe that's how they're delivering the mail. I don't know, but if it is, something's wrong. Maybe that mailbox is full. Maybe that mailbox is to the point where it's not coming to where it should be.

So what I'd like to point out for the government is that if they truly believe that consultation is the right way to go on Canada Post, then let's do it. Let's find out really what Manitobans have to say. But why would we not want to do our due diligence and make sure that we are actually doing things right in

our own yard? They're not. They don't seem to be wanting to do that.

So two weeks ago yesterday, when the Minister of Manitoba Hydro awarded \$1.4 million in contracts to Keeyask, I'm concerned. I'm concerned about whether or not this government truly is functioning on whether or not they want to go forward with Canada Post. Is that the reality of what they really want to focus on, or is it to take their eye off really what is happening here in Manitoba so they can push the other stuff underneath the rug? Maybe that's not important any more. But I can tell you, we are talking billions and billions and billions of dollars.

And we have a prime example of what's happened with this government in regards to their own Manitoba Hydro building. The original contract was \$75 million. It come in at \$285 million. Is it working great? Is that great dream building that we thought that they really had the engineer plans on to work? Well, the staff I talked to, on one side of the building in the morning it's really hot. Well, the other—then the sun goes to the other side of the building and it's really cold. So somebody messed up somewhere on this dream building.

Maybe that's what they're doing with this Canada Post resolution. Maybe they're trying to say that it really doesn't matter as long as we put the camouflage out there and we put up the goal net and we'll shoot the puck at the net and say Canada Post is the issue we're going to talk about today. Maybe that's the issue they want to focus on today, because they think they can. Mr. Speaker, they think they can. Whenever you get a majority government like the government has right now, sometimes we get to the point—and we've seen it all—is that we get a little arrogant. We get a little arrogant and we push through things that we maybe should've had a second thought on or—coming back to what I preach on time and time again—on consultation. So if they'd have done that with the PST, they had done that on the dam projects, done that on Bipole III, if they would of reached out and talked to the business people who are affected by Canada Post by this own government's admission, is that they would have probably heard—they would have probably heard there was some concerns there that they maybe want to address. But they didn't do that, Mr. Speaker. They decided to bring a resolution forward, the member from the Maples said, this is a resolution that we're going to be able to really drive home. We're going to be able to take an eye off the ball on this other stuff, because really it's the federal government that's the

problem here, it's not us. It's not us. It's about what we're going to do next as government.

* (11:40)

So I warn Manitobans. I warn Manitobans to be positive. Times will change. They make that very clear. They're the ones that will decide. This—the general population of Manitoba has their eye on the ball. If this Canada Post issue is one of them, I'll guarantee you they'll be speaking out. The government don't need to take charge on it. They feel they do because what they want to do is say to Manitobans, we know better. We know better so we're bringing this resolution forward in order to make sure that the federal government wears this, and we will be the Big Brother, the saviour—the saviour of Canada Post, and put through the PST, put through the dams, put through what's not necessarily always best for Manitobans. Like, I proposed the New West Partnership, was an opportunity for the—actually the government to do the right thing—and do the right thing for Manitobans, create jobs, create opportunities, in order to make sure—in order to make sure that Manitoba's best interest are—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson): I'm really very thankful to the member from the Maples and the member from Tyndall Park to propose and support this motion. And I believe this is extremely important, particularly, even for me and my wife. We are seniors. But in our area there is a box. So it's a question that we have to share with you here.

And based on my own business background [*interjection*]-thank you—I would say this is a corporate decision. So once you make it corporate decisions, generally speaking, this is the corporate culture, that you look at your mandate, what are you about. So the corporation which sells products, they want to make money, of course, they can go and raise the prices of those products, they can compete.

But here we are, it's a corporation, which is a public-service corporation; it is going to provide service to the public, therefore, their customers are public. But if you are a business person or a corporation, and you make a strategy, you talk to or find out what the customers want. But this decision was not taken by consultation, as mentioned here. And more or less, it was not done on the cultural structure of this country—geographical structure of

this country—and taken a decision in a Ottawa boardroom, that they perhaps don't understand.

There are people who are living in apartments, particularly, in Radisson. I can explain to you, Mr. Speaker, not today—eight months back—when I was door knocking, people said, what are you doing about this post-office business, that we understand there will be no delivery. So I am, in a way, very shocked to see that this particular thing will take place. I hope it doesn't.

But I think I was expecting all of us here, unanimously join and say, no, we don't want to have our door-to-door services being eliminated. Because I think there are several bills that we have worked together. And I'm a firm believer, Mr. Speaker. I have spoken several times, we don't have a monopoly on great ideas; they have brought some great ideas, we bring some good ideas—work together and make this happen. Because this is a serious issue, particularly, for Manitoba, particularly for Winnipeg, and in particular, for my constituents, that will suffer.

Now it's—one example, my wife is suffering—I don't want this to be a mega-public knowledge—but she has arthritis. Like most seniors, at times have some disabilities. She cannot walk too much to pick up the mail. When it is 50° below zero, which was one day here, colder than Mars, and if you look at how you go and pick up the mail, when there is slippery roads and you're a senior, and the road is—nobody's there for you to even look at if you fall. So she had a [*inaudible*] three days when I was not in town here to pick up the mail. When I come, we go, we try to open up and see if there is a big parcel come. Then they give you a key to open another box that—so it's not simple service to people who are looking at getting mail. And member from Tyndall Park said, I come from a country called India with our 1.3 billion people, and addresses are not as structured as 379 Broadway. It is that house, behind that there is another house, and there is a little alley that the postman has to cross.

But when I was a child, Mr. Speaker, there was a poem that I—used to be recited. The teacher used to say, come hell or high water, the postman will come. Postman will be at my door because that is how, as member from Tyndall Park says, it's a personal service also. You interact with that person; he asks how are you doing and all that. In the electronic culture that the world is heading to—which I at times not very much appreciative of—we are all—you go to the airport, yes, computers. They don't look at you,

so there is no eye-to-eye contact; there is no personal contact, which is again a different issue. I'm not going to waste time here to discuss whether we should or we shouldn't.

But one service which is essential, you need information. You need mail, you need your welfare cheques, you need your—everything that you need, you have to get through the postal system, and the postal system is going to let you not go and pick up the mail; it's going to be a disaster.

So we have to make sure that we do give the services needed to the people that are citizens of this country and immigrants of this country that deserve that service which is called Canada Post.

So my point—very strong point is that we look at the country of 1.3 billion people; they provide services. Now if this is a corporation that has been designed to, say, make huge profit then I will say, well, there are other ways by which you can make profit, not by cutting services, because you are trying to really destroy the whole mandate of the corporation that has to provide postal services.

So I would say strongly the loss of jobs—of course, there are going to be 8,000 to 50,000 jobs lost, which is another aspect, but I'm not emphasizing that—I'm emphasizing it is not possible for the seniors of—particularly of this city who live in areas that it's not possible for them to walk to pick up their mail. This will be disservice to them, Mr. Speaker.

So I would say very humbly to those people aboard of the Canada Post to sit down, talk and resolve this issue so that door-to-door deliveries of the postal system that is a basic fundamental right for each citizen and resident of this country is not scrapped.

And I would say with that note that there are ways by which it can be done, but I would not want to go and say now you send couriers by DSL services and pay \$20 for your mail to be delivered at your door. That makes me very upset and saddened that the country should not head to where I came from—they're progressing, they're doing more things; we are going to be going back, that's not something that I'm very pleased.

As a senior I object to this, as an MLA of my constituency I object to this, and as a fellow Canadian I think this is not something that I will be very happy if this goes on.

So, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for time and I think I would leave that for other speakers to talk. Thank you.

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): I'm pleased to rise in the House and put a few words on the record with respect to this particular resolution on Canada Post eliminating door-to-door delivery. I want to thank the member opposite for bringing this forward for debate in the Manitoba Legislature today.

I listened very closely to him—his comments as well as his reading of the resolution itself, Mr. Speaker, and I have to say that there is certainly an area here that is of great concern to me, and the irony and hypocrisy of the NDP government bringing forward something of this nature in the Manitoba Legislature for debate is quite interesting.

The member opposite in the first WHEREAS talks about a lack of consultation, in particular with municipalities, Mr. Speaker. Well, at a time when members opposite have brought forward a bill in the Manitoba Legislature forcing municipalities to amalgamate with no consultation at all or very little in the communities that are being negatively impacted as a result of that piece of legislation being brought forward by this NDP government.

* (11:50)

The irony around that, Mr. Speaker, that they're calling on another level of government, suggesting that they have a lack of consultation with respect to the Canada Post, while at the same time they aren't consulting themselves with municipalities and have done very little doing that themselves. The irony around that is interesting and also the hypocrisy around that.

Certainly, we know that members opposite—when they brought forward that piece of legislation, my colleagues and I heard from many municipalities across this great province of ours who came forward, and they know they're going to have—they know that they're going to be forced to amalgamate. They know that they—they're going to have—they're going to be negatively impacted as a result of that. And they came forward and they let us know that the government didn't even so much as pick up the phone, didn't go out to their municipalities, didn't consult with those municipalities, Mr. Speaker.

So, at the same time, they're calling on another level of government that is—that they are suggesting in some way is not consulting the public, Mr. Speaker, when they're not doing it themselves. It's

the epitome of hypocrisy. And I think it's extremely unfortunate for members opposite to bring forward this kind of a resolution at the same time that they're not even living up to those consultations themselves in their own legislation that they bring forward in the Manitoba Legislature.

But that's not the only area. I—we go back to, I believe it was 2001, 2002, when this government—this same government—forced school boards to amalgamate in this province. And at that time, they did—they said that they were going to save \$10 million by doing that. Well, they didn't save any money doing that. In fact, it cost more—more like \$10 million, so a difference of \$20 million in what they had promised, Mr. Speaker.

But not only that. We know at the time, when we went around and visited with various school divisions, there was very little consultation that was done at that time. So this is really nothing new, this lack of consultation with respect to the NDP government. We know that it goes back to when they were first elected, where that—there's a culture within their government, Mr. Speaker, of not consulting with Manitobans when it comes to major issues that will affect them in the province of Manitoba.

Of course, we also can go back and we can talk about their lack of consultation with the public of Manitoba—the great citizens of this province and the taxpayers of this province—when it comes to when they first expanded the PST to include more goods and services that would have a significant impact on Manitoba families in our province, Mr. Speaker.

There was no consultation that was done at that time. It was slipped into the budget at the time, Mr. Speaker. I know because I went out to the meetings of the minister of Finance at the time, the community meetings, and nowhere in his prebudget consultation speech to people in the communities, nowhere in there did it mention the PST expansion at the time.

And so I think it's unfortunate that when they say that they're consulting people, they're really not. Even hosting those meetings, it's a farce. We know that they're not even bringing forward some of the major things that we end up seeing in the budget and we have to dig through—dig deep into the budget to find them, Mr. Speaker.

And so we know that Manitobans didn't ask for that PST expansion, which was the largest increase, Mr. Speaker, in 25 years since the last NDP government under Howard Pawley introduced an

expansion to the PST back in the time. And, you know, it's unfortunate that that was the largest increase since their previous NDP government.

But not only did they choose at the time and didn't consult people in expanding the PST, we know that the year later, Mr. Speaker, the year after that, the minister of Finance, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) decided that he was going to increase the PST. Members opposite went out and campaigned, all members opposite. Member for Southdale (Ms. Selby), member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau), member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan), member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald), all of those members went door to door before the last election and campaigned on not raising taxes.

In fact, the Premier (Mr. Selinger), at the time, called the very notion of us suggesting that they were going to increase the taxes, he called that nonsense. He said it was ridiculous. Well, we know now it wasn't so ridiculous, was it? And it wasn't nonsense because they had every intention of raising the PST. And not only did they expand it, they raised it from 7 to 8 per cent.

But not only that, Mr. Speaker, they didn't consult Manitobans on that increase from 7 to 8 per cent. Because I, again, went out to the prebudget consultation meetings, so-called consultation meetings, and nowhere in the speech that was delivered by the minister of Finance at the time, the member for Dauphin, did it suggest that he was thinking, and his government was thinking, of expanding the PST.

So by eliminating the notion that they were considering it, and we do have documented proof that they were considering it. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they weren't just considering an increase to 8 per cent, we know now through—that we were—that they were considering increasing it to 9 per cent. We know that. And as a matter of fact, we know that that continues to be what their plan is for the next election. They'll go out door to door, they'll say, oh, no, we're not going to increase the PST again, no, we're not going to. And then they'll increase it to 9 per cent. Well, we know that past behaviour is indicative of future behaviour, and we know that that's what they did before, so we know that that's what they're going to do again. We know that that's what this NDP government is going to do. *[interjection]* And I know members opposite are chirping from their seats because this is a very sensitive issue. I don't blame them. It is a sensitive

issue, because the citizens of this great province, whether in the city of Winnipeg or in ridings all across Manitoba, they have been negatively impacted as a result of this NDP's broken promise when it comes to the PST increase.

And I know that members opposite are getting the same phone calls that we're getting, and we've gotten in the past, that we continue to receive from people in our constituencies and from their constituencies. We know that it's a sensitive topic for members opposite. And that's why they're uncomfortable with this kind of discussion. But we know that their lack of consultation in that area has brought them to where they are today and to where we are in Manitoba with an 8 per cent increase with the NDP considering a 9 per cent—an increase in the PST to 9 per cent now. And we know that they won't consult on that. They've never consulted in the past on this, and we know that they won't consult in the future.

But Mr. Speaker, not only did they not consult Manitobans when it comes to forced amalgamation in municipalities, forced amalgamation of school divisions, the PST expansion, the PST increase in—from 7 to 8 per cent, and then to probably to 9 per cent. We know that they didn't consult Manitobans there. We also know that they didn't consult and they did very little on Bipole III. We know that landowners, the west side of the province, were caught very off guard by this NDP government's decision to put Bipole III down the west side of our province. Again, very little consultation, and it's entirely disrespectful to the people that will be negatively impacted.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to make a minute-long speech here on Canada Post Eliminating Door-to-Door Delivery.

People are very concerned about this, and they're actually rising up against these cuts. These cuts are not necessary. They're not wanted. They'd have a huge impact on communities and small businesses. In fact, Canada Post has been profitable for 17 out of the last 18 years, the price of stamps has gone up by 59 per cent, and the Tories are asking you to choose between piles of junk mail in front of your home or a long walk to the box.

And also we'd like to know how many ridings of the 22 where the cuts are occurring are actually Conservative ridings. I'd like to—an answer to that.

Mr. Speaker: Any further—the honourable member for St. Paul.

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Well, Mr. Speaker, and it's always good to see the member for Elmwood get up and filibuster his own PMR.

Mr. Speaker, in the four seconds that remain for myself to speak—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for St. Paul will have nine minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 22, 2014

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