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DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 18, 2015

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, everyone. Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I'm asking leave to move directly to Bill 206, the workers' compensation amendment act, employment advisers, sponsored by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Smook).

And concluding that, I think the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) may want to move to third readings on some private members' bills.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, is there leave of the House to proceed directly to debate on second readings of public bills, starting with Bill 206? *[Agreed]*

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—
PUBLIC BILLSBill 206—The Workers Compensation
Amendment Act (Employer Advisers)

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call Bill 206, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Employer Advisers), standing in the name of the honourable member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard), who has seven minutes remaining.

Is there leave for this matter to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Fort Rouge?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Leave has been denied.

Is there further debate on this matter?

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise this morning and put a few words on the record in relation to Bill 206, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act, the Employer Advisers.

Mr. Speaker, in one of my previous careers, I had the honour to work for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business as their provincial representative. And on that and through my work as a member of the Manitoba Employers Council, I can tell you that no single issue so dominated our office in terms of our members requiring help than that of the Workers Compensation Board.

Mr. Speaker, the Workers Compensation Board obviously forms an important part of the workplace fabric here in Manitoba and—but there is no denying that for a lot of individuals, both employers and employees, it can be a confusing agency to deal with with a myriad of rules, of regulations that sometimes individuals can find conflicting.

Now, obviously, and the government has previously brought in a position for employees, the employee liaison office, because they recognize that a single individual may be challenged to deal, especially a single individual who may be hurt, may be challenged to deal with, again, the obligations and demands put on them by Workers Compensation. And so this bill, Mr. Speaker, it really mirrors that previous role of the employee liaison, in that it creates the mirror counterpart to that for employers.

I think it's very important to remember that employers pay for 100 per cent of the cost of Workers Compensation and the cost of running the organization and the Crown. So by offering them this service, I think you're just simply offering them a service that they rightly deserve and ultimately pay for. So, again, it's important to note that there is no cost borne to the taxpayer for the creation of this adviser position.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we should all recognize, too, and I think all members of this House recognize the importance of the small-business sector here in the province of Manitoba. Well over half of our economy is created by the small-, medium-sized business sector. I believe over three quarters of all employers are under that five-and-under category.

So where there are larger employers, Mr. Speaker, that have a multitude of staff, it's not surprising that they would have those accompanying resources to guide them through workers' compensation. And, as well, I mean, just the odds of it, that if you have a few hundred employees, you may have, through a variety a reasons, just may have more interaction with the Workers Compensation Board. But for a small employer, and say you have three employees, it may be years between claims, years between any kind of interaction beyond the quarterly billing that you receive from Workers Compensation. So when a small employer finds themselves dealing with Workers Compensation, it's not surprising that they can be a bit befuddled in how to properly deal with the organization. So having a position and having an individual who acts as an employer adviser to help guide them through the system is long overdue.

The members opposite and the NDP like to talk about the middle of the pack, Mr. Speaker. It's a mantra they often spout to justify a lot of their action and hopefully that will spur them on to action on this file. There are already six provinces that have employer advisers: British Columbia, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador. So, literally, from coast to coast there are provinces, and the majority of provinces have already moved towards this, so, in fact, Manitoba is in the minority and is an anomaly in not having this position available to the employer community.

So it is time, long overdue, that Manitoba adopted this as well, and it would make sure that all parties before the WCB are equal in terms of access to information and advocacy. And this is really what this bill that my colleague has put forward is about. It's about ensuring that fairness, that we are not out to—this adviser role is not out to put employers above employees in terms of their access to information. In fact, right now, employees have access to their own adviser, their own liaison, which employers simply don't have. So this is about levelling that arena, Mr. Speaker, and to ensure that all individuals who go through the Workers Compensation Board, interact with that board, have equal access to those services.

You know, and in some instances, Mr. Speaker, this is more than just simply a reactionary role, in terms of, you know, waiting for the calls or the employers to contact them and help navigate them

through a particular claim or answer particular questions that they would like answered.

* (10:10)

And a lot of times employees—or, sorry, employers are concerned about calling the Workers Compensation Board to find out information because they're worried that suddenly WCB may raise an eyebrow and do—and take what is an honest query as something more ominous and start doing searches and start putting pressure on that business.

So there is that fear, and I recall talking to a number of employers about that concern, and this is one reason why we have organizations like CFIB and like the chambers and the retail council and the restaurants association, that we act in some ways as that liaison, Mr. Speaker. But, again, that is—we're not funded and that is not our primary purpose, and while those organizations are more than pleased to assist their various memberships, the dedication of a single individual would go a long way in improving the situation.

But, as I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, this is more than just a reactionary role on the part of an employer adviser. The employer adviser can work on educational activities to employers to ensure that they know their employees' rights when it comes to WCB; that they are aware of the proper safety measures. And the office will also act to provide a direct representation for employers at tribunals and boards because, again, I think it's worth repeating that the overwhelming majority of employers in this province are small employers. I mean, it's a phrase that we often throw around, but the mom-and-pop shops—but here in the province of Manitoba that is a most accurate statement.

And so when you are putting in the kind of hours you do as a small employer and, in some instances, you know, you may putting well in excess of 70 hours, Mr. Speaker, and you're more than just the owner—you are a staff person, you could be the accountant, you're—you do the HR, you're the computer technician. The hats that any small-business owner wears are multiple. And so, in a lot of instances, they simply don't have the time to properly study, to properly understand a organization and a claim that they have no experience with.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I believe that my colleague from La Verendrye has put together a good template, that the employer adviser position is a position that is overdue here in the province of

Manitoba, that it will go a long way in terms of providing that service to the employer community, a service that they have been asking for for quite some time, that it'll bring Manitoba into the mainstream when it comes to offering that service.

And so I would encourage members of this House to support this bill in terms of going forward to committee so that we can hear from members of the public to see if there's any opportunities to add or make amendments to make sure that this bill actively reflects the needs of employers and employees, and then, hopefully, once we hear from members of the public, we will have an opportunity to bring forward and pass this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

And so with those very brief comments, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your time.

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to rise to speak to Bill 206, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Employer Advisers).

As a business owner—a small-business owner—I've had long experience with WCB, some of it positive and some of it not so positive. But it is always an area of questions, Mr. Speaker, and we don't, as small business, necessarily, know who to call, and this would enable us to, as small businesses, to make those calls to ask the inquiries without—ask the questions without being penalized, as we're often fear, working with WCB, because it is there for the benefit of the workers, of course, and for the companies, and enables protection on both sides.

However, what I have seen in some cases with small business is that recordkeeping is a challenge when you're worried about getting the product out the door you don't always necessarily worry about keeping records about who was there and what happened. And we have had knowledge and experience of instances where staff were working very well all week and products were being manufactured and put out the door, small group of workers, you know, four or five. And everything worked well until shutdown time at 5 or 6 o'clock on Friday, and everybody went home, and then one of the workers came in Monday morning with an injured back. And because no one could recall the injury happening during the week, there was a workers' compensation claim and it went through and it was deemed to be—have occurred at work. No one could remember it happening at work; it may have happened at work. Again, recordkeeping is a challenge for small business.

And the process goes along and you understand how it all works, but then you get the claim and it goes through and you're told as a small business, well, if you're not happy with this process you can appeal. And I'm not sure that there's a bigger threat to a company than being told that you can appeal, because then you worry about, okay, does this mean I have to confront that former employer or current employee in a public space, in a legal environment that I'm not familiar with? Is this public? Are things going to be said that may or may not be true? If I appeal, will that penalize me further down the road either in the compensation board process where there's other problems that'll be flagged on my file?

So those are all concerns for the small businesses that this will enable business to ask those questions without fear of reprisals. Because we want it to be an area that workers are comfortable going dealing with the board as well as companies.

And there's other experiences that I've seen, Mr. Speaker, where there was a definite injury that everybody saw. The board was easy to work with. There was adequate compensation for the employee to make sure that they can continue their rehabilitation and their education while they were injured, and it worked very well for the employee. There was no doubt that the person was injured at work. So those are—that's what this is there for and, obviously, it has an impact on what you pay as a company on your rates going forward and when you have an injury it's basically an insurance program. So if you have no injuries your rates are fairly level, although when we compare them to other provinces sometimes we think that they're higher for certain industries and, of course, you're told, well, you can appeal that. And, again, the question is, well, if I appeal that rate and it's reduced, what impact will it have in the coming years? Does it go up again and I don't realize it?

So there's all those questions, Mr. Speaker, that business owners have that they need somewhere to go and they need someone that they can depend on to answer them in a easy and non-confrontational approach so that business is comfortable asking this—those questions as the employees are comfortable asking the questions as well.

So that's what I think that this would enable, Mr. Speaker, opportunities for business to make sure that they have the information they need to make the best decisions and continue to run their business, because at the core—at the core it's—the businesses are

there to operate. They're not necessarily there to support the Workers Compensation Board or respond to the board. They have to be in there to have their service available, produce their product, and if they are not able to do that if they have to focus on paperwork or bureaucracy, then they take their eye on the ball, and that's how you lose a business.

So you want to make sure that this is easy for businesses to access and you want to make sure that it's a simple approach so that they know they can pick up the phone or they can send an email or perhaps even a text or some new form of communication that we haven't even considered yet, Mr. Speaker, and get a quick and easy response from the board so that we know as a business what you need to do to move forward and to make sure that you're doing the right thing and that you can continue to run your business and produce the product and pay your staff and make sure that they have jobs and make sure that the future is taken care of, all the while working with the civil service and the Workers Compensation Board to make sure that side of the world is covered off as well, because there's a lot of balls in the air as a small business and this is one of those.

We know it's there. We know it's there for our employees. We want to make sure that it is—that they are adequately covered and we want to make sure that the business is doing the right thing not only for our employees, but when they interact with the board. Because, as I said, Mr. Speaker, one of the big fears of a business is that they're going to be singled out for something that they may or may not have done. And it's—on both sides, if there's something that they've done that's wrong, well, we need to deal with it. If there's something they didn't do, perhaps they forgot to file a form; well, we got to find out that that's necessary as well.

* (10:20)

So, you know, there are lots of forms that need to be filed with the government, and this is one of the many. You've got to make sure that when you pay the fees to the compensation board that you pay the rates that they are correctly representing your business in your area of the economy, that you're not put in a separate rate schedule that perhaps is higher than what you really should be in in your business. Because the board has to decide where you fit in the rate schedule, and if you're a new business, you might be something that they haven't experienced before, and they may have no track record on what

the risks are in that business, so they may put you in a higher rate category just because they're not aware of the risks, and then you go into that category and you stay there. And it may not be the rate category that you need to be.

You may be able to prove to them down the road that indeed you are not a risky business in their eyes, and perhaps would benefit, and they would benefit, from putting you in a different rate category that better—would better reflect the experience and the safety experience that that business has because of the risks that are inherent in the business, but also in the safeguards that businesses put in place for the owners and for the employees.

Because in the end, Mr. Speaker, everybody wants to go home healthy and safe at the end of the day, whenever that end of the day may be. And we want to make sure, as a business, that our staff are protected and we put the proper safety requirements in place, that the staff are properly trained before they start the job, and that training continues on the job so that we can make sure that they're doing the right thing without risk of injury to themselves or to the other staff that are there or indeed to the customers and clients of that particular business.

So those are a lot of the areas of risk that business deals with every day. And I think that having an area of simple answers for the Workers Compensation Board for business would go a long ways to making everybody a little more comfortable in the process and making sure that we can keep everybody safe in Manitoba.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on this matter?

House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is second reading of Bill 206, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Employer Advisers).

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

House Business

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with rule 31(9), I'd like to announce the private member's resolution that'll be considered next Thursday is the resolution on Chronic Deficits Mean Less for Essential Services, brought forward by the

honourable member for Morden-Winkler (Mr. Friesen).

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that, in accordance with rule 31(9), that the private member's resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on Chronic Deficits Mean Less for Essential Services, sponsored by the honourable member for Morden-Winkler.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Goertzen), on House business.

Mr. Goertzen: On House business, I've had consultation with the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak), for awareness of the members, and we're looking to call Bill 203, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety), for concurrence and third reading.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to call, under concurrence and third readings, Bill 203? [*Agreed*]

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 203—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety)

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call Bill 203, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety).

The honourable member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler)—no? The honourable member for Morden-Winkler.

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen), that Bill 203, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques (sécurité des piétons), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure this morning to rise in the House and take these few moments to put a few more comments on the record with respect to Bill 203, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety).

Mr. Speaker, you will remember that I introduced this bill following the tragic death of a

student at Northlands Parkway Collegiate in Winkler. That was a school that was opened, and just weeks after the opening of that brand new high school in the city of Winkler, that opening and the celebration that should have taken place was tragically marred by the death of a student who was doing nothing more than crossing the road in front of the school. The reason she died was that there was no pedestrian crosswalk in place, the kind that we have come to associate with the presence of schools, with those cantilevered signs with the push-button operated lights. There was no paint on the asphalt in front of the school marking—demarcating that corridor, indicating to motorists the possibility of the presence of pedestrians on the roadway. There were no permanent signs erected to notify motorists of the need to slow down.

It was a terrible situation, a terrible loss for Carina Denisenko's family, a terrible loss for a school, for that principal and teachers, for the educational assistants, for all of her friends, for the entire community.

And in the wake of that tragedy, Mr. Speaker, I brought this bill after careful consultation with community stakeholders: principals, superintendents, the mayors and reeves, engineers, traffic authorities, parent council, members of the school board, including the chairs of the school boards. What we realized, of course, is that the issue, that the circumstances that had led to Carina's death, were not unique, but that, in fact, in the province of Manitoba we had a situation whereby that event, that tragic event, could be allowed to occur again and again and again, simply because of changes that had never been made that would locate the traffic authority in that central working group that is responsible when a new school is approved and planned.

So there's a central planning process, it's called the integrated design process, and that process works whereby all the agents come around the table to talk about the new school. That group would involve engineers; it involves architects; it involves members from the PSFB; it involves the superintendent and school division chairs; it involves the local or municipal government representatives; there's usually even an individual there who represents the construction company. All of those groups work together and they analyze all of the issues that will arise when a school is built. What we noticed in the wake of this tragedy is that the one group that should be at the table, that one group that was overlooked,

in this case, was Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation, that the discussions around the need to reduce speed limits, the discussions around the need to locate new pedestrian safety equipment apparatus, those discussions were being had completely apart from the process of building this school.

I can still recall a day when I became increasingly aware of the urgency of the situation. I went across in this Chamber and spoke to the Education minister, and I asked the minister at that time to please speak with the minister for MIT because there was no formal mechanism by which those ministers would share their notes about the construction of a school.

Well, what all this information led to was this bill that I brought, Bill 203, which seeks to simply address this oversight, which seeks to make sure that there will never be another death like Carina Denisenko when a new school opens, because this bill then locates the traffic authority at the table as a key agent along with all of those other groups represented in the integrated design process. That was the bill that I brought and introduced back last year on Tuesday, December the 2nd.

Mr. Speaker, since that time, of course, this bill has gotten attention. It's gotten attention in my community, for sure. It's gotten attention around the province of Manitoba because we know schools continue to be built in the province and they always are built and we are a growing province, and so it's the responsibility of the provincial government to oversee the construction of schools. And other communities have claimed that this bill is important to make sure that a tragedy like this does not occur in their communities. But, moreover, this bill also had the attention of the Education Minister and I have appreciated the discussions that the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) and I have had, me in the context of bringing the bill and he as the Education Minister.

*(10:30)

And so early on in this process after the introduction of the bill—and I should also point out it was the member for Gimli (Mr. Bjornson), the former Education minister, who initially asked to meet with me to discuss the bill. At that time we strongly agreed that it was in both of our interests to bring forward a bill that would protect students. It was not in our—it was not the desire of either of us to allow this to descend into a political—aims

And so I appreciate the commitment of both the member for Gimli and the member for Fort Garry-Riverview, the former Education minister—and the current Education Minister—for making good suggestions about the bill, looking at the wording. I would also want to be sure to mention that departmental—senior departmental officials were a key in this process of looking at the bill and seeking to strengthen it.

And so a number of changes were suggested along with way, some of these coming from the Education Minister and his staff, and changes were also suggested and a lot of input given along the way by stakeholders. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that now there have been some changes which I believe will even strengthen the bill further. For instance, the bill has been expanded so that not just will these conditions, these formal conditions be put in place that would make sure that traffic authorities had consulted in the construction of a new school, they will happen as well for a major school expansion. That's a good change.

As well, there was some technical language that needed to be adjusted, of course, because when it actually comes to speed limit changes, well, those aren't things that the department, MIT, does. Instead, those are done at the traffic safety board and so there needed to be language that would reference the fact that the authority for this lies within the traffic safety board.

But when it comes to the actual opening of the school, there was a lot of discussion about the hard and fast prohibition against the opening of a new school if it were the case that all of the safety apparatus and all of the changes necessary as advised by the traffic authority and the school division, if those changes weren't ready for some reason, then there's been an important change to the bill that says that temporary safety measures can be put in place.

Now, that is a good change, but I do want to say this on the record for posterity. I believe it's important to note that it will be the effort in every single case during the construction of a school to make sure that the—all the identified changes necessary to ensure school pedestrian safety and the vehicular safety are in place. And I believe that the strength of the bill is not the provisions made at the end in the last clauses; the strength of this bill are the clauses that come early on that say as soon as a school construction project is approved, at that point in time traffic authority comes to the table.

That's the strength of this bill, to make sure that there are no surprises along the way for the traffic authority, no surprises along the way for the traffic safety board. They'll come to the table; they'll be fully apprised of the location of a new school and they will have their processes under way at the very beginning.

At the end of the day, in all the amendments I asked myself the question: Would this amendment work to preserve the spirit of this bill, and if these amendments would have been in place would Carina Denisenko have died? It is my belief that if this bill were in place that that young woman would be alive today. We cannot prevent the loss now of Carina Denisenko. What we can do as legislators is make sure that the system is strengthened to make sure that never again would another family, would another group of friends, would another group of educators have to suffer that terrible loss that has been suffered.

And so I thank the minister for his input and I thank you for the opportunity for putting these comments on the record. I look forward to the passage of this bill, as do so many stakeholders around the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods): Mr. Speaker, I just want to put a few brief words on the record in regard to this very important piece of legislation and I do want to thank the member for Morden-Winkler (Mr. Friesen) for bringing forward this legislation. Clearly, it's a very important piece of legislation as a result of a very tragic accident that occurred in one of his communities. And I guess we as legislators, from time to time, these issues are brought forward from our local constituents, and I think it's important that we as legislators recognize those issues that impact our constituents, and at the end of the day it's very important that we bring this legislation forward to protect Manitobans. So I do want to commend the member for bringing forward this legislation. I know he's been working on it for quite some time, and it obviously has had a very dramatic impact on his community and certainly many Manitobans.

And we know there's—these issues are not just specific to Morden and Winkler. We also see other areas around the province where similar situations exist. And we, certainly, on this side of the House, have been trying to raise awareness of those issues. We certainly know—we've been reading petitions, Mr. Speaker, as you're aware, of issues that exist across the province, and I think of the community of

Swan River. We were just there not too long ago and saw the same sort of a situation where school kids are crossing a very major highway there and without proper notice indicating to motorists that those things exist there. So we're trying to bring awareness to the public, the motoring public, that they have to be aware of issues relative to school zones.

Certainly, the government has brought forward legislation in terms of speed-zone reductions in school areas, which certainly has helped, I think, raise awareness to the public, but certainly more has to be done. And, clearly, what the member is bringing forward in this legislation is important, and basically it's something that has been overlooked in the past in terms of developing schools and in terms of renovating schools. Certainly, I've seen the same sort of issues arise in my communities as well. When you add school buildings or daycares in some cases, the routing changes and traffic flow changes, so it's important that we are cognizant and then the government is cognizant of the fact that the changes are being made. And we have to be aware of movement of students around schools and, some cases, daycares, so that we're aware of it and then the motoring public is aware of it, Mr. Speaker. And, obviously, when we're dealing with school kids, obviously, they don't always pay close attention when they're crossing streets, so we have to make sure that the public is aware of school zones and be on the alert for children.

And this legislation will make it incumbent upon government to make sure that they're doing their due diligence in the analysis of traffic and traffic patterns around schools and school zones, especially when new schools are being developed, and it's a key element that I think has just been overlooked. And, obviously, a tragic situation like this occurred in Winkler has brought to light some of the deficiencies in legislation, and I certainly acknowledge that the member bringing forward this legislation will certainly, hopefully help alleviate any of these situations occurring in the near future.

I certainly want to acknowledge the minister. I think he's been supportive of this legislation, as well, and there's been some amendments brought forward to address some issues, so it is good, Mr. Speaker, that, certainly, the government and opposition can work together from time to time when there is a need for legislation to address these important issues.

So it is certainly a positive piece of legislation going forward. We certainly look forward to the

implementation of this legislation, and, again, I just want to thank the member for his work in bringing this very important legislation forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (10:40)

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, this is a beautiful Manitoba morning. The sun is shining, it's absolutely gorgeous outside and we're sort of at the end of the school year. Children are—have gone on their way to school and whether they take a bus or they rode a bicycle or walked, but they go to school. They're full of life and energy and all kinds of enthusiasm. They know that there's going to be great and exciting things happening at their school. And one of the things that, as a parent, and as parents we know, that often this enthusiasm tends to take away a little bit of the ability to discern when you should or shouldn't be darting into traffic, or sometimes they get so caught up with friends or activities that they're doing on their way to school that sometimes kids aren't as cautious as they should be. And certainly, we want to ensure that all the children that go to school, like this morning, that they get there safe and sound so they can get part of that great education that we provide for them.

And we know that whether it's parents, whether it's teachers, whether it's school administrators or here at the Manitoba Legislature, we are always impressed and we go to whether it's grade 6 grad—I believe now it's going to have to be grade 5 grad, because we're going to the middle school, and I know my daughter missed out. She—her grade 9 class was moved to River East Collegiate, so she didn't get grade 9 grad, and she was very disappointed in that, although, she says that, really, grade 9 should be part of high school, because, you know, they really are way more mature when they get into grade 9. Of course they are.

And, you know, we celebrate all these things and we do these great celebrations. And I remember, as a school trustee, I used to go to these different graduations, and so we should. We should always encourage our children and celebrate with them as they make these maybe smile—maybe small, but they are substantial, benchmarks in their life. And we want them to do so in such a way that they are safe, that they get there in—they get there safely.

And, Mr. Speaker, Bill 203 addresses some of that. And what it does is it puts a cautionary note on for school boards and for the architects and the

spatial organization individuals who lay out the grounds of how the school is going to work. And it puts a caution there and says, keep in mind the safety of our children.

And I am pleased to hear that this bill will be passing. I happen to have a petition I'm reading every day, it deals with children crossing PTH 207. And, Mr. Speaker, we are pleased that this bill will go forward because, again, it's one of those cautionary notes to those who build our schools to please keep in mind the safety in the crossing of our students. And I'm pleased to hear this is going to be one of those pieces of legislation that will pass unanimously and very pleased that I could put a few words on the record.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on this matter?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: House ready for the question?

Question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 203, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety).

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

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): I advise the House, I've had consultations with the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak), and I'd—and in agreement, I'd like to call Bill 201, The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act, for concurrence and third reading.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to consider Bill 201? *[Agreed]*

Bill 201—The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act

Mr. Speaker: So we'll proceed to call bill—under concurrence and third readings, Bill 201, The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act.

Is there any debate?

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson), that Bill 201, The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I am indeed honoured to be able to stand here and speak to this bill to third reading. And at this time I would like to indicate my gratitude to all members of the House for being supportive of this bill. I think it is an important bill, particularly in the context of women's rights and women's equality, to be bringing forward something that is going to recognize 100 years of women in Manitoba being the first in Canada and in the Commonwealth to be given the right to vote.

It was a struggle. It wasn't something that came easily in that era. In fact, men of that era did not think that it was appropriate for women to vote, they did not think women really wanted to vote. They thought it would be better for women to stay at home and do a woman's job.

But it took a group of very dedicated women and men—and a lot of people don't realize that in that time there weren't just women fighting for women's right to vote; there were actually a significant number of men that actually were working alongside them. Petitions had to be signed and, you know, thousands of names were on those petitions and it was women and men because men were recognizing that, you know, they were part of the journey. Men have daughters; men certainly want to see in this world that their daughters have the same equality as anybody else.

So there were—there was, you know, a lot of effort 100 years ago and we are on the eve of that momentous day, January 28th, and it was in, you know, on the eve of that, just almost 100 years ago, we will be celebrating on January 28th, 2016, 100 years since the vote was passed.

I really wanted to thank Legislative Council for going into the archives and finding that original bill where it indicated women in Manitoba being given the right to vote. And it was very interesting, and I indicated in committee, as well, that I don't think I've ever seen legislation that had been written 100 years ago and ever thought I would be standing here making an amendment to that and—or building on it, sorry, not making an amendment to it, but building on it to acknowledge something that happened that 100 years ago.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

So it was exciting to know that this can now be celebrated fully because we are now at the point where we are going to declare January 28th, 2016, as The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote

Act. Not only are we going to be honouring Nellie McClung and all of the people that fought so hard for that vote at that time, but we are also going to be having an opportunity to celebrate today what we have achieved over the last hundred years and the potential for what we can achieve as we go forward.

Certainly when we set up the Nellie McClung Foundation a number of years ago through a private member's bill that I was honoured to be a part of, it was never just to look at celebrating history; it was always meant to be an opportunity for people nowadays and for young women to be reminded that there were a lot of struggles towards fighting for women's equality, women's right to vote, for social justice and we were always hoping that the monument would be something that would remind people that we still have steps to take, we still have a journey to go down.

Because certainly today when we look in Canada and across the world, women have not achieved full equality. Although women make up 52 per cent of the world's population, in many legislators—legislatures and parliaments across the world we are not even close to being, you know, equally representative and a lot of people would feel that that's a democratic deficit. And it's important that we try to achieve better in that because women bring, you know, different attributes to the job of a woman in politics, women bring different ideas. And it's certainly not saying that women are better than men, it's just women bring something different to the table.

* (10:50)

So this bill gives us an opportunity to celebrate a lot of things and remind us of a lot of steps that still need to be taken. But this is a momentous occasion that we need to be celebrating because Manitoba women were the first in Canada and the first in the British Commonwealth to be awarded the right to vote. Other provinces came after that. The government of Canada came after that, and the—this enfranchisement of Manitoba women can be regarded today as the first in a series of sweeping changes that ultimately allowed women to take their rightful place in our democratic society.

There are going to be a number of activities happening over the next number of months as we approach the 100th anniversary, and it's a privilege for me today to stand in the House and indicate that some of those steps have been launched today.

The Nellie McClung Foundation has put out a news release today that announces the launch of what is called the Nellies. They are awards that will be given at a gala in January on January 28th, 2016, to 10 Manitoba women who have followed in Nellie's footsteps. And we are going to be recognizing five rural women and five urban women, and we will be acknowledging women who have actually been modern-day Nellies, and so that is very exciting. Those were launched today in partnership with the Winnipeg Free Press and Golden West radio. People are going to hear a lot about this over the next number of months, and we encourage people nominate women to be recognized as modern-day Nellies. There is also going to be a re-enactment of the mock parliament on October 18 at the PTE, and we have actually secured a playwright to write a play—and there has actually never been a play written on this. So this will be a first in Canada where we will actually have a play and a play that will be available to schools and to the general public and whoever wants to re-enact it, and that play will be available on the Nellie McClung website.

I would urge everybody to have a look at the website because the website for the Nellie McClung Foundation has a lot of valuable information on it including educational chapters for various grades in schools. So there has been a significant amount of work done to celebrate Nellie McClung, to celebrate her peers, and we are just adding just one more piece to this now by having this act become official so that in all of Manitoba for all of the women's groups right now and all of the groups out there and organizations that are looking to celebrate this momentous occasion in Canada, by making this act official we are just adding to the excitement of the activities that will happen.

I would like to also indicate that the Canadian Museum for Human Rights is a partner in a lot of these efforts with the Nellie McClung Foundation as we move forward, and I think we're going to have members of Nellie McClung's family that will be part of a lot of these efforts. So it is going to be a very exciting time, and I don't think we should underestimate the significance of this event and the significance of Manitoba being the first in Canada to give women the right to vote. And I think we should be very proud of that and we should be very proud of our history here. It wasn't done with women chaining themselves to monuments. It was done in a very, very, classy way by a lot of perseverance by a lot of

people 100 years ago. So we have a chance to celebrate and to be part of something really exciting.

This act will help make it all even better. So I certainly appreciate the support of everybody in this House in passing third reading on this, and look forward to all of us having a chance to celebrate 100 years of women getting the vote and Manitoba being the first province to give women the vote.

Thank you.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I appreciate the opportunity I think to speak on this, what I would say is a momentous day and an important day in the Legislature.

And lots of important days that happen in this place. It's an important building and it's a lot of important work that happens. But this will rank among the top, I think, for this session, that we'll have the opportunity to pass the legislation—and I believe it will pass—that will recognize the centennial of women's right to vote and the work of Nellie McClung and the many others who brought us to this point.

And I want to recognize the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) for her work on this bill. I think she's advocated for this bill for at least a couple of years now, and so I'm happy for her that it's going to be passing, though I know she's not doing it for that reason, Mr. Speaker, but I do think that it's important to recognize her work on this and the other things that she has done.

Also I acknowledge other members in this Chamber who have also supported the legislation, on both sides of the House, Mr. Acting Speaker. I know that there's been good support from both sides. I appreciate the discussions I've had with the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) on this and some of the other private members' bills. I recall the former leader of the NDP saying that there is no monopoly on a good idea and I think that that is true. And the private members' bills that are passing today for third reading and that are going to committee tonight, and—that will go to committee at a scheduled date—I think are good ideas.

This one in particular I think will stand the test of time and will allow us to remember the great role that Manitoba has had, and women in Manitoba, of assuring that women across Canada have equal rights in terms of voting and moving—ensuring that they have equal status, both in our democracy but also in

other areas of government and in our world, and that is no small thing when you consider.

Now, I think others have said and others have spoken on this bill in different sections, that while much has been accomplished, there is still more work to do and I would agree with that, Mr. Speaker. We certainly recognize that this isn't something where there's an end to or there's a mission accomplished sign put up. That's not the case. The struggle for equality for women, in particular on this bill, is something that will continue on and it won't end simply with this bill. But it is worth recognizing that Manitoba has played a special role and it's worth remembering that. Because I think when you celebrate that, it also encourages you to look to the future in terms of what other things you can do.

And I think it will inspire—I'll say, in particular—it will inspire women, but I think it will inspire a lot of men too. And when we talk about issues of equality or sometimes we've talked about it in issues of domestic violence, we know that men play a particular and special role in this. There's been programs where it really relies on men to speak up, for example, on domestic violence, to say this isn't acceptable, and to say that to other men. And that is important in this context as well. When you're struggling for equality, it's very important that we have everyone engaged and that it is not simply one particular area or one particular gender, Mr. Speaker. So I think that this is something that will inspire women. It will inspire men. I think it'll particularly inspire young people. And we see so many young people that are inspired when it comes to issues around human rights or equality, and they are really taking up the torch from our generation. They are really the future. And this is something that they can look to, as we celebrate the centennial and recognize that we have a strong past, but we have an even stronger future.

So, I'm—I want to, again, commend the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger). I want to thank all members of this House. I want to thank the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) in our negotiations for ensuring this bill was one that was going to be passed as a private member's bill. I think it reflects well on all of us as legislators, and I think we can all take pride in that. There are many things that divide us in this Assembly, and there are many things that divide us in politics, and that is part of our political process, and I wouldn't speak against that, Mr. Speaker. There's always a time for vigorous debate and there's a time for differences of opinion,

but there's also a time when you can put those differences aside. And I think we've done good work by putting those differences aside today and ensuring that this bill is going to pass.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): The question before the House is concurrence and third reading on Bill 201, The Centennial of Manitoba Women's Right to Vote Act.

Is the House willing to pass the motion?
[Agreed]

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Acting Speaker, I would ask if you would canvass the House to make the motion that just passed on that bill unanimous.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Is it agreed by the House that the motion is passed unanimously?
[Agreed]

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 11—Provincial Government's Failure to Proactively Address Canada's Microbead Issue

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): The hour being 11 o'clock, we will now move to resolutions.

The resolution before us now is brought forward by the honourable member for Brandon West, and the topic is Provincial Government's Failure to Proactively Address Canada's Microbead Issue.

* (11:00)

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Portage la Prairie, 11,

WHEREAS Manitoba is home to some of the most beautiful rivers and lakes in Canada; and

WHEREAS Manitoba's ecological beauty and natural resources are important economic drivers for such industries as tourism, recreation and fisheries; and

WHEREAS microbeads pose a risk to the ecological health of Manitoba's waterways and lakes; and

WHEREAS the current provincial government has failed to proactively engage with industry representatives, such as the Canadian Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association, CCTFA, or the federal government regarding the phasing out and ban of microbeads; and

WHEREAS the current provincial government has had an appalling record as Manitoba's environmental steward since their first term in office in 1999.

THEREFORE it—BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba acknowledge that the provincial government has failed to take any action to work with partners in other jurisdictions or industry to phase out and ban microbeads; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly be urged to follow the example set by industries and work with the federal government to phase out and ban microbeads in personal-care products.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): It has been moved by the honourable member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer), seconded by the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Wishart), that

WHEREAS Manitoba is home to some of the most beautiful rivers and lakes in Canada; and

WHEREAS Manitoba's ecological beauty and natural resources are important economic—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Did I hear dispense? Dispense?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Dispense.

The motion is in order.

Mr. Helwer: Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to speak to this resolution. It is an issue that has been facing Canada and North America for a while now, and what I've found in my research is that Manitoba is just not present in the debate. In fact, the Canadian Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association has been very proactive on this issue and has addressed the issue with all provinces in Canada and with the federal government and has heard absolutely nothing back from the province of Manitoba.

But probably the first question we should talk about is: What are microbeads? Because I did see,

when we first spoke about this resolution in this House, our House leader, we noticed that the government side, there was lots of commentary over there from ministers and Premier (Mr. Selinger) about—well, there was lots of words used that I can't use in here—but what are microbeads? Because they were not aware of the issue. So we have to inform them of the issue because they are obviously not informed, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

Microbeads are used in personal-care products as an astringent to make the product work better so that when you try to scrub that dirt off, it actually does get scrubbed off, even though some of the things that are attached to this government I don't think even microbeads would take off.

However, what happens with microbeads is—what has been found is that our sewage treatment plants don't—aren't able to deal with them. So they pass through the treatment plants because they are indeed micro—very, very small—and they pass through all the various screens and they flow into our lakes and rivers.

And then they get into our food cycle, because obviously they're consumed by the various fauna that is in the water systems, and they get into the food chain with the fish, and then we eat the fish, and we're not sure what that impact would be.

But even worse, what happens with microbeads is that they do mass on the floors, the bottom of our lakes, and then they are an avenue for algae to grow. And we don't need—certainly I'm sure the Acting Deputy Minister must know—we don't need any more algae in our lakes. The government has done a bad enough job of dealing—trying to deal with that issue, and they've been absent from that debate, as well. But what happens is the algae will find this as a matrix to grow in. And so we promote more algae in our lakes.

Ms. Jennifer Howard, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Now, the associations have been very active on this issue, and the manufacturers have, indeed, in North America, been very active on this issue. Many manufacturers have already phased out the use of microbeads in their products, and they are continuing to do so. And the products that currently have it in the distribution system, after they move through the distribution system, many manufacturers, indeed, will not use microbeads, polypropylene, in their products, and then we will not have that issue as much as we would've right now.

However, we do still—in North America, we are a trading economy, and Canada is a trading economy, and we bring a lot of products in from offshore so the reason that we need to push the federal government on this issue. This is not an issue that needs to be regulated at the provincial level. The provincial level does—the Province does not have any authority nor jurisdiction over drugs nor natural health products that both of these can be classified in. That—those products are regulated at the federal level, so we need to, as Manitoba, add our voice to the people that are pushing the federal government to move on this issue in a more rapid measure because what happens—as I said, we're a trading nation, so many of the organizations that do business in Canada and, of course, throughout North America will bring in products from offshore.

Now, some of those manufacturers offshore may not have taken the microbeads out of their product yet, so that's why we need to ban those type of products from importation in Canada, and, again, the federal government has the authority and the regulatory agencies to deal with the import of those products at our border, so those are the areas that they need to deal with. We also, of course, have an issue in North America and throughout the world with counterfeit products and the importation of those products. And they may, indeed, contain microbeads as opposed to other products.

So those are areas that we need the federal government to act on, and that is the recommendation that I have for the provincial government: that they move to ask the federal government to react to the letters and the questions from both the association and the federal government to push the government to work on this so that we can make sure that we keep these microbeads out of our systems and, indeed, can move to make sure that they don't come into the North American market.

You know, I've watched what's happened over the many, many years that this government has been in power, and it's sad when I watch what's happened to Manitoba's environment. There's lots of opportunity there to work with many people to improve our environment, but instead what's happened is I've watched while the NDP has allowed our lakes to be destroyed by products and by sewage mainly. What I see is, you know, we did hear a few—couple of years ago—in fact, the former minister of Conservation did admit, finally, that 80 per cent of the phosphate load into the lake comes from the north and south Winnipeg water sewage treatment

plants. And I know that it's expensive to deal with that issue—I know it is—and I know the government was asked also to deal with nitrogen, and we've been working on this for how long? And still the sewage—the raw sewage flows into the lakes and contributes to the phosphate load. So the environmental stance of this government has been deplorable.

I am well aware of a project in Riding Mountain National Park. They had issues with phosphate loading in the lake and they were concerned about where this might be. They're at the top of the watershed, so where was the phosphate loading coming from? Possibly from the golf course, so the golf course went organic, and still the phosphate load didn't change. So there must be another source.

What's the other source? Obviously, we have the forest. There's a possibility of it coming there but not at the phosphate-load levels that we saw in the lake. So finally the park decided—the federal government decided to dig up a sewage pipe that had been running under one of the marshes and discovered to their amazement and dismay that that pipe had been leaking for many years, so we've been putting raw sewage directly into the marsh that feeds into South Lake that feeds into Clear Lake, and that was the source of the phosphate loading. So when that pipe was replaced and rerouted, the phosphate load fell by 85 per cent in the lake within a year.

So that's what I'm saying to the government is you have been—had a deplorable issue on the environment. You could've acted and we would've seen immediate results. So with this, it's an opportunity to change your stance on the environment and do something proactive, to go engage the federal government because they are the agencies that will deal with this issue, and make sure that they are working to protect Canadian waters from microbeads.

* (11:10)

You have an opportunity here to make yourselves a steward of the environment. Very simple process: you actually don't really have to physically spend any money except for the money, perhaps, that it might take for a phone call or a letter or a stamp or a reply to the organization that is asking you—the Canadian cosmetic toiletry and fragrance association that is asking you to respond to this and be proactive, to engage the federal government and make sure that they are protecting Manitoba lakes and waters with the rest of Canada.

So there's an opportunity here, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I'm pleased to see you in the Chair. I'm sure you'll do very well. I congratulate you on your appointment. I think that there are certain times that we need some guidance, and I'm sure you'll give us that guidance on the decorum of the Chamber.

So, again, here we have an opportunity, prime opportunity for the government to actually do something positive in the environment. We've seen where they've had lot—they've had lots of talk, again, on the invasive species—lots of talk, little action. Riding Mountain National Park has essentially had to build a dike around the park to protect itself from the Province's inaction so that they can deal with invasive species that are coming from the rest of the province, and, again, the Province is not sure what to do.

We can look to other jurisdictions, and in this one we can actually be proactive. We don't need to bring in legislation because it's not our area of expertise. But this government is very good at lobbying the federal government, and I would encourage them to do so in this case and be proactive.

Thank you.

Hon. Thomas Nevakshonoff (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship): It is my pleasure to rise to speak to this resolution brought forward by the member opposite. I'm glad to see that they're following the path of the NDP opposition in Ottawa who brought this resolution forward just a short time ago. So I compliment them on their conversion on the road to Damascus, as they say.

The stalwart environmentalists, they are in opposition. Of course, they sadly fail when they're actually in government, but that's no surprise. They're following that old advertising adage, Mrs.—or Ms.—Madam Deputy Speaker, in the sense that if you repeat something often enough, eventually the public starts to believe it and that seems to be their strategy across the way. I think when a person watches television he has to see a commercial 17 times before he actually grasps what the product is, and that's very obviously their path here. Interesting, the topic being microbeads makes me think of the word microscopic which I would use to describe the Conservative environmental policies in times past, definitely microscopic.

On the topic of microbeads, though, this is something that is very much so at the front of our

agenda. As a matter of fact, the Canadian council of environment ministers will be meeting here in Manitoba next week. As a matter of fact, starting Monday—and I as the new Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship, am actually the president of that entity. So I will have the opportunity even more so to drive this particular agenda at the national level when it comes up because we do need national leadership on this. Microbeads are a 'scrouge' globally, actually. The—our oceans are full of them, and if national governments don't take the lead then we will get nowhere so, hence, the endeavours by the NDP environment critic, Megan Leslie, to move this motion in the House.

And so we'll do our part in regard as we have as a government over the many years that we've been in office here. You know, if I could just speak to my own record in the last month or so, just a few short days ago declared five more endangered species. As a matter of fact, a high focus on the little brown bat which is something that's very important globally. But we took it a step further, in that we are now declaring ecospheres, ecosystems themselves as endangered and designating them as threatened or endangered depending on the state of affairs there. This is something new. It's the first jurisdiction in the country, it's first jurisdiction in North America, as a matter of fact, to actually take such action. There's only a couple other jurisdictions in the world, in fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, two, in fact, New Zealand and Australia have gone down this path, so we're proud to follow in their footsteps.

If the member opposite wasn't paying attention, those ecospheres here in Manitoba are the tall grass prairie and the alvar, which is a very unique ecosphere, coincidentally present in my constituency around the Marble Ridge area, the Broad Valley management area, I believe, might have some alvar as well. So, you know, we're doing what we can.

The aquatic invasive species something that they were critical of last week, and yet our progress is good on that front. The endeavours we took to control it last year and the endeavours under way now to mitigate something that we're doing good work on I think.

Members opposite talking about protection of water, it's just staggering, a staggering example of the double standard that we see from members opposite and opposition. If they're so concerned about water why would they have opposed our endeavours to upgrade our sewage treatment plants

here in the city of Winnipeg? Like something as basic as that, you know. Rural people, we do our best to control our manure emissions in the rural landscape, and the city of Winnipeg has to do its effort as well and we're committed to cost sharing in that regard. Members opposite don't think it's necessary, in fact they described the investment in the North End, I believe, waste water treatment plant as a waste of money. So for them to be going on today about how proud they are of their environmental record is just staggering in, I don't know if I could use the word hypocrisy in general terms, but certainly comes to mind. I'll refer to it as the double standard.

Let's talk about our forests. Okay, well, here we are trying to preserve the largest remaining intact boreal forest on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, that's something that they're opposed to as well. Right? They're all for industrial development in the area and, in fact, they put it on the table as the number one election issue in the last election. So their respect for forests, you know, well, how about the ban on logging in provincial parks that this government put in place? Something, again, that they opposed. So, you know, talk is cheap, I guess I would sum it up, and that's certainly typifies the approach of members opposite when it comes to talking about the environment.

You know, their leader, when he was a Member of Parliament, stood in the House of Commons alone to vote against banning a major cancer-causing chemical in household products, so we know how they feel about that. And, you know, just recently we went down the path of banning the cosmetic use of pesticides on lawns, something that's very, very important to the mothers of our children out there. I'm sure you, Madam Deputy Speaker, feel likewise in regard to that. But the Leader of the Opposition, I guess, dandelions, killing dandelions are more important to him than preserving the life of our children. So something as simple as that, even on something that all mothers and people who own pets just take for granted; members opposite can't even get their act together on a simple little environmental issue such as that.

* (11:20)

So, you know, if they can't focus on something as basic as banning the spread of cancerous chemicals on our front lawn, how can we seriously expect them to—*[interjection]*—well, the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) is starting to mumble a little

bit. Maybe he'll get up and continue babbling about the double standard that typifies their approach to the environment. I await with interest to see if other speakers on that side of the House will get up and respond to this.

But, you know, in conclusion, Madam Deputy Speaker, as much as I'm impressed by, as I said earlier, their conversion on the road to Damascus in regard to environmental issues, you know, and I would sincerely like to encourage that modernization in their thinking, but I know it for what it is. It's the classic double standard: Do as I say, not as I do. Because when they had the opportunity when they were in government, their record paled in comparison to our accomplishments over the years, so this resolution is facetious in that sense and I, for one, will not support it.

So thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity this morning to address this resolution.

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, it's truly an embarrassment for the NDP government when their Conservation Minister stands up and puts those kind of comments on the record and concludes by saying that he will not be supporting our call and the call of their federal cousins, as he so sanctimoniously put on the record, that we need to protect our lakes and rivers from microbeads, which is absolutely an issue that is facing a lot of communities, a lot of jurisdictions here in Canada and North America and around the world, and when we have an opportunity to stand as a Legislature and stand as—and put aside our partisan differences and say, you know, this is a real situation that is facing us, and it's a situation that we can address as a Legislature by calling on the authority in that the federal government to ban microbeads and to have that standardization against—across all of Canada.

And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the member opposite and the minister who says, you know, he needs to be judged on his own vast record of the last four weeks or whatever it's been, and I guess the result of the upheaval within the NDP that resulted in the 16 years of backbench wilderness being catapulted to the front bench, but, you know, we need to look at ensuring, and take a look at the previous record of his predecessors.

And so what we're asking for, Mr. Speaker, is we're not even asking for this government to ban microbeads; we're asking for this government to join

us in calling and lobbying on the federal government and, again, and joining with their federal cousins, the federal NDP, to say that we need to ban these small plastic beads because these plastic beads can't be removed by the current waste water treatment system and not surprising they're ending up in our lakes and rivers. And so there's obviously the concern about a surge in algae blooms with the volume of these microbeads that are going through, and, obviously, once they get present in the system, into our waterways, not only are they being consumed by fish that see them as a potential food source but it can actually get into the human food chain. But, of course, the minister and the NDP don't seem to care about the fish nor do they care about the children who consume the fish. They're more concerned about their partisan politics and their shots. So it's always interesting that the minister stands up and says, it's at the front of our agenda but just not important enough for us to stand and join you with this call.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the minister goes on and he wandered all over the place in a meandering ramble of defence of the NDP's failed environmental policy; he talked about the boreal forest, but, of course, what he didn't mention is the several hundred kilometres of boreal forest that they have cut down as they put in their east-side road and, of course, not just the east-side road, but what's beside the east-side road—oh, it's a hydro line. There is a hydro line in conjunction with that east-side road.

Now, you don't hear the minister get up and defend a single tree or the cutting down of a single tree during the course of that line and you didn't hear the minister talk about obviously the cutting down of boreal forest on the other side where their political interference in Manitoba Hydro has resulted in, again, several hundred kilometres of bush and vegetation and trees literally being slashed and burned, and I remember driving through that and seeing those piles, this huge swath of land that the NDP have cut through, and saying, you know, why aren't these, you know, these trees, these felled trees, being recycled or utilized in some manner? And they said, no, no, it's just easier to simply just burn them, burn them on the—cut them down and just burn them on the spot and just drag them into piles.

Mr. Speaker, the minister goes on and talks about the government's banning their cosmetic pesticides. Always quite interesting to see or hear the minister talk about that, because, you know, he talks about, again, I'm not—I don't have a Ph.D. in chemistry, but I do—so therefore I think I have to rely

on the authorities, in this case the federal authority that covers and regulates these products, and they are suggesting that these products when used appropriately can be safe.

But—so the minister is on the public record and he specifically refers to these pesticides, Mr. Speaker, and I quote, as cancerous chemicals, and those were his words, cancerous chemicals killing children. These pesticides are killing children and yet his own government did not ban these very cancerous chemicals—his words—that are, quote, killing children; again, his words. They did not ban those from agricultural usage. They didn't ban them from golf courses. They didn't even ban them from gardens. So they're saying that you can—you can't use these killing, cancerous chemicals that the minister says, you can't use them on your lawn but feel free to spray them on your tomatoes and feed them to your children.

So I find the minister's comments to be duplicitous at best, Mr. Speaker, but not surprising at all. And the minister as well didn't note that his own legislation and the failures of his legislation has resulted in amendments being required to allow municipalities to actually use these, again, his words, cancerous chemicals that are killing children, to actually allow them to use those on sidewalks.

Now, I'm pretty sure that there are children here in the province of Manitoba that might use those sidewalks and suddenly now they're going to be exposed to these, you know, cancerous killing chemicals that the minister wants to protect us from. So, again, the minister likes to talk about double standards, Mr. Speaker, and I know he speaks well of them because his government is one giant double standard.

But, Mr. Speaker, we need to take a look and focus on the reality that the microbeads that are within these products are presenting themselves in a serious manner to our environment, that they have a serious detriment to our environment, that there is this opportunity where we as a Legislature could say to the federal government, we need you to act on this file. We need to engage with the Canadian cosmetic and the toiletry and fragrance association and the federal government to phase out these products.

And there are those companies, Mr. Speaker, those private companies, and I know members opposite hate all things private sector, but there are those private sector companies that are listening to Canadians and the voice of Canadians that say that

this is a problem that there—it is not necessary to have these small, millimetre-sized plastic beads in these products, that there are natural alternatives that can be used, and the consequences for having these microbeads in our products are going to be long term.

* (11:30)

And so even if we are successful in achieving this ban, there is no denying that these products will continue to cycle through the retail system. There's no denying that these products that have already ended up in our waterways will be there for years to come.

But, again, the government has no problem allowing that flow of plastic into our streams and rivers and waterways and turn a blind eye to it as they stick their head in the proverbial sand, Mr. Speaker, and ignore what is a, again, a reasonable motion. And the government often talks about their financial situation that they find themselves in, that they're flat broke. And as my colleague, the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer), pointed out, this wouldn't cost this—the successful passage of this resolution wouldn't cost more than a solitary phone call or email on behalf of the minister.

So with those comments, Mr. Speaker, I would urge all members to take a good look at this resolution, to join us and join their federal cousins in Ottawa, and let's take action to address Canada's microbead issue.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert): As always, it's really nice to stand up after the member of the opposition puts falsities on the record and clear the record on this, Mr. Speaker.

The last speaker talked about meandering. Well, let's talk about meandering in their party. You know, where the Financial Post reports that Canada's poor environmental record could hit energy exports, warns the watchdog. How about The Huffington Post that says, Canada's environmental assessment 2012 abolished most of the federal environment assessment, gutting the Navigable Waters Protection Act; 2.5 million rivers and lakes were protected, and underneath their federal counterparts, only 159 are now protected.

So they want to talk about a record on environment, Madam Speaker. I mean, let's go down

that road. The double standard coming from the members opposite is absolutely astounding when they want to talk about protecting waterways and 99 per cent of the waterways were unprotected underneath their federal counterpart. So if they have an issue with microbeads, which our minister is actually taking up and is saying, you know, that we don't want to have microbeads, it is a federal issue because I guess the members opposite would want to have us have inspectors at the border at Ontario and Saskatchewan opening up people's shampoo bottles and perspiration—and products and all of their laundry products and checking for microbeads. We have to make this a national ban, and the federal NDP has already called for that. The—their party has failed to act on it. Their party is the one who's cut 99 per cent of the protected waterways.

CBC also reports that 2,000 scientists were fired in the past five years and that the scale of assault on knowledge is unprecedented in this country. So when the member opposite wants to talk about lawn products being banned, absolutely, Madam Speaker. We looked at it; we took advice from the doctors and from the people who know, scientists, which I know that they don't believe in because they cut them on their side of the House; that's what they do. And we took advice from them, and they said, you know what? On your lawn, where your child is likely to be crawling and playing and your pets are likely to be, you know, they eat the grass sometimes. You know, we all know dogs do that when they have an upset stomach; they eat the grass on your lawn. They said, you know what? You should ban those products because they're cancer-causing products. So we banned them.

Now, the member opposite fails to have any understanding when he says, oh, well, we're going to use them in cracks in sidewalks. Well, it's not as likely that a child is going to be crawling on a crack on a sidewalk as it is that they're going to be playing in the grass at a field at a school or on their front lawn. That's why we banned those products. But underneath them, they would just allow those products to exist, and they wouldn't care about the fact that the scientists say that it's cancer causing.

And, you know, they want to talk about the federal government hasn't banned those products federally. Well, the federal government's also the same one that gutted the navigable waters act and unprotected 99 per cent of our waterways. So we'll take no advice from their side of the House nor their federal counterparts on what is and what isn't good

for the environment, because we've seen how they treat the environment. It's a sewage for them. That's what their record is on the environment. You look at what they've done; they've gutted The Environment Act to allow things like the Alberta tar sands to pump untreated water into our waterways. They've done nothing to protect the waterways, Madam Speaker.

You know—and every time, every single time that we put money in place to do things in this province, they vote against it. They vote against the conservation officers that go out and check for zebra mussels. Would they vote for more conservation officers to check for microbeads at the Saskatchewan and Ontario border if we decided to take a province-wide ban? Would they be okay with funding that? No, Madam Speaker, because every single time that we put something in place, they vote against it. They voted against the water treatment plant at the north end which is going to take out thousands of tons of phosphorus from our water supply. They voted against that. They said that they wouldn't do it. They ran in the election saying that they would cancel that project. So they want to talk about environment. The double standard that comes from that side of the House is astounding.

And for the member opposite to say that this is a reasonable motion, if you read over the last three bullets in the motion, it's absolutely not reasonable, Madam Speaker. If they wanted this, if they were serious about putting forward a motion that we could support, they might want to talk about all the good environmental things that we've done instead of trying to say that we haven't done any good environmental things when we're clearly supporting the treatment plant at the south end; we're funding that one. We're funding the treatment plant at the north end. We've done—we've protected entire biospheres. We protected more animals and species. We stopped the shipment of oil to going up into Churchill, protecting that very fragile ecosystem. And all along, they voted against every single one of those measures. So if they want to talk about supporting the environment, I mean, it's absolutely unbelievable.

And, you know, the matter—the member opposite talked about, you know, oh, yes, we want to claim that we're broke. I just want, you know, maybe point to the front page of the Winnipeg Sun that says the City of Winnipeg is getting record funding from the Province. So not—we're not broke, Madam Speaker. We're investing. We're investing in things like the

city of Winnipeg. Maybe they want to go to mayor of the city of Winnipeg and tell him that we're going to cancel our investments in north end treatment plant and the south end treatment plant, that we're not going to fund that. That's what the members opposite would do because they've put it on record that they would quit that funding.

It's absolutely unbelievable that the members opposite could even table something like this when all they'd have to do is, is the Leader of the Opposition, who is clearly proud of the Harper government's record on the environment, could pick up the phone and call Mr. Harper and say, you know what, why don't we ban microbeads. Because they do have the hotline between, you know, the Leader of the Opposition's house and the Harper house. You know, they could call each other and they could bring this as a national ban.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

You know, it's unbelievable that they would table this motion and expect that it would go through when they talk about how all of the great things that we've done for the environment, but all they want to do is bash it. Well, we've seen their record on the environment, Mr. Speaker. They've done nothing good for the environment. Their party is all about cuts. That's all they would do. They would slash and burn all of the natural resource department and we would see nothing more than polluting and problems in this province. They wouldn't protect Lake Winnipeg.

You know, we want to talk about microbeads. Okay, well, microbeads were actually found through research, I know, which they don't like, and scientists, which they don't like, at the ELA program in Ontario, which they also don't like because their federal government counterparts cut the ELA program which was years of research on waterways that they cut. But you know what? We didn't let that happen. We had an agreement with Ontario. We stepped in; we provided \$900,000 worth of funding because we believe in scientists and we believe in listening to the data. On that side of the House, they just cut it, because if the data doesn't exist, well, then it's not a problem, right? I mean, that's exactly how they go about governing. If you don't know about it, it can't be a problem.

Well, we believe in the scientists and the data, and that's why we funded the ELA program for \$900,000, and, you know, we're working with that program to continue to protect our waterways. And

all of the research that has come out there has saved millions and millions of litres of water from pollution because they have discovered all of these different things to do in that program. But their party would gladly cut that because you wouldn't want to know about any of these things that go into our water supply because then they just don't exist.

That's that double-standard approach on the other side of the House. They call for one thing but completely do the opposite because they could completely phone their federal counterparts and demand that they ban microbeads.

Why don't they do that, Mr. Speaker? I'm asking them right now. The next speaker can put on the record that he's going to phone the federal Environment Minister and he's going to say, I want you to ban microbeads. I'd like to hear them say that because the federal NDP has already called for it; we're behind them. We've said, yes, that's exactly where we believe it should go and—because it is a federal issue because you're not going to have inspection stations at all of the borders across the province to inspect for microbeads coming in and out.

* (11:40)

You know, we put—they want to talk about putting their money where their mouth is—\$20 million into the new waste water treatment plants to protect Lake Winnipeg. We have funded the ELA arrangement with Manitoba and Ontario. We've bought decontamination units, stepped up the enforcement, done a Don't Move a Mussel campaign thanks to the former Conservation minister's vision to try to stop the movement of these zebra mussels, and the new Conservation Minister is following in on those footsteps and he's making sure that that program gets initiated. They've also brought in a dog that sniffs for the zebra mussels. And, once again, every single time we've done things to try to help the environment, they vote against it.

We've—we're looking—we have a ban on peat moss mining in our provincial parks and, you know what, Mr. Speaker, when—if that was—if they were to come into the government, we know where they would go with it; they would just allow the companies and corporations to run roughshod over top of all of the environment and allow them to pump into our waterways and then they would blame the federal government for only having 1 per cent of the waterways protected, even though it's their federal counterparts that did it. When the Leader of

the Opposition was in power, he voted against greenhouse measures—greenhouse gas measures.

So this is another example of that double standard. They call for one thing and they do a completely other when they have the chance, Mr. Speaker. They are the absolute party of double standards. I have never seen anything like this and I can't believe that they would even bother to table something—

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

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the member from St. Norbert needs to have a look not at what his government is not doing and can't do, but rather at what can be done and what should be done.

You know, there has been now very considerable scientific evidence that there are major problems with microbeads, that these microbeads contaminate the environment, cause problems for wildlife and for people, and, as a result of this, there are efforts now which are occurring in different places around the world to end the use of these microbeads and to end their use, as an example, in personal-care products.

The Netherlands has announced its intent to be virtually free of microbeads in cosmetics by the end of 2016. In the United States, Illinois has a two-part ban which goes into effect in 2018 and 2019, and in October 2014 the New Jersey Senate passed a similar ban and the government of New Jersey signed that in 2015 in March. The New York State Assembly voted in May 2014 to ban microbeads, and legislation is under consideration in Ohio.

So the states in the United States and Netherlands are acting on this important issue but this government clearly has not been doing enough, and the government and members, including the MLA for St. Norbert, should be supporting this resolution.

It is one step, it is an important step, but at the same time the province should be looking at what it can do even without legislation. The province could enable a greater awareness of these issues and consumers can then make choices about products which are used based on that greater awareness, and we could have a change occurring here in Manitoba if the government made an effort even without having provincial or federal legislation because of a greater awareness of this issue.

It's about leadership, Mr. Speaker, and the government could be doing much better than it is doing. Certainly, there needs to be a greater awareness and understanding of the problem, but there also needs to be greater awareness that as individuals you can look at the products that you have and know whether those products have microbeads, and stores and businesses in Manitoba are likely going to be further ahead if they have products which don't have microbeads, and so there's an opportunity to work with businesses in Manitoba to be ahead of this trend instead of behind this situation. Companies which are ahead will get ahead, and they will be ahead when these bans come in, because they've reached out, they've shown that they are environmentally conscious. Let's be thinking about what can be done, not trying to, you know, tear down efforts which are being made to advance the reduction and the banning in the use of microbeads. And the reduction in the use of microbeads could be happening much more, right now, than it is if this government has actually started to make a little bit of an effort to build that consensus and to show some leadership.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I will leave it to others to comment further and to advance this debate. Thank you.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I'm very pleased to speak to the motion today. And the previous speaker spoke about how there is activity in two or three American states on this issue of microbeads, and how, I believe, in the Netherlands, there is action there. And they—the member is, you know, highly motivated here as a member of the provincial Legislature to speak on issues like this when, in fact, he well knows that it's a federal issue and the—matter of fact, we have—I note that my former colleague here, the NDP federal environment critic Megan Leslie, moved a motion calling for the listing of microbeads as a toxic substance under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. This motion was approved unanimously. Now, this was earlier this year.

The member—I didn't hear him say anything about his federal party, how—what Justin—where Justin is on this issue or any of the Liberal members in the federal House. And, you know, in 1993, this member was a member of the federal Cabinet, and I recall the days—those great days of the red book. You know, he was part of the sign—original members, you know, signing in on the red book, promising—now let me try to remember what the red book suggested,

we—that they were going to do with it if they become the government. I believe they were going to eliminate the GST. Well, last time I looked, the GST was still with us. They were going to bring in, what, a national daycare program or a national pharmacare program. You know, this was—this member was promising all this in 1993. So before he starts pontificating in this House about what this government should be doing when it's not even our legislative authority to do, he should reflect a bit on, you know, his former role when he was in—federal Cabinet minister—sat through the Paul Martin years when they had balanced the budget basically by cutting transfer payments on health and education to all these provinces. And yet you would never guess that was the case when you find this new and improved member, you know, representing the Liberal Party here in Manitoba. So, you know, let's put things into perspective before we start charging off in different directions here.

And I want to deal with the Conservatives because that's where this motion is coming from right now. And, you know, I'm happy to see that they're coming around, that we finally see, after all these years, a environmental resolution that actually, you know, makes some sense, banning microbeads. But, you know, I wonder if the member in his drafting efforts on this resolution actually checked with his leader, because his leader's record on issues like this is not exactly stellar, and, a matter of fact, the leader keeps talking about these 3,000 pages of red tape that he eliminated when he was a minister way back when in 1995 for a couple of years. You know, we looked, Mr. Speaker. We couldn't find a single page, let alone 3,000 pages. But, you know, the type of red tape, what their—his definition of red tape would be, would be exactly stuff like this. In other words, they define—his leader, you know, defines red tape in many respects as what we call environmental regulations, labour regulations, health and safety regulations.

* (11:50)

So, you know, I think he should pass this one past his leader and ask him, you know, where does it fit into the spectrum here? Is it, you know, would it—could it be considered red tape? We'd hate to, you know, pass this resolution, get results with the federal government on this resolution, have the leader in a future Conservative government designate his resolution as red tape, so, you know, he should check his resolutions with the leader before he goes forward on this.

So, you know, this is a caucus who are at, obviously, at odds with one another on resolutions like this, you know, so this one—now, we have the minister—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Maloway: Well, Mr. Speaker, it would be nice to be heard. I'll just let the members calm down for a moment here. They shouldn't get too excited.

But the fact of the matter is that this government is on top of the environment issue and has done things on the environmental file that the members opposite can only dream of, that a Conservative government—and we've had fortunately not many of them over the last number of years—but they have, in government, have a record of ignoring the environment at the expense of development. I mean, if there is a development project, doesn't matter what it is, this group opposite are always prepared to defer for development.

And so we've indicated, the minister spoke earlier, that Manitoba supports the effort of the national NDP MP, the NDP caucus nationally, who introduced the motion in the federal House of Commons on microbeads. We—he's indicated that we support the federal initiative here for the NDP, that Manitoba has identified microbeads as a threat to water quality and to aquatic species. It's declaring them a toxic substance. It's likely the best mechanism to move them from the Canadian environment. He has indicated to the members that there will be a federal conference in Winnipeg next week. He's indicated to them that he's the chair of the council and that they will be dealing with this issue.

So, you know, let's not let the member think that somehow they developed, like, new policy here. And you know, they make—they're making fun and they're suggesting, well, you know, the members opposite don't know about microbeads. Well, I would submit to you that it's unlikely that any of them ever heard of a microbead either.

And a matter of fact, I can tell you that the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) is deeply concerned about microbeads and was looking forward to his speech.

An Honourable Member: Where is he?

Mr. Maloway: And, well, the member was chairing. The member for Wolseley was chairing this House, if the members would pay attention; the member was in the Chair. The member was in the Chair just, you

know, 20 minutes or so ago, and was—is deeply concerned about this issue and would like to inform the members opposite, the Conservative members in the Legislature here, and give them a bit more of a history on this microbead issue.

So you know, Mr. Speaker, the minister, when he spoke on this issue, he announced new steps that our government has taken to protect five animal and plant species and two ecosystems in the province by designating them as threatened or endangered. Well, they—you know, the fact of the matter is that the minister has tried to explain to the members opposite, the Conservative members, because they obviously don't remember, that the government has a extremely good record on the environment. And it is a—it is more than mildly surprising, I think, to the members of the government side to even see, to even witness this spectacle of a Conservative opposition member bringing forward this motion on microbeads. I mean, it's just not something that we have seen coming from the members of the opposition.

So, you know, I'm not surprised that the government is surprised about that. It's a surprise that the Conservatives would be all of a sudden concerned about microbeads when, in fact, they've been totally silent on environmental issues consistently over many, many years. And that's my observation here. So the government has this—will take this issue and will present to the federal government. It's been outlined by the minister, and so I think we should trust in the minister to take this issue forward and take it to the federal government but recognizing that it's a federal issue fundamentally.

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

Mr. Peter Bjornson (Gimli): I'm pleased to rise in the Chamber to put a few words on the record with respect to this particular resolution, and if you look at the text of the resolution, whereas Manitoba's ecological beauty and natural resources are important economic drivers for such industries as tourism, recreation, and fisheries, I couldn't agree more. That is, indeed, the case. However, as you go through the rest of the resolution, as my colleagues have pointed out, this is something that clearly falls under federal jurisdiction, and we're very proud to support the efforts made by our federal NDP environment critic Megan Leslie with respect to the motion that she has brought to the floor in the federal Chamber.

Now, what this resolution does do, though, is give us an opportunity to talk about the things that we have done for the environment, and, of course, I'm sitting here listening intently not only to my colleagues speak but to the members opposite as they heckle my colleagues who are speaking, and one of them piped up and said, name one thing that you've done for the environment.

Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly, 10 minutes is not enough time to talk about all the things that we've done for the environment, and while we're talking about lakes and, of course, representing the constituency of Gimli and growing up on Lake Winnipeg as I have and spent my entire life in the community, I certainly have a lot of concerns about the health of our lake as do many of my—citizens in my constituency. And what we have done, I do recall, in the—my tenure as a councillor, the first time I had met representatives from the provincial NDP government when I was a councillor in Gimli when they came to talk to us about a partnership to fund the Namao and the Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium. And that was a proud day as a councillor for the town of Gimli where we were able to do so and partner with the provincial government because we know that science is important for making decisions around what we do to protect our ecological assets such as Lake Winnipeg.

And I had a very good working relationship with Dr. Allan Kristofferson, who championed the research on Namao. It's the first longitudinal study of the lake with many points—GPS-designated points throughout the lake where they do three-hour tours or they do spend a couple of days—they spend a couple of days in the north basin checking sites

through GPS to test for certain anomalies that might occur. And I remember Dr. Allan Kristofferson coming into my constituency office one day extremely distraught and very concerned about some of the findings on one of the tours that they had conducted with respect to the deoxygenation of the lake. Now, fortunately, because they had gone repeatedly out to those sites and tested again and again, they discovered that it was an anomaly, but it certainly raised concern because the data that they were recovering was an important part of the analysis that needs to be done to understand the impact of algal blooms in Lake Winnipeg.

Now, that's one thing that we've done. Of course, working with the Lake Winnipeg water stewardship board, they came up with a number of different recommendations on what we could do to protect Lake Winnipeg and bring it back to its natural state pre-1970s when I remember the lake being shut down to the fisheries for fears of mercury poisoning, Mr. Speaker, all the issues of the runoff from the floods and the chemicals that are being brought into the lake unnaturally through the floods. So I know that a long-term study is important, and I'm also very disappointed that the members opposite would not stand up against their cousins in Ottawa when it came to their cutting the ELA, Experimental Lakes, for the research and—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Bjornson) will have six 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

Thursday, June 18, 2015

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