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PROCEEDINGS
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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CHIEF, Kevin	Point Douglas	NDP
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 14, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m.

Madam 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.

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Madam Speaker: Is it the intention to call Bill 204 for second reading?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 204—The Post-Secondary Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policies Act (Various Acts Amended)

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): I move, seconded by the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin), that Bill 204, The Post-Secondary Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policies Act (Various Acts Amended), Loi sur les politiques visant à contrer la violence à caractère sexuel et le harcèlement sexuel dans les établissements postsecondaires (modification de diverses dispositions législatives), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kinew: I wish to thank you for the opportunity to speak to this private member's bill here today.

I want to begin my comments by acknowledging the advocacy work of many post-secondary students here in Manitoba who are one of the prime reasons that, you know, we're bringing this bill forward here today. Again, I think that probably everybody—every member in this Chamber agrees that every student in Manitoba deserves to be able to pursue their education free from the threat of sexual violence or sexual harassment, and indeed it is the

intention of this bill to make sure that we take a step closer to that reality.

Specifically, I want to acknowledge the Canadian Federation of Students whose advocacy work brought this to my attention a number of years ago when I was then employed as an executive for the University of Winnipeg, and it helped to raise my own awareness on this—the important topic of sexual violence on campus and a need to build a culture of consent at colleges and universities in our province. And, of course, the Canadian Federation of Students as well as the University of Winnipeg Students' Association and the Aboriginal Students' Council at the U of W all helped in our consultations towards developing a policy there. And that work has informed my thoughts on the matter currently before the House today.

So, again, the reason why I begin with students is because though I acknowledge the importance of consulting all stakeholder groups, and I know that the government acknowledges also the importance of consulting stakeholders, and that there are many stakeholders at colleges and universities—faculty, staff, teachers, admin, executives—we can never forget that students are the primary stakeholder. Without students pursuing their educations, all of those other pieces would not be in place.

And so what I have heard from many of these students is that it is necessary to build a culture of consent on campuses.

And what a culture of consent, Madam Speaker, means, is that there is an increased awareness that we must educate students in the best practices around cultivating healthy relationships, around preventing violence against women, around having respectful on-campus events.

However, it's also incumbent on the educators in post-secondary universities to make sure that everyone who comes to campuses feels safe, be they staff, be they community members attending events on campus, be they merely people passing through on their way to some other destination in the city. And so these rules and procedures would serve to advance that end.

Specifically in the bill now before the House, Bill 204 would require that universities and colleges

(1) have policies on sexual harassment and sexual violence; that they design these policies in consultation with students, so, again, that the student perspective is taken into account, very important; that these policies help to build awareness around the resources to help victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment; that these policies also serve to provide resources towards the prevention of sexual violence and sexual harassment; and, finally, that colleges and universities report on incidents that happen with respect to sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Of course, we would want that reporting to happen in a way that is respectful of victims, that respects their privacy, that respects PHIA and FIPPA, but also that encourages and ensures that there be a safe space so that people who are victimized by either harassment or violence of a sexual nature do feel comfortable in coming forward, seeking the supports that they are entitled to, and also the, you know, due process under the law that they should be afforded.

Now, just to provide greater insight into what is meant by a culture of consent, again, you know, when I was going to university myself, we often heard the phrase no means no, which is the starting point for the on-campus initiatives to end rape and sexual violence and other forms of sexual harassment.

However, in the years since, which, you know, I must admit is probably about 13, 14 years now, that standard has evolved to now mean yes means yes, meaning it is not enough to assume that a partner gives consent, that you must actively seek the explicit verbal consent of a partner before any sort of sexual activity is undertaken.

And, again, this is reflective of our greater societal understanding of the importance of securing the rights of all people to feel free and safe and secure. And so that's what's meant by a culture of consent. And, again, awareness is a huge part of that.

Now I'll speak briefly on my personal experience with the matter. I was an executive at the University of Winnipeg some two years ago when we brought into place a sexual misconduct policy which would be in keeping with the standards proposed by this bill here.

*(10:10)

First, I would say that the process of developing this policy for the University of Winnipeg was not onerous. It was undertaken by some staff members

who worked in the Student Life department. They, over the course of a few months, consulted with students on campus, had some campus community consultations as well, and brought back to the executive team—of which I was, then, a part—this policy. We debated that, with some fine tuning approved it, sent it to the board for formal approval. And this entire period took about a year, including the consultation with stakeholder groups.

Once the policy was approved, then the onus turned towards developing the awareness component. And, so, we began, you know, public awareness campaigns, which included advertising, which included social media, which also included events during what's called roll call. You know, previous generations of students such as myself would probably know this as orientation week or O-week. But there were events at the roll call, as well, around building awareness of the standards of consent that are required to be obtained in order to be in keeping with this new sexual misconduct policy.

And my observation was that all of this proceeded in a very positive manner, that it was received well by the students, that it actually served to foster a greater understanding of some of these issues here. And, so, I thought that that was very good and, on a practical level, I observed that a post-secondary institution could move towards developing these policies in a way that was not onerous and could be accomplished with existing staff and with existing resources, which I think is an important, you know, point to consider.

However, ironically, it was not two students who served to underline the importance of this bill to me. Rather, it was two non-students who passed through the University of Winnipeg campus that really underlined the importance of a bill like this. And their names are important—are known to everybody in this House. The first is Tina Fontaine; the second is Rinelle Harper.

It is not widely known but one of the last places that Tina Fontaine was seen alive was on the University of Winnipeg campus, and she had an interaction with campus security. Following this, we know that many systems failed her, which is, you know, for another day to debate. However, after the tragic murder of Tina Fontaine and, after hearing that she had interaction with on-campus security, I was forced to ask myself: Might her fate have been different had our campus security been afforded some sexual misconduct awareness materials, as

would be prescribed under this policy? Maybe. And through that small sliver of opportunity to have a different fate for that young woman by making a small intervention—to me, that is the rationale for this bill.

Similarly, Rinelle Harper. The alleged attacker of Rinelle Harper was a regular visitor to an on-campus facility, a community program. And I was forced to ask myself: Might he have chosen a different course for his life had he received the awareness training on the standard of yes means yes, end of consent culture? And I was forced to conclude: Yes, perhaps he would have behaved differently.

And so I'm here before the House today to ask for your votes, to ask that you support this bill, because I believe that, if we can prevent even one young person—one young woman—from being victimized on a campus, then this bill would have been worth it.

And so I submit it to you humbly, Madam Speaker, that this be a bill that we should all support, and that it will lead to a greater feeling of security and safety across all the campuses of Manitoba.

Miigwech.

Questions

Madam Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence:

First question to be asked by a member from another party. This is to be followed by a rotation between the parties. The independent member can ask a question, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James): My question, through you to the honourable member, is what consultations were done to ensure that Bill 204 can be implemented responsibly?

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): Personally, I have, you know, reached out to the—you know, the colleges and universities, and I've spoken to a number of the executives who would be in charge of implementing the policies on their campuses and also of ensuring the compliance with these laws. They all indicated to me that they believe that this, you know, law could be complied with in a relatively straightforward fashion. Most of the college and university executives that I spoke to are already in the process

of developing policies, and they believe that—based on the consultations that I had, that they'd be able to accomplish this in a relatively straightforward fashion.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I want to thank the member for bringing in a very important bill, and I note that the Conservatives are asking about his—people that he's consulted with, and I know that that is important and he has done that.

The question I have for him is why does he think that the Conservatives were so reluctant to support a similar bill brought in by the previous government just—introduced by the previous government just a few months ago?

Mr. Kinew: Well, I have a tremendous amount of respect for my esteemed, you know, colleague who brings a question here today. However, not having been a part of the last government in which this bill was debated, I'm not sure as to what occurred during that previous session. I would observe that because this is a piece of legislation that very closely resembles that legislation that was brought forward by a former government and that there were extensive consultations undertaken by the Ministry of Education at that time, that it actually serves to bolster the case that the universities and colleges affected by this bill have had quite a long time to consider this.

And, Madam Speaker, I would submit to you that they have actually chosen to govern—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mrs. Colleen Mayer (St. Vital): Many post-secondary institutions have already developed or are working to develop policy around reporting and prevention of sexual assault and harassment on campus. What reporting mechanisms are in place on our campuses currently?

Mr. Kinew: Well, the reason that there is a—well, first of all, I thank my colleague for the question.

The reason why this bill is necessary is to ensure that there is a common standard across the province. That way, we can be sure that the, you know, student from an urban centre who goes to study in the North, or the student from a rural centre who comes to the city, that both they and their families can be sure that there is a common standard that applies across all provinces. The answer to the question is that there is an uneven requirement to report, currently. And in some universities which—and colleges which are still

in the process of designing their policies, there is not a requirement to report at all. So this would bring everyone into line with one common standard across the province.

Madam Speaker: In terms of the order, the next question would be asked by a member of the official opposition, followed by the question from the independent member, and then it would be back to a government member. So according to the way it is set out and approved, the next question would have to come from an official opposition member.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): I just wanted to congratulate my colleague on this very important private members' resolution.

I just wanted to know if he can speak to the services and counselling services that will be provided to students who are—who do—who are victims of sexual assault on campuses, if he can lay that out for us to ensure that our students—that we do have a full plan in place for our victims of sexual assault.

Thank you.

Mr. Kinew: I thank the member from The Pas for the question.

Just to answer, I guess, the procedural side of that question. What this bill does is it sets out the legal space so that the Minister of Education can establish a regulation that would govern such things as the type of reporting that is required, that would define what is meant by sexual violence and sexual harassment, and that would cover, I think, the substance of the member from The Pas's question.

* (10:20)

Being that this bill is not currently law, I can only speak to what exists at the university that I previously worked at, which is the University of Winnipeg. There a partnership was struck with Klinik to provide the counselling and the additional support services, and they actually set up a triage centre on campus—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): This is a good bill, and it's about time. But, if indigenous women, even indigenous people, can't even go to the authorities, like police or RCMP, how can we ensure that people who do report are fully supported after they report?

Mr. Kinew: I would thank the member from Kewatinook for this question because this actually gets to the heart of the rationale for the bill, which is that in the absence of a law that would help to advance the creation of a culture of consent and safe spaces on colleges and universities, there are too many victims who feel uncomfortable reporting the incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment that they have experienced.

And I would submit to you, Madam Speaker, that since we know that indigenous women are disproportionately more likely to experience sexualized violence in their lifetimes, that those non-reporting incidences would disproportionately target indigenous women as well.

So I feel that this is a standard which can serve all students in Manitoba, but its impact may be particularly acute on advancing—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mrs. Mayer: Can the member opposite provide me with specifically which campuses have policies in place or are currently working on those policies, and on the flip side, which ones do not have?

Mr. Kinew: I'm happy to answer the question, though, of course, the Minister of Education in the member's caucus would be able to perhaps even more quickly answer such a question.

I've spoken to the universities and colleges, they are all in the process of designing such a policy on their campuses, however, they are all at uneven stages. Therefore, I don't want to characterize a campus as not having a policy, which would—which potentially would cast them in a negative light if they are already in the process of designing a policy and are mere perhaps weeks or months away from submitting such a policy to their boards.

So universities and colleges that come to mind in such a category would include MITT, UCN, Brandon University—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I'd like to ask my colleague if he can share with the House some of the discussion/consultations in respect of Aboriginal students associations.

Mr. Kinew: I thank the member from St. Johns, and I would actually just pause for a second to remark on an important milestone that I think our society has achieved that I notice during these consultations,

which is that indigenous students are now in leadership positions of the overall mainstream student organizations in the province, and so they have played quite a robust role in the conversations that I've had to date.

Again, what I would say is that their concerns are very similar to those voiced by students from every walk of life, which is that they want a culture of consent on their campuses and they want campuses that are safe and free from sexual violence.

Madam Speaker: Are there any further questions?

Mr. Johnston: And I ask the honourable member what happens if the violence occurs between students off campus. Are victims still protected under Bill 204 and given the same rights and support under this bill?

Mr. Kinew: Again, this proposed bill would provide the regulatory space for the Minister of Education to act. It would be my preferred option that they have an inclusive approach, which would allow students off campus to take their concerns forward to campus authorities and have that dispute resolution open to them in addition to those offered by the criminal justice system.

Madam Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate

Madam Speaker: And debate is now open.

Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale): Good morning, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the member from Fort Rouge for bringing forward this important legislation, and I also want to thank him for attending the vigil last night, as all other members who did attend. It was quite a touching event last night here at the Legislature, everybody condemning those heinous attacks against a group of people just because they are LGBTTTQ.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to put forward a few words regarding Bill 204 this morning, The Post-Secondary Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policies Act. Believe that safety in our post-secondary institutions in Manitoba is of utmost importance to our government. Students must feel safe on and off campuses to ensure a prosperous learning environment.

Madam Speaker, while college and university campuses are places where students are heavily engaged with academic and social activities, there are also places where some students face sexual

violence. This is a major concern, and we cannot act as though these issues do not exist.

As a community, we need to allow for open conversations so students can feel safe and that their voices are being heard. This conversation needs to include everyone; women, men, young people, seniors, and those living with disabilities, newcomers, members of the culturally diverse communities, indigenous people, visible minorities, and the LGBTTTQ community. We must gauge our students, faculty administration as well as law enforcement to take part in this conversation, to encourage them to come forward and discuss these very sensitive issues. Collaboration and support will help our post-secondary institutions move forward in helping victims of sexual assault and harassment.

Students attending post-secondary institutions should feel safe on campus. A positive learning environment helps student to achieve their goals to the best of their ability. Sexual violence on campus is an issue that needs public awareness and discussion. As leaders in Manitoba, we have an obligation to ensure that our students feel safe while attending post-secondary institutions, and this government is very supportive of legislation that ensures our students in Manitoba can grow and learn in a positive, educational environment.

Our government is working with universities and colleges throughout Manitoba to ensure that safety is a top priority, to allow students throughout Manitoba success in their studies. We need to ensure that proper consultation with post-secondary institutions, campus organizations and students has occurred before passing important legislation on sexual harassment.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, the per capita rate of violence against Manitoba women is almost twice that of the national average. In the past few years, Manitoba has had one of the worst records when it comes to violent crimes against women, and it nearly doubled the national average. This is the worst rate of sexual assaults compared to other provinces.

Madam Speaker, according to the Winnipeg Police Service's annual statistical report there were over 680 sexual assaults committed in the city in 2014; there were 1,427 reports of sexual assaults in Manitoba in 2014 alone. Manitoba has the highest self-reported rates of violent crimes against women compared to all provinces at 161 rates–units, the national average is 112.

Madam Speaker, I know the member from Fort Rouge has talked about his consultation with the Canadian Federation of Students and other colleges and universities—he did not want to name them and I respect him for doing that because consultations should be about trust and I do appreciate his efforts on that front. It's important that post-secondary institutions work together with their students, the province, police services and the justice department in order to create awareness and supports for sexual assault victims. Now my question is, does this legislation provide for collaboration between all stakeholders?

Most post-secondary institutions have already developed, or are working to develop, policy around reporting of preventional and sexual assault harassments on campus. I know the member has already talked about the reporting mechanisms that are in place, I guess my question then—and I assume that there's—either it has been looked into or will be looked into, is what—how will that work within the framework or the existing framework that's already in place?

I assume that, as been mentioned earlier, some campuses have more stringent policies while others have less. Will this in any way impact some of the more stringent policies and perhaps the more effective policies that are already in place on campuses?

* (10:30)

So I'd hope that perhaps that would be a standard or a gold standard that we can all look to, and I would urge the member opposite to perhaps either speak to that or get back to us on that issue. I think that is important to remember.

Also, I believe that it was mentioned earlier that Bill 204 is—that violence that occurs between students off campus should be covered or at least insinuated that it should be covered by Bill 204, and I'm just curious how that would be enforced. Off campus might be a bit difficult, so maybe some more details as to what that actually means and how we'd actually enforce more stringent policies and legislation against sexual harassment of college students off campus because we know quite often campuses are just a temporary place where students hang out. There's a lot of other places—nightclubs and bars and other facilities—that students typically attend and that, of course, is not off limits to sexual assault. So, Madam Speaker, I do hope that this piece of

proposed legislation would cover that overarching issue.

I'm also curious in terms of consultations with—what consultations have members opposite done with post-secondary institutions? How much consultation has been done? We know there's been some reference to it, but I'm curious as to how much and in depth that was and how much—what kind of results we received from that type of consultation. We would like to, perhaps, see some more—find out exactly what transpired in those consultations and perhaps, then, members from all sides of the House could perhaps put their input into that and, you know, more people working on the issue, the better.

And I, again, commend the member from Fort Rouge for bringing forward this important measure and this important topic because, Madam Speaker, it's unfortunate that it took media reports over the last few years to bring this issue to our attention. And maybe sometimes that's the only way to get people's attention, but I would like to see more of our general public get behind these types of issues and take on protecting the rights of women, and some cases men and other groups that are often victims of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

So I, again, thank the member from Fort Rouge for taking the time to put this forward.

Thank you.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I would like to respond in respect of my colleague's bill, and I just want to congratulate my colleague in taking a leadership role in respect of this bill to this House.

I first and foremost want to acknowledge students, and I know that we do have students in the gallery. And I want to acknowledge the hard work and the courage and the determination of students in creating a space on colleges and universities that is safe for women and for all women. And so I do just want to take this moment to acknowledge everybody.

So the other thing that I would like to share with the House are a couple of things. And more importantly than the students themselves trying to bring attention and awareness and find resolution to this particular issue are actually the women and the young women who have been sexually assaulted, who have been raped, and have had the courage to actually come forward.

We know that in respect of the women that—and the young women that have come forward, there are

probably an additional eight that have not. It's not the easiest thing to do, to come forward and to share with your family, with your community, with your education institution or the police that you've been sexually assaulted.

And I'm sure that many people in the House understand, or I would hope that they would understand, the nature of sexual assault and what it does intrinsically to women. And one of the things that it almost immediately does to women is that it produces this self-blaming and self-hatred, that somehow I'm at fault for this sexual assault that took place. And so that prevents many women and young women from coming forward and reporting.

The other thing that happens is that, you know, we don't necessarily have—those individuals that we would need to report to don't necessarily have the training that they need. When you're dealing with a trauma, you know, I would argue that not a lot of people actually understand how to, first off, understand trauma, its manifestations, and then actually how to approach that individual. And so women intrinsically know that, and so, you know, I think one of the statistics is that only one in 10 women will report. That's a very, very sad commentary on our—on all of Canada, that women do not feel safe to report.

I want to share with the House that in the myriad of different things that I've done in my career, one of the things that I did was I was a sessional instructor during my master's, when I was doing my master's degree at the University of Manitoba. And during these periods as a sessional instructor, I actually had three students that were sexually assaulted. And I always remember one in particular, and I remember that I had an assignment due. The assignment was due on the Friday, and so I had students coming in and giving me their assignments. And I had this one student, and inevitably anybody that's been a sessional instructor or a professor or whatever knows that there's always one or two students that something's happened, you're not going to get your assignment on time.

And so one young woman asked if she could talk to me. I said yes. And she said, can we go somewhere private? I said, absolutely. And so this young woman proceeded to tell me that the night previous she was visited by somebody that she was starting to see or whatever, and he indicated to her that he had taped their last sexual encounter, he had it videotaped, and that if he didn't—if she didn't allow

him, essentially, to rape her, that he was going to release that video to CFS. And she was shaking and she was crying as she told me this, and she said, suffice it to say, you know, I had to give him what he wanted and I couldn't do your assignment. I said, don't worry about the assignment. She was crying because she was so terrified that he was going to release that tape and advise CFS. I, on the other hand, was enraged, absolutely enraged. I let her know, don't worry about the assignment. We'll work out a time, da da da da da.

It just so happened that she had also, in the course of this story, had told me who this individual was. And just—it just so happened that that day I happened to have a meeting where this individual worked. And because I knew she did not want to tell the authorities, because I knew there was no reporting mechanisms in place, I went and had a conversation with him. And I can tell you that by the time that I was finished talking with him, he was sweating, he was shaking, and within an hour she had that tape back.

Now, I'm sharing that because, unfortunately, that's the reality that many women go through every single day across this country. It just so happened that the stars aligned and I was able to do that. She did finish and graduate, but she—the bottom line is she shouldn't have had to have gone through that. I shouldn't have had to have—go have a conversation with somebody, and I'll spare the details of what was discussed in that conversation.

That's why this bill is so important, that women, that students, can pursue their academic career and better the lives for themselves and for their children free from sexual violence, and if, unfortunately and tragically, there are those incidents, that there are the reporting mechanisms.

The other thing that I want to talk about is in respect of—part of this is about educating men, and I'm really proud of the work that we did, our former government, in respect of deconstructing sexual violence for women for young men.

* (10:40)

As everyone knows here, I shared in my inaugural speech that I was sexually abused as a little girl, and one of the things that that does is it makes you hypervigilant about protecting your own children. And so from very early on, my two sons that I love and adore and worship have known very early on about sexual violence. They've known it in

respect of how I want them to be safe but, more importantly, I've raised my sons to understand their roles and responsibilities as respectful men and boys.

And so, you know, one of the things that we did previously, we looked at—we partnered with Blue Bombers' Don't Be a Bystander. We did, with status of Manitoba—or, Manitoba status women, we had an Aboriginal men's antiviolenace campaign which—in which Aboriginal men in the community, an elder, a father of two sons, a father of two daughters, a youth, Kevin Settee—who is just an extraordinary youth—all stood, and—there's posters all across Canada, and, in fact, that public awareness campaign went all across the world. As far as Papua New Guinea, we got emails back. And it's about indigenous men and, really, all men taking a stand and recognizing men's sacred role and their responsibilities in protecting women and standing up for women and ensuring that our basic human rights—to be able to walk down the street safely, to be able to go to university safely, to be able to go to college safely—are 'respectan' and inherited.

And so I just want to finally just say that, you know, it is my hope that this House can stand together on this bill. And I have faith that we can. I believe that everybody in this House understands that our sisters and our daughters and our mothers deserve to be protected.

So I say miigwech.

Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James): Madam Speaker, first my compliments to the honourable member from Fort Rouge for bringing this very important subject to the House.

I am pleased to speak on record regarding Bill 204, The Post-Secondary Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Polices Act. Sexual violence on campus is an issue that needs public awareness and have open discussion. Sexual violence is an—is unacceptable in any form.

Having been a school trustee for a number of years, one of my primary responsibilities was to develop, implement and improve meaningful policies for the schools in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division. Needless to say, this issue is of great significance to me. Every school in the district has policies to identify, react, educate and deter sexual assault. This is significant in high schools where a number of individuals are vulnerable to unfortunate situations.

In order to make the best available policies for schools, special consideration is required from a number of implementation strategies. Time is necessary to consult all 'stakeholders'—stakeholders and professionals to offer genuine value to process. We implemented policies over considerable discussion with sincere inclusion.

I have concerns regarding what consultations were done to ensure that Bill 204 can be implemented responsibly, Madam Speaker. While college and university campuses are in—are places where students are heavily engaged with academic and social activities, they are places where some students face sexual violence. This, unfortunately, is not a new theme, and universities have taken initiatives to promote safe, inclusive spaces for all students.

And it is not the role of government to ignore the efforts of these self-regulating institutions and dictate the handling of such a sensitive topic. We must work with higher learning institutions to incorporate comprehensive consultations and open dialogue.

I would like to reflect, highlight and acknowledge some of the work Manitoba's higher education learning institutions have self-implemented.

The University of Winnipeg has created the Sexual Misconduct Protocol, which my honourable friend had indicated, that offers guidance in providing assistance to support to those who are members of the campus community and have experienced sexual misconduct. The University of Winnipeg sexual misconduct protocol mandates that cases are handled in a sensitive, consistent and timely manner through various available support services on campus and in the community. The University of Winnipeg sexual misconduct protocol does not condone behaviour that is likely to undermine the dignity or productivity of any of its members and prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment, whether it occurs on university property or in conjunction with university-related activities.

The University of Manitoba has a working—a working group was established to review existing behavioural policies and consulted with students, faculty and staff. The U of M behavioural policies working group has been meeting regularly since May 2015. Its review pertains to the university's governing documents regarding the behaviour and conduct of students, faculty and staff at the university.

These documents include the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy, RWLE, which it's referred to, the Violent or Threatening Behaviour Policy, the appropriate disruptive student behaviour policy and the Student Discipline Bylaw.

The revision has conducted after—was conducted after concerns were raised surrounding the university's policies. The proposed changes include revisions to the W—or to the RWLE policy, which includes sexual harassment.

The working group proposed that the definition of sexual assault be clearly outlined within the RWLE framework and that a sexual assault protocol be drafted as a procedure within policy, Madam Speaker. While sexual assault will—would be investigated and disciplined under the RWLE, protocol clearly defines sexual assault and consent and lays out the steps a person can take to report an accident—[interjection]—incident. Thank you.

The protocol emphasizes that a person reporting has options on how to proceed, and that those who experience sexual assaults are the final decision makers when it comes to their best interests. Adopted May 4th, the goal is to have revised changes incorporated into the 2016-2017 academic calendar.

Brandon University established a Sexual Violence, Assault and Harassment Advisory Committee with strong representation from students, as well as faculty, staff and community experts, and has been developing and is getting under way.

With the consultation across the university's community and taking into account provincial legislation, the Brandon University Sexual Violence, Assault and Harassment Advisory Committee is tasked with producing appropriate new stand-alone policy and protocols. This work will be ready for consultation with campus community and external partners in September 2016.

Red River community college recently addressed this sensitive issue and established policies in place to protect staff and students from sexual harassment, discrimination and violence. Red River College also—excuse me—processes in place to provide support through a counselling service or assists with accessing external resources.

The fact of the matter is, Madam Speaker, post-secondary institutions have already developed and are working to develop policy around reporting, prevention of sexual assault and harassment on

campus. I am concerned that this bill has not actively considered existing reporting mechanisms that are in place on our campuses currently. These policies are new, ongoing and have consistently been an inclusive process with necessary parties. It is clear that our higher education institutions are listening and responding to major issues in their campuses. Incorporation of the existing structure promotes successful policy practice and increased opportunities for successful outcomes.

It is important that post-secondary institutions work together with their students, the Province, police services and the Justice Department in order to create awareness and support for sexual assault victims.

* (10:50)

It is not apparent in this legislation that this legislation provides for collaboration process between all stakeholders. Collaboration and support will help out second—or post-secondary institutions move forward in helping victims of sexual harass—sexual assault and harassment.

This is a major concern, Madam Speaker. We cannot act as if these issues do not exist. We want all survivors to never feel silenced. Encouragement for reporting in all cases must be promoted. As a community, we need to allow for open conversation so students can feel safe and that their voices are being heard.

This conversation needs to include everyone: women, men, young people, seniors, people living with disability, newcomers, members of culturally diverse community, indigenous people, visible minorities and the LBTTQ communities.

As leaders in Manitoba, we have an obligation to ensure that our students feel safe while attending post-secondary institutions. The government is very supportive of legislation that ensures all our students in Manitoba can grow and learn in a safe, positive educational environment.

Our government is working with universities and colleges throughout Manitoba to ensure that safety is a top priority to allow students throughout Manitoba to be successful in their studies. We need to ensure the proper consultation with post-secondary institution, campus organizations and students has occurred before passing important legislation on sexual assault and harassment.

Bill 204 appears to be only available on post-secondary institution campuses. However, it is well known that students actively engage in community and social events that take place off campuses. Bill 204 does not make it apparent that—what happens if violent occurs between students off campus. It would hope victims are still protected under Bill 204, and given the same rights and support under the bill; however, that is not clear.

Further discussion with the stakeholder is needs—is needed at this time.

Thank you.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): We fully support this bill, and I can't believe it has taken this long to be brought forward and I want to thank the member for reintroducing it.

According to Stats Canada, Manitoba has the highest rates of violence against women. This was based on 2011, about double the national rate. Women account for nine out of 10 police-reported sexual assaults in Canada, and the media has reported that one in five women is a victim of sexual assault during her post-secondary education. Many on-campus sexual assaults occur during the first eight weeks of classes. More than 80 per cent of rapes that occur on college and university campuses are committed by someone known to the victim, with half of these incidences occurring on dates. But that's enough about statistics.

Personally, I couldn't believe the stat about one in five, because in my circle of friends pretty much all of us had been a victim of sexual assault or sexual violence at Brandon University. One of us was brave enough to report it to the authorities, the Brandon University administration. But there was no happy ending. Instead of being supported, she was shamed, as if the incident was entirely her own fault. And based on that, none of us were brave enough to go and report our respective incidences.

I was the last one standing. We all eventually quit because we were forced to face our tormentors daily, who knew they had gotten away with it, who had those smug smiles that still, today, I still see in my nightmares. I know many will appreciate all of us here to take this stance against sexual harassment and violence against women.

Thank you.

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): I am pleased to put a few words on

the record regarding Bill 204, The Post-Secondary Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policies Act.

First of all, I'd like to thank my colleague from Fort Rouge for introducing this legislation and bringing the issue of sexual harassment and sexual violence to the floor for discussion. I'd also like to thank all the support workers, the student advocacy groups and the protection and safety officers who help women and girls feel safer in public places and, in particular, feel safer on campus. I'd also like to thank this House for—in April of 2012—bringing forward a private member's bill that would have—that deemed April to be Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Manitoba. Raising the profile and breaking down the barriers to talking about sexual assault and creating awareness is essential for reducing incidences of sexual violence in the province, so I thank this Chamber for introducing that legislation.

I'd like to put a—sexual harassment and violence against women and girls in public spaces, including campuses, limits their freedom and exercise the rights to fully participate in public life. And I'd like to point out that our government is committed to advancing violence prevention and awareness efforts, and supporting survivors of sexual violence. Sexual violence against women and girls is an international problem as well as a local problem, and it does require locally based strategies and a co-ordinated action plan. We are pleased to be working with our partners here in Manitoba to develop further meaningful interventions.

In regards to sexual violence and sexual harassment on campus, we know that much work needs to be done. I personally experienced many fearful moments as a student in post-secondary institutions in Manitoba and, in particular, as I was leaving campuses walking to my car late at night. I took a lot of my courses in the evening, and I just really want to thank the SafeWalk officers who would escort me to my car and ensure that I would get home safely after night classes. And, in particular, I'm interested in learning how this bill would protect students—and how it would protect students if a sexual assault or harassment occurred off-campus as well as on-campus, because we definitely do need to create safer communities for women and girls.

And, like my friend from Southdale had mentioned, that the conversation that we embark upon when we're talking about safety for women and

girls, it needs to include everyone. It needs to include women and men, young people, seniors, people living with disabilities, newcomers to our province and members of culturally diverse communities, indigenous people, visible minorities and members of the LGBTTTQ community.

As the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I'm particularly engaged in the topic of sexual assault, sexual violence and how we can reduce sexual assault in the province of Manitoba. And so I just want to broaden my comments for a moment if I could to the discussion of sexual violence in—as it pertains in Manitoba.

It is estimated that fewer than 10 per cent of sexual assaults are reported to police, like my friend from St. Johns had pointed out. And this speaks to the issue that she had raised regarding the self-blame of victims who are sexually violated. The—when a victim believes that she is responsible for the crime that was committed against her, it is unlikely that she is going to want to further the discussion, and I believe that that creates some barriers for assault victims from going forward and reaching out and getting the support that they need, speaking with the law officers or other workers and, instead, just keeping that blame and that shame in—close to their heart. And I think society needs to be part of a discussion on how we can create awareness and create a safe community where women feel that they can come forward and report their assault to the police officers and receive the support and the encouragement to move away—move forward from their—from the assault in a positive manner. Those discussions definitely need to happen.

And, while being a woman—or perceived as feminine—is the single greatest risk factor for experiencing sexual violence, age, ability and ethnicity are also important categories of analysis in Manitoba. I'd also like to point out that national data finds that women with disabilities are three times more likely than women without disabilities to experience sexual violence in their lifetime. And I'd also like to remind the House that data from—

Madam Speaker: Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member—or the honourable minister will have five minutes remaining.

* (11:00)

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 2—Recognition of the Manitoba Filipino Business Council

Madam Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m., and time for private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on recognition of the Manitoba Filipino Business Council, brought forward by the honourable member for Arthur-Virden.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry),

WHEREAS in 2011, the Manitoba Filipino Business Council (MFBC) was established; and

WHEREAS the MFBC is a forum for entrepreneurs, business owners and professionals that brings a voice to Filipino issues in the province and in the provincial economy; and

WHEREAS the MFBC is comprised of business owners in diverse sectors like finance, technology, healthcare and many others; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Filipino community is growing and is an important part of the fabric of this province; and

WHEREAS working collaboratively as part of a team is essential to growing a stronger economy on a local and provincial scale.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize the important work of the Manitoba Filipino Business Council and its effort to make Manitoba a better place to do business.

Motion presented.

Mr. Piwniuk: I'm here—I'm honoured here today to—for the—to represent—to actually present the Manitoba Filipino Business Council in a results of like-minded Filipino business owners and the entrepreneurs who work to build, sustain and extend business relationships across Winnipeg and across the province of Manitoba.

The Manitoba Filipino Business Council was established in 2010 and have been growing strong ever since. The business owners in this sector, like technology, finance, health, automotive, publishing, home service and many others are part of the Manitoba Filipino Business Council.

The Filipino community is the largest ethnic group in the city of Winnipeg, and it's also one of the

fastest growing ethnic groups in the province of Manitoba, such as cities of Steinbach, Neepawa and Brandon. And, Madam Speaker, my constituency of Arthur-Virden have—now have many Filipino immigrants coming into our community. And I think it's really important to have immigration, especially the immigrants of the Filipino population. We've found in our constituency, in the area, that many Filipinos who come to live in the—in rural Manitoba actually, basically, have the opportunity—they've—they assimilate into the population very easily. They make friendships, they build relationships, and they do that throughout the province, including the city of Winnipeg.

And this is to be honoured here today to speak on their behalf is great. And I want to commend all the hard work they have done in the past and in going into the future. As a population that's growing in this—the province of Manitoba, the Filipino population, it's so important that that next generation, the generation that's the second generation, the third generation, is the ones that—the second generation are the ones that are well educated. Per capita, immigrants' children have a better chance of getting higher—secondary—post-secondary education than any other segment in the population.

And it's important, like, for the high professionalism that's the education that they receive, that they start businesses. And businesses have the opportunity to grow, and especially in the Filipino population here in Winnipeg, there is so many different businesses that can be established, and with this group, with the growing population, we have opportunity for a lot of business to be established into the future, and now and into the future.

Madam Speaker, when it comes to businesses, you know, especially consumers—when consumers—the economy is made up of 70 per cent of consumer spending, and with such a high population of the Filipino community here, there's an opportunity for this—the economy to grow quite rapidly in the province of Manitoba. All we need to do is make sure that, for the Filipino Business Council, that we listen to them when it comes to setting policy in government. We want to make sure that we reduce red tape so that the—so that group can continue building their businesses and prospering into the future.

It's going to be individuals like the Filipino Business Council that is going to be representing all through the province of Manitoba eventually. You

know, right now they're strong in the city of Winnipeg, but what's going to happen is the opportunity to—you know, we see in Neepawa, you know, the pork operation there, they employ so many Filipino employees that—I actually was able to take a tour of the facility. And, you know, those people are hard-working people and I know down—second or third generation in this—in the town of Neepawa, there's going to be more and more businesses that are going to be established. And we'll see that in—that we saw in Winnipeg, you know, and Brandon's the same situation. So is Steinbach and Winkler.

And, Madam Speaker, I was—I have to say, you know, when I was—who—the doctor that brought me into this world 49 years ago was Dr. Lou [*phonetic*], who came from the Philippines. And he was my doctor from the time I was born and he delivered my two older brothers, and he delivered my youngest brother who was nine and a half years younger than me, quite an afterthought, we actually doctored with him until I actually moved away from Russell, Manitoba. I was born in Russell; he practised in Russell for over 25 years, and he was actually a very good family friend. Also, in rural Manitoba, I went—when my grade 2 school teacher, Mrs. Tungal [*phonetic*] was also from the Philippines. So I was exposed by—from the—with the—with early—and Philippine population really came into Manitoba for over—back in the 1950s. And so, when my brother was born in 1963, Dr. Lou [*phonetic*] was the one that delivered my mom's first child, and ever since she—he has been like a family doctor.

Madam Speaker, when it comes to the council, Manitobans know that the economy's better when we all work together, in collaborating with people in our communities and stakeholders representing diverse viewpoints. It is encouraging to see communities of people work together to ensure a strong business climate takes root here in Manitoba. Our government is excited to work with groups like the Manitoba Filipino Business Council to grow our Manitoba economy. Communities like Steinbach, Neepawa and Brandon have grown both in population and economically thanks to the Filipino entrepreneurs and employees.

Again, like I said, rural Manitoba has truly benefited from the immigration of the Philippine people here in Manitoba. Like I said before, the PC government was the first to introduce the nominee program back in the 1990s with our—like, with the—our colleague, who is now retired, the member from River East, Bonnie Mitchelson. And she was the one

that was the cultural critic—a cultural minister—and was able to help to bring that nominee program into Manitoba. And today the nominee program has brought so many people here in our province and here to open up the doors for a lot of Filipino population to come here to work, work in different areas of—different industries, but eventually start their own businesses. And the next generation of—the next number of generations are going to continue building that business environment when it comes to the—to that—into that group of individuals.

The Chamber of Commerce and the Business Council play a vital role in ensuring that the business community works together to grow our economy, and the Filipino Business Council plays an important role. As a PC team, we cannot be more proud to recognize the work of the Manitoba Filipino Business Council and the work that they do for the future for Manitoba economy. And like said, Madam Speaker, you know, with the new government now, this gives an opportunity to open a doors—open the doors to encourage entrepreneurs to say that we're open for business. And for the future of—for the Filipino population who's coming to this province, we want to open the doors to say, look, this is the place to come to, to raise your family, to work and to even start a business here in this community.

We want to create a good environment going forward into the future, and this is important to have that environment here in Manitoba to give people opportunities, and what I found the restrictions that we had for the last 16 years, especially when it comes to businesses—I know I was a business owner for 20-some years, and I really valued the—what it takes to start a business, to continue a business and to make sure that we don't have restrictions, and like I said, this is why I ran for—as an MLA—was the importance of making sure that we create a good environment for the business community, especially the community that's working so hard, like the Filipino Business Council who have done so much work in our province.

And, again, we—I just want to—just to acknowledge that we have members from the council here today with us, from the gallery—in the gallery, Madam Speaker, and I'm so honoured to be here today to congratulate them for all the hard work they have done.

And we have to also say that one of our colleagues, the member from St. Norbert, actually started this—the council and was a member for a

number of years, and we're so proud to have him on our team right now. And we're going to have a lot of—we're going to work very well as a team with the member from St. Norbert, and an honour to be part of the—part with—working with him as a teammate.

And, again, congratulations to the Filipino council.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

* (11:10)

Questions

Madam Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will now be held and questions may be addressed in the following sequence. The first question may be asked by a member from another party. Any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties and each independent member may ask one question and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): I thank my colleague from Arthur-Virden for bringing forth this resolution.

Just would like—I'm just interested how many organizations or people my colleague consulted before he prepared or brought forward the resolution.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): I consulted in—a number of individuals from the Filipino Business Council, including my member—my—the member from St. Norbert, my colleague, and also the members that I've got to know, and the president, JR, who can't be here today. And I talked to, also, to the vice-president of the council.

And just talking to the community—in our community, too, we want to make sure that we acknowledge how—the work that they've done and of the future that they can bring to this community, to this province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker: The next person to be able to answer a question is in rotation, and so the next member that will be able to ask a question is from the government side. Are there any questions from the government side?

Then we will—I will allow—the next member to ask would be from the official opposition.

Ms. Marcelino: Just for clarification, I heard that my colleague only consulted one group of—organization. But that's not the issue here. I am appreciative, and I thank the member from Arthur-

Viriden from—for bringing forth this resolution. This is a resolution that I will personally support and I hope everyone else will support.

Madam Speaker, I'm happy to put in a few words in favour of this resolution. I'd like to share with you and the rest of—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Piwniuk: Okay, with this question—I just wanted to say that, too, like, I really believe how important—we have to acknowledge all groups in Manitoba, and this is the first one that we wanted to acknowledge was the Filipino Business Council. And there's many more—other nationalities and individuals that also have to contribute lots to the province of Manitoba, to the future we're going forward.

Like, with our immigration and nominee program, this is opportunity, again, it's going to be the second, third generation that going to be well-educated, that we're going to be professionals, who are going to be contributors to our province of Manitoba, to our economy and to the future of business here in this great province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker: Are there any further questions?

Debate

Madam Speaker: Debate is now open. The time for questions has—as there are no further ones, then, the debate is now open, and I would recognize the honourable interim Official Opposition Leader.

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): I was a little confused there. I thought I'm making my statement in support of the resolution, and I don't have any further question after the initial one.

Anyway, Madam Speaker, immigration of Filipinos in Manitoba started way back in the late '50s, years before our honourable colleague here was born. He's a very young man.

The early Filipinos who immigrated to Manitoba consisted of health-care professionals. That was in the late '50s. Then, a wave of sewing-machine operators were recruited in the late '60s until the late '70s, and Madam Speaker, these young sewers, mostly female, enterprising, hard-working, family-loving—sponsored their families, their relatives, their friends and their fiancés and, before long, the community grew so big and those that they sponsored also sponsored, in return, families, friends,

relatives. And, by now, we believe the Filipino community to be over—at least 60,000 strong.

Madam Speaker, it is notable to mention two outstanding Filipino pioneers, and I would like to mention their names: the late Mrs. Carolina Custodio, who was instrumental in bringing many garment workers from the Philippines to Winnipeg in the late '60s. She also generously assisted them to make a smooth transition to life in Canada.

Another pioneer and role model in our community, a dedicated health-care professional, is Mrs. Fe Ryder, now a retired nurse. She was one of the first five nurses who settled in Winnipeg in 1959.

We all know, Madam Speaker, the tremendous multiculturalism in our province is part of what makes Manitoba such a great place to live, work and raise a family, and we are proud to have a caucus that represents some of that diversity.

We know that quality child care, health care, education are key priorities for Manitoba families and we will continue to push for all those services to be invested in this critical areas.

Our NDP government focused on steadily growing immigration, which had significant and positive results for our province's economy and communities. And our unemployment rate at that time, after 17 years in government, is the lowest in the country at 5.9 per cent.

This year, Manitoba grew to nearly 1.3 million people, an increase of more than 16,000 over the previous year. And this growth helps keep our economy growing.

Since 1999, over 150 new—150,000 new immigrants have settled in Manitoba, and newcomers to Manitoba have an annual real GDP impact of over \$353 million.

To date, Madam Speaker, in the Filipino community, there are over 35 community organizations just in Winnipeg and, proudly, the Manitoba Filipino Business Council is just one of them.

I recognize the honourable member from St. Norbert. I believe you—she—he was one of the founding members, and past president of the council.

Today the council is led by another young man like its former past president, Mr. Hipolito Alibin, Jr., a successful business consultant.

I would also like to mention, Madam Speaker, that Winnipeg and—the Filipino community in Winnipeg, I believe, is such a—one of which is the MFBC, is one of the many organizations in Winnipeg which echoed the positivity of living, working and doing business in Manitoba, just like the Financial Times which stated that Winnipeg is one of the best places to do business in Canada because of our affordable cost of living, vibrant art scene and steady economic growth. That was quoted from a July 18th, 2014, news article.

* (11:20)

Recently KPMG said that Winnipeg is the most competitive city in which to conduct business in North American Midwest ahead of Saskatoon, Edmonton, Phoenix, Dallas, Fort Worth, Minneapolis, Denver and Chicago. Likewise, retail sales in Manitoba increased by 3.9 per cent in 2015, fifth best among provinces.

Also in Manitoba, we enjoy one of the most affordable costs of living in the country, and our high quality of life makes our province a great place to live, work, invest and start a business.

Today's Free Press business article by reporter Murray McNeill referred conference—referred to a Conference Board of Canada quote: Manitoba's economic performance has been quite strong since the beginning of the decade. With real GDP set to expand above the national average this year, Manitoba will continue to be a reliable source of growth in Canada, adds Marie-Christine Bernard, associate director, provincial forecast for the Ottawa-based think tank. She continued: Services will see healthy increases as Manitobans are on a spending spree due to strong employment and wage gains from recent years. The board notes Manitoba led the country in unemployment—in employment growth last year, creating nearly 10,000 jobs. With more Manitobans working, that should enable it to lead the country in retail sales growth this year at just over 6 per cent, it adds.

In terms of industries, Bernard says manufacturing and agriculture should turn in solid performances this year with production gains of 2.6 per cent and 2.2 per cent, respectively. She said growth in construction output will be tempered somewhat this year due to a slowdown in housing starts, but the construction industry should lead the charge in 2017 with growth of 6.1 per cent, she added, as work ramps up on Manitoba Hydro's Keeyask dam and the Bipole III transmission line

projects. End of quote. And that was in today's Winnipeg Free Press.

So, Madam Speaker, business is booming in Manitoba and it's not by any means just an accident. It took years and years of intentional, dedicated, diligent efforts of—from the past government to grow the economy, train workers, increase immigration and also support many, many social programs that contribute to the high quality of life of—for Manitobans.

So with these few words, Madam Speaker, I—again, I thank my honourable colleague and I congratulate the Manitoba Filipino Business Council for the splendid work they're doing, and also note that I thank the past president for the many efforts he has put into making this Manitoba Filipino Business Council the successful, vibrant, inclusive organization that it is today.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Nic Curry (Kildonan): I thank my colleagues for my ability to speak today. I'd like to recognize and thank the members of the Filipino Business Council who are here today in our audience. Thank you so much for the work that you do for our communities and also for attending here with us today.

I thank the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk) for bringing this resolution forward and the honourable member of the—the interim Leader of the Opposition for her words to the importance of Filipino culture and immigration to Canada. Many of us in Manitoba share a heritage of immigration. It is a small and, sometimes, forgotten past for a lot of people, but an important memory. Many people are immigrating from the Philippines as we speak now.

Many come to Manitoba for things in the service sector, things in government, things of other natures where many, especially at Seven Oaks hospital, when caring for my family—many nurses just sent from the Philippines—and we're grateful for their service and for their ability to come here as recent immigrants, not only learning things like language and our culture but able to provide for the health and well-being of many people in our community. But, also, in many other ways that's the other parts of immigration that's so important in terms of the small business.

So many immigrant families, especially from my wife's side of the family, came here and started very

small businesses like restaurants or hair salons, or simply plumbing. My two great uncles, descended from southern Italy in Calabria, came to Winnipeg to be plumbers—both named Mario and Luigi, and with any luck, perhaps, they were heard of, and that is where we get the videogame from. But they went on—one to work in a restaurant and one to own a hair salon. And small businesses, in many ways, are what drives our economy. I know from my own family's experience.

We know that Manitobans need an economy that works together with people from different walks of life. The different cultures that come to Manitoba at the forks of two great rivers—it's been a meeting place for people for thousands, if not tens of thousands of years; a place to trade. It's very enjoyable to know that people, to this moment, are coming here to trade and give their gifts of entrepreneurial spirit, give their gifts of, you know, hard work ethic and give their gifts of working together on things like such as business councils.

It is important to note, as well, that many rural communities in Manitoba are now benefiting from Filipino immigration, something that, perhaps, there was barriers in years past. And, now, the honourable member from Arthur-Virden brings up that many people are joining his community and experiencing all the wonderfulness of Manitoba, not just in the city but in rural life; very important to us.

I'd like to bring up, of course, people from Kildonan. Although with a Scottish name, and now a part Scottish member of the Legislature—a previous Ukrainian member of the Legislature, nonetheless, our community has many Filipino immigrants. My neighbours to our north side are of Filipino descent and many members of the household are very recent immigrants, and it's an important thing in Garden City area. The wonderful families that we see immigrating from the Philippines, and many of them are looking immediately at small business creation, things where they ask me: Nic, where are we going to get these grants from? Where are we going to, you know, set up shop? Is this stall coming open? How much are you paying for your office, I want to get one going.

These are great questions that I get to now field from my neighbours, from people who are trying to grow this community in a small business sense. It's important that we, as government, are there to stand beside Manitobans, whether they be here for tens of thousands of years or those who've come here for

tens of days to, you know, reach out and find ways that we can—benefit all of us, because, when we have a vibrant economy based on small businesses, mainly, we can grow that economy into something even stronger.

I'm very happy that—just, a neighbour up in the northern part of my riding, but Joel Duque is an immigration consultant. It is a small business in many senses of it, where it's almost a business of himself. And he works with families across the Philippines and helps them immigrate to Manitoba where they can start that dream. So even just the immigration process, in and of itself, is a small business, is part of that business community. And it's an honour and a pleasure that I get to mention his name today.

He's focused on very similar principles to what us and the PC caucus are concerned with; the idea of, you know, fairness and common sense. People have certain skills, such as nursing or things in construction, you know, heavy manufacturing, this is something where, in Manitoba, we benefit from bringing people who already know the tricks of that trade.

From my own background in the military, you know, many of us received special military training, which is no different from the training we can get on the civilian side, as we call it, but in the military we're abundantly clear that, if we have our airbrakes training course or if we know how to operate a forklift, and we have that qualification in the military, we return to the civilian world and are told, no, you have to take the civilian training course. Where you could have had soldiers who served in operations, had bullets flying by them as they were working on these machines, a pretty stressful environment. Something that, luckily, here in Canada we're safe that we do not have and, yet, they are told, no, the training is, unfortunately, not acceptable.

And luckily though with immigration consultants like Joel Duque, he's able to work with many members of the Filipino community as they come over, like many immigration consultants who are able to find those skills and work with the people as they immigrate to get accreditation and find ways that they can immediately help in our society.

* (11:30)

It's quite frustrating for many immigrants when they have specialist training from their countries of origin that are on par if not maybe even exceeding

the standards we have in Canada, however, their barriers to languages, barriers to culture and barriers to understanding how to integrate those skills into our culture, into our society, are left wanting. And someone like immigration consultants like Joel are able to help out with those people.

It's also very important that—he works in all kinds of immigrations, such as temporary or permanent immigration status where—we are a country of sometimes temporary belongings. People of my younger generation, they tell us now that we're going to have about 20 jobs before maybe we find that right one. And it's something very difficult for people when they are going to be on temporary workers' visas, and they're just working in Canada for a brief period of time, to have an important consultant to help them navigate those difficult times.

I'd also like to bring up R.J. Padua, who's the owner and operator of No Limit Training, a strength and training program in East Kildonan, my old neck of the woods. And, as a younger man out of high school, I unwittingly used his services. He works out of a public gym and provides the services at that gym of, you know, improving health, both of the mind and of the physique.

R.J. has incredible philosophy of just everything you bring to the table is what you get to, you know, take back. And if you bring a positive attitude to a strength exercise training program, then you're going to leave with a positive outcome. He's dedicated himself for over 10 years working in various agencies, working with various athletic teams, and R.J. knows more than anyone that small business is where we can grow those dreams or community.

He's someone who's very interested in keeping things creative. That entrepreneurial spirit is where we can find those aha moments, where we go: that's going to work and we've never tried before. For example, using landmarks as exercise routines, using places like Chief Peguis bridge—beautiful vistas—as the site of your gym. It doesn't have to be just some basement at a school. Very similar—he's at Chief Peguis Junior High, very similar to University of Manitoba's old gym, which I used myself in my even younger days. He knows that you have to just break the barriers and get out.

When I commented to him, well, maybe we can bring you down to the Leg., he initially asked me, well, you know, it's a tall building, let's do the stairs, let's run up to the top. And I commented, well, we

can't go to the Golden Boy, but yes, let's maybe use those stairs or something.

These entrepreneurial ideas that R.J. Padua brings to the table are something that you sometimes lose when you have, say, a larger corporation or government services, where you're stuck in the minutia of that greater body. When it's a company of one person or one or few, you can have these innovative ideas. Who would have thought where some of our greater technology would have come from if not for a few people working in a garage to invent computers?

And the other—where I have to come back to even closer to my heart, are people like my former colleague and Queens Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, Darwin Avena. Himself of Filipino descent is someone where he's now looking at the next step, spending many of his younger days as a soldier, now working in whatever he can do for business, really any job and every job. And that driving passion, that desire, that, you know, untangible entrepreneurial spirit—correction—intangible spirit is something that is so critical for business councils to help, you know, nourish, help network. That idea is something that maybe someone like Darwin can get out.

And also like my friends, Joseffus Jom Santos of my fraternity, Phi Delta Theta, is a biochemist, is a research technician. And it's people like him, as he works in larger businesses and government agencies now, but in the future I'd love to see him and many others of his background, where you take these very difficult skills to learn in school, biochemistry and working with many materials, and bring that into the business community.

And I know that members like this in the Filipino community are what is going to drive our ability in Manitoba to move forward, a nice future where we can all participate in our economy and we can all kind of benefit from being friendly with each other, of networking and growing Manitoba into what—I know that my friends who I've mentioned and my neighbours who I've mentioned all want for our society. And that we're looking forward to government in doing.

Thank you.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): It's always a pleasure to rise in this House following the member from Kildonan. And it's in high praise of the presence of the Filipino population that the Manitoba Filipino Business Council was—I think it

was imagined and then created by somebody that I know personally. And it was way back when, even before I got elected in 2011, that there were some organizational hiccups at first. And they were very adamant about creating the Business Council.

It is a recognition of the amount of exposure and the amount of business from restaurants to retail stores to financial services to insurance agencies. And, also, to United Parcel Service, the UPS, that we have become known to be engaging as a community. We have engaged in almost all facets of life, and it is amazing how it has expanded to the Legislature. We now have three Filipino nationals, or, former Filipino nationals, or, Filipino hyphenated Canadians who have become valuable members of the Legislature. Three out of 57 is a good score. And we need one more, maybe, or two.

And it's amazing, also, that the promotion of our culture and, of course, our businesses have become a little bit more than just an accident. It's all intentional in the sense that, as organized as we should be, we have become more aware that we have impacts on the lives of many. The portrait of the Filipino from way back was—we were either health-care providers, from nurses to health-care aides, to government workers. But now, there's the Manitoba Filipino Business Council, which means that we have defined ourselves, also, as entrepreneurs.

We have also defined ourselves as politicians, and there are also those who are professionals, as in, doctors and lawyers. As of last count, I believe, we already have about a million lawyers here from Filipino descent. No, maybe about 10. But the amazing thing about the Manitoba Filipino Business Council was that it has survived. Most Filipino organizations do not survive. They usually split up. And it's evident in some of the seniors group, that we have to promote and deal with.

There's the Original Filipino Seniors Association, and then the Filipino Seniors Group, and even the association—the regionalistic, dialect-driven organizations of Ilocano. We have the Timpuyog, and then there's other branches. But the Manitoba Filipino Business Council has remained one.

And it's a matter of pride, especially for the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes). That it was a seed that he planted, and it was a seed that he watered and nurtured. And it was a seed that he protected for a while. And then—it's now, what, five years? And my honourable friend from

Arthur-Virden was correct when he said that the population has grown.

* (11:40)

The—our attempts at making sure that the services and products that we provide to the general community are all vetted and inspected, and that we always deal with honesty. And there was—I think there were a couple of tours to the Philippines to engage some chambers of commerce from the Philippines to at least start some trading in Manitoba. And we are at that point where maybe, just maybe, there will be a—there will be two restaurants here who will compete with McDonald's. They call them Jollibee. The Jollibee, they serve good hamburgers and french fries—*[interjection]*—and the chicken and spaghetti and also noodles. And you'll be amazed at the cost. It's way below what McDonald's will be charging you or even A&W.

We are very proud of our own attempts at succeeding in the environment that we find ourselves in. We are very good at what we do when we want to. And so we need more people to join up, the Manitoba Filipino Business Council, and, I guess, the membership is not—it is not conditional on you being a Filipino national. You could be a member of the business council even if you are puti *[white]*.

An Honourable Member: As long as you pay your dues.

Mr. Marcelino: Or as long as you pay your dues, that's what.

And I congratulate the members of the council for being here, especially Katya, is she here? Oh. She's one of the more friendly of those group. *[interjection]* No, I mean—you know what I mean. And Judyann, of course, is there.

And I have two minutes? And I thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing me to speak.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I rise to support this resolution, and I want to start by congratulating the MLA for St. Norbert, who's played an important role in getting the Manitoba business—Filipino Business Council going and in keeping it going. I've had the opportunity to attend a number of the Manitoba Filipino Business Council galas, and they have become, you know, one of the major events in the social calendar in Manitoba. And I, you know, hope that as many MLAs will come out next time as possible because it's an important event, and I want to congratulate all

the members of the Filipino Business Council for their efforts.

You know, the gala events provide awards, and the awards go to, in some cases, Filipino businesses who are doing well in a whole variety of areas, and in some cases the awards go to non-Filipino businesses who've been very supportive of the Filipino community in Manitoba. Examples of, you know, the latter—or the former Filipino entrepreneurs: Jeffrey Reyes, Step-UP Waste Management Solutions; Golda Farrah; a young entrepreneur of the year award last year went to Melissa Cadelina and Rebecca Carter of Everyline Designs.

And an example of a non-Filipino business which has been very supportive, comes out to many events, is Larry and Tova Vickar with Vickar Automotive. And they've been very supportive of the community, and the community has been very supportive, in turn, of Larry Vickar, because he's done good service and because he's a regular member, almost, of the Philippine community in the way he comes out to events.

I want to also acknowledge, as well as the, you know, award ceremonies and recognitions, which are tremendously important, that the Manitoba Filipino Business Council is playing, you know, in a sense, a role which is somewhat similar to the Italian Chamber of Commerce, reaching out, not only developing businesses and helping business grow in Manitoba, but reaching out nationally and internationally. And so, last June, the business council, and with the—hosted, together with the World Trade Centre, a mission of the Canadian Philippine chamber of commerce, I believe, a delegation from the Philippines. And they were very welcome here. They were very interested in what's happening in Manitoba not only in the Philippine business area but in green technologies and other areas.

So this is tremendously important in building bridges between Manitoba and the Philippines and companies in both areas working together and benefiting both Manitoba and benefiting the Philippines at the same time because of the interchange of people and ideas and of business and of trade. And so what's happening, and I want to congratulate the members of the Philippine business community for the tremendous effort that's been done in terms of outreach and participating recently, I believe, in Centrallia, as one of the, you know, important events of the year, but it shows what can

happen when you have a Philippine business council. All of a sudden, you're very involved in what's happening in a broader context here in Manitoba, just because you're well organized and a really strong group of very dedicated entrepreneurs.

I know my colleague from Burrows has been very active and at many Filipino events and very supportive of the Philippine business community and enjoys making sure that Philippine businesses are involved in some of the events that she's been involved in putting on with yourself and your dad. And so, there's a, you know, I think, a real connection and a tremendous participation by Filipino entrepreneurs in the growing—what's happening in terms of a growing Manitoba and a vibrant economy and a vibrant—you know, it's not just about creating an economy; it's about building relationships and making connections and it's about learning and knowing more about people and making sure that people have opportunities. And so providing opportunities and mentors and role models for Philippine students who are now in high school and going to university, that, look what you can do in terms of building a business here in Manitoba and providing an example and providing that mentorship.

So I fully support—as the Liberal Party, we're all fully supportive of this resolution and I hope it will pass because we recognize that you've done a tremendous job in the Manitoba Filipino Business Council. I just want to say thank you for all your efforts and congratulate you for what you've done.

Mr. Jon Reyes (St. Norbert): First of all, I want to thank the honourable member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk) on bringing this resolution on the recognition of the Manitoba Filipino Business Council. I also want to thank my colleagues in support of this resolution.

We all share a similar story, and I mentioned this at Friday's Philippine independence day ball, that in my case, my dad immigrated here to Canada for a better opportunity for his children, his grandchildren and future generations to come. And it's all about hard work, as we know, and I'm honoured to be here in this House as the member of St. Norbert.

One thing, also, is in my career with the Canadian Armed Forces, when I would travel across Canada and meet other members of the Filipino community, whether it was in Victoria, Vancouver, Halifax, Toronto, Calgary, I would brag, I would take pride in where I came from, in Winnipeg, in

Manitoba, of my Filipino community here, and I'll say it again.

As a Filipino-Canadian of Filipino descent, I was very proud that Manitoba has been the only province that has elected a Filipino city councillor in our deputy mayor, Mike Pagtakhan; that we elected the first MLA of Filipino descent, the late Dr. Conrad Santos; also having the first elected Member of Parliament, Dr. Rey Pagtakhan; and our first provincial Cabinet member—Cabinet minister, the honourable interim Leader of the Opposition, Flor Marcelino. As well—[*interjection*] Oh, sorry—

* (11:50)

Madam Speaker: Just a reminder to members not to be referring to anybody—

Mr. Reyes: The honourable member of—

Madam Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Reyes: Logan.

As well, we've had—as well, the first federal Cabinet minister in Dr. Rey Pagtakhan as well. So I take pride in that, prior to even going into politics. I was very proud, when I would travel our great nation with the military, I was a very proud Canadian but I didn't forget my Filipino roots because I can't forget the homeland of my parents where they came from.

And, as the honourable member from Burrows had stated, that—sorry, from Logan had stated, that it was back in the '50s you had professors and in the '60s you had textile workers, you had nurses, and they would form the foundation of the Filipino community back in those days.

When we go to the Manitoba Filipino Business Council, though, how the idea came about was it came from someone who I truly admire, and that is actually my wife, who is actually here today. And my wife—we owned a small business and she was part of the Women Business Owners of Manitoba. And what I found was that this organization had monthly meetings on benefiting business owners, small entrepreneurs; it'd be educational. They'd talk about marketing, time management, stuff that would benefit the business owner and, as well, network with your peers.

So I went to myself: Why don't we have this in our growing Filipino community that have entrepreneurs? And that's when I got together a group of like-minded individuals to come up with this idea. And it's also about forming partnerships;

partnerships with businesses, larger businesses—and believing in this idea.

So I had sat down with Holly Toupin of the RBC, Royal Bank, and I always think of—whenever I take on a project I want it to be a win-win situation. And, in this case, it was good profile for RBC helping our large Filipino community, in turn it would help them in terms of advertising.

So, just like what our current government believes in, you have to form partnerships with businesses because governments don't create jobs, businesses have to. Like, government has to create an environment for businesses to create those jobs, and that's why I'm very excited that the member of Tyndall Park stated that two franchises—one franchise, sorry, from the Philippines, they're going to be opening two locations. Jollibee, will be opening up in Manitoba.

And that's going to be very huge because it's going to create jobs, it's going to stimulate our economy, something that we believe in, we believe in a stronger economy and it's going to create jobs. And I'm very excited. Our Filipino community is very excited. People in general are very excited of the Jollibee franchise coming to Manitoba because it's—at the end of the day it's going to create a stronger economy.

Partnerships are important. I go back to partnerships when we were forming the Manitoba Filipino Business Council; not only did the RBC Royal Bank step up, as the honourable member of River Heights stated, Larry Vickar from the Vickar Automotive Group, we—he—an honorary Filipino we can call him, has always supported the Filipino community. Larry Vickar I have known since I was four years old, and I'm 44 now. And one story I want to share with you, when we picked up my dad's 1976 Chevrolet Malibu, I was four years old. My dad took it for a test drive and I'd asked Larry Vickar where did my dad go. And I'm four years old at the time. He says, oh he took off. And, as a four year old, I started—tears came down my eyes because I thought he was serious. But he came back, and there we have it, we had a 1976 Chevrolet Malibu and he's been a big supporter of the Filipino community ever since.

As well, I can't forget to mention Rod and Ron Cantiveros; the profile, the exposure that they gave the Manitoba Filipino Business Council in terms of media. We established key relationships as the business council moved on with the World Trade

Centre of Winnipeg, the World Trade Center of Metro Manila when we had our first ever trade mission in Manila back in 2013, and also with the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce with their president, Chuck Davidson, the past president to the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, David Angus, and we look forward to working with their new president, Loren Remillard. And also with the World Trade Centre of Winnipeg, I should mention Mariette Mulaire as well.

Just to rewind a little bit, though, is that I had to—I sought advice when I formed the business council from my business mentor who I can call Larry Vickar, and one of my political mentors in Dr. Rey Pagtakhan because, you know, to put an organization together takes a great team to build, and you have to have a great group of volunteers, and I can't thank the volunteers who are up there in the gallery enough for helping the Manitoba Filipino Business Council continue what you're doing today in benefiting business owners in the Filipino community, but also in mainstream community as well.

I'm very—also, I'm very proud that, as a past president, that the MFBC continues on the tradition of, you know, welcoming delegates from around the world and especially our Canadian Chamber of Commerce from the Philippines, the Philippines ambassador to Canada as well.

And before I'd left the MFBC, I had to make sure that there was a plan and process in place so that it could continue on. I'm very proud that we had partnered up with Gary Sarcida and Daniel Plato to ensure that there was a constitution in place so that it could continue on, and they had a guideline to follow by.

I'm very proud of the accomplishments of the MFBC and for them moving forward, and I would

like to recognize them for their accomplishments, giving back to the Filipino community. One thing, as the member of River Heights also had mentioned, that in terms of the awards galas, we always gave back to The Kidney Foundation and to other charitable organizations. I was very proud to be part of The Kidney Foundation as well as a board of director, because having learnt by being in other non-profit organizations, I could take that knowledge back to the Manitoba Filipino Business Council.

So I'm very happy, happy that you're here today to recognize that, and I'm honoured to be here and honoured to be your past president founder.

Thank you.

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the—oh, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the resolution? *[Agreed]*

I declare the resolution carried.

* * *

Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business, would you be willing to canvass the House to see if there's agreement to call it 12 o'clock?

Madam Speaker: Is there agreement to call it 12 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

The—when—the House being 12 p.m., this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 this afternoon.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

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