

Fourth Session - Fortieth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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The Honourable Daryl Reid
Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne, Hon.	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Greg, Hon.	Selkirk	NDP
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MELNICK, Christine	Riel	NDP
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Thomas, Hon.	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	NDP
ROWAT, Leanne	Riding Mountain	PC
SARAN, Mohinder, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	St. Paul	PC
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	NDP
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	NDP
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie, Hon.	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 29, 2015

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Mr. Speaker: Introduction of bills?

PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: Seeing no bills, we'll move on to petitions.

**Province-Wide Long-Term Care—
Review Need and Increase Spaces**

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) There are currently 125 licensed personal-care homes across Manitoba, consisting of less than 10,000 beds.

(2) All trends point to an increasingly aging population who will require additional personal-care-home facilities.

(3) By some estimates, Manitoba will require an increase of more than 5,100 personal-care-home beds by 2036.

(4) The number of Manitobans with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia-related illness who will require personal-care-home services are steadily increasing and are threatening to double within the current generation.

(5) The last personal-care-home review in many areas, including the Swan River Valley area currently under administration of the Prairie Mountain regional health authority, was conducted in 2008.

(6) Average occupancy rates for personal-care homes across the province are exceeding 97 per cent, with some regions, such as Swan River Valley, witnessing 100 per cent occupancy rates.

(7) These high occupancy rates are creating the conditions where many individuals requiring long-term care are being displaced far away from their families and home community.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to consider immediately enacting a province-wide review of the long-term-care needs of residents of Manitoba.

And (2) to urge the provincial government to recognize the stresses placed upon the health-care system by the current and continuous aging population and consider increasing the availability of long-term-care spaces in communities across the province.

And this petition is signed by J. Borley, F. Hogan, W. Colbert and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: In keeping with our rule 132(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to have been received by the House.

**Provincial Trunk Highway 206 and Cedar
Avenue in Oakbank—Pedestrian Safety**

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Every day, hundreds of Manitoba children walk to school in Oakbank and must cross PTH 206 at the intersection with Cedar Avenue.

(2) There have been many dangerous incidents where drivers use the right shoulder to pass vehicles that have stopped at the traffic light waiting to turn left at this intersection.

(3) Law enforcement officials have identified this intersection as a hot spot of concern for the safety of schoolchildren, drivers and emergency responders.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge that the provincial government improve the safety at the pedestrian corridor at the intersection of PTH 206 and Cedar Avenue in Oakbank by considering such steps as highlighting pavement markings to better indicate the location of the shoulders and crosswalk, as well as installing a lighted crosswalk structure.

This is signed by G. Loewen, S. Moynes, N. Pelissier and many other fine Manitobans.

**Beausejour District Hospital—
Weekend and Holiday Physician Availability**

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The Beausejour District Hospital is a 30-bed, acute-care facility that serves the communities of Beausejour and Brokenhead.

(2) The hospital and the primary-care centre have had no doctor available on weekends and holidays for many months, jeopardizing the health and livelihoods of those in the northeast region of the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority.

(3) During the 2011 election, the provincial government promised to provide every Manitoban with access to a family doctor by 2015.

(4) This promise is far from being realized, and Manitobans are witnessing many emergency rooms limiting services or closing temporarily, with the majority of these reductions taking place in rural Manitoba.

(5) According to the Health Council of Canada, only 25 per cent of doctors in Manitoba reported that their patients had access to care on evenings and weekends.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government and the Minister of Health to ensure that the Beausejour District Hospital and primary-care centre have a primary-care physician available on weekends and holidays to better provide area residents with this essential service.

This petition is signed by A. Antonurida, B. Mikoluff, M. Mickey and many, many more fine Manitobans.

**Community-Based Brain Injury
Services and Supports**

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Brain Injury Canada, cited at <http://braininjurycanada.ca/acquired-brain-injury/>, estimates that 50,000 Canadians sustain brain injuries each year, over 1 million Canadians live with the effects of an acquired brain injury, 30 per cent of all traumatic brain injuries are sustained by children and youth, and approximately 50 per cent of brain injuries come from falls and motor vehicle collisions.

(2) Studies conducted by Manitoba Health in 2003 and 2006 and the Brandon Regional Health Authority in 2008 identified the need for community-based brain injury services.

(3) These studies recommended that Manitoba adopt the Saskatchewan model of brain injury services.

(4) The treatment and coverage for Manitobans who suffer brain injuries varies greatly, resulting in huge inadequacies depending on whether a person suffers the injury at work, in a motor vehicle accident, through assault or from medical issues such as a stroke, aneurysm or anoxia due to cardiac arrest or other medical reasons.

(5) Although in-patient services including acute care, short and longer term rehabilitation are available throughout the province, brain injury patients who are discharged from hospital often experience discontinuation or great reduction of services which results in significant financial and emotional burdens being placed on family and friends.

* (13:40)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to develop and evolve community-based brain injury services that include but are not limited to: case management services, known also as service navigation; safe and accessible housing in the community; proctor or coach-type assistance for

community reintegration programs; improved access to community-based rehabilitation services; and improved transportation, especially for people living in rural Manitoba.

(2) To urge the provincial government to encompass financial and emotional supports for families and other caregivers in the model that is developed.

Signed by S. Smith, C. Edwards, S. Sanderson and many other Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: Any further petitions?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: Seeing none, we'll move on to committee reports.

Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development Fifth Report

Ms. Nancy Allan (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Fifth Report of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Social and—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense? Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT presents the following as its Fifth Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on June 25, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 11)** – *The Public Health Amendment Act (Prohibiting Children's Use of Tanning Equipment and Other Amendments) / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique (utilisation interdite des appareils de bronzage par les enfants et autres modifications)*
- **Bill (No. 17)** – *The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba*
- **Bill (No. 22)** – *The Red River College Act / Loi sur le Collège Red River*

Committee Membership

- Ms. ALLAN
- Hon. Mr. ALLUM
- Hon. Mr. CHOMIAK
- Hon. Ms. CROTHERS
- Hon. Mr. DEWAR
- Mr. EWASKO
- Mr. GOERTZEN
- Mr. GRAYDON
- Mr. PIWNIUK
- Mr. RONDEAU
- Mr. WIEBE

Your Committee elected Ms. ALLAN as the Chairperson

Your Committee elected Mr. WIEBE as the Vice-Chairperson

Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following three presentations on **Bill (No. 11)** – *The Public Health Amendment Act (Prohibiting Children's Use of Tanning Equipment and Other Amendments) / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique (utilisation interdite des appareils de bronzage par les enfants et autres modifications):**

*Steven Gilroy, Joint Canadian Tanning Association
Erin Crawford, Canadian Cancer Society, Manitoba Office*

Kelly Karam, Fabutan Studios, Owner

Written Submissions

*Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 11)** – *The Public Health Amendment Act (Prohibiting Children's Use of Tanning Equipment and Other Amendments) / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique (utilisation interdite des appareils de bronzage par les enfants et autres modifications):**

Kathy Litton, Tan FX Sun Tanning Studios, Owner

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 11)** – *The Public Health Amendment Act (Prohibiting Children's Use of Tanning Equipment and Other Amendments) / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique (utilisation interdite des appareils de bronzage par les enfants et autres modifications)*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 17)** – *The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 22)** – *The Red River College Act / Loi sur le Collège Red River*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

Ms. Allan: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Rules of the House First Report

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Vice-Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the First Report of the Standing Committee on Rules of the House.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Rules of the House—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense? Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Rules of the House presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on June 26, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under consideration

Amendments to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Committee Membership

- Hon. Mr. ASHTON
- Hon. Mr. CHOMIAK
- Mr. CULLEN
- Hon. Mr. GERRARD
- Mr. GOERTZEN
- Hon. Ms. MARCELINO (Logan)
- Mr. MARCELINO (Tyndall Park)
- Hon. Mr. REID (Chairperson)
- Mr. SCHULER
- Mr. WIEBE
- Hon. Ms. WIGHT

Your Committee elected Mr. MARCELINO (Tyndall Park) as the Vice-Chairperson

Officials Speaking on Record

- Ms. Patricia Chaychuk, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
- Mr. Rick Yarish, Deputy Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Amendments to Rules Considered and Reported

At the June 26, 2015 meeting your committee agreed to report the following amendments to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba with one amendment:

THAT the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be amended as follows:

THAT these Amendments will come into force, on October 20, 2015, unless otherwise indicated.

THAT the definition "a Recognized Opposition Party" in clause 1(3)(h) be replaced with the following:

- (h) **"a Recognized Opposition Party"** means an opposition party represented in the Legislative Assembly by four or more Members;

THAT Rule 2 be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Sitting Periods

2(1) *The House may meet at any time during the following sitting periods, except during the Spring Sittings when the House must begin to meet on the first Wednesday in March:*

November Sittings

From Tuesday following the Remembrance Day week as described in sub-rule 2(2)(a) to the first Thursday in December.

Spring Sittings

From the first Wednesday in March to the first sitting day in June.

Fall Sittings

From the first Wednesday in October to Thursday of the week prior to the Remembrance Day Week.

Within these periods, the House is to meet on a day fixed by the Speaker at the Government's request and, unless adjourned earlier by order of the House, is to be adjourned by the Speaker, without a

motion for adjournment on the applicable day. The House then stands adjourned to the call of the Speaker.

The Government may call the House into session for four additional sitting days in June after the first sitting day in June to complete consideration of Specified Bills. On the last day of these four additional sitting days the remaining stages of Specified Bills not dealt with by the usual hour of adjournment will be deemed to be adopted and concluded. The House will not rise until royal assent has been granted.

If the day of the week on which Remembrance Day falls prevents the House from sitting for seventeen days in the Fall Sittings, the House may extend daily sittings until 10:00 p.m. Each of these extended sitting days shall count as two sitting days for the purpose of achieving seventeen sitting days.

These extended sitting days may be held at any point in the Fall Sittings for the business of supply and passage of The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act and to achieve the following Completion Days for Designated Bills:

*Second Reading per sub-rule 2(17)
Committee Stage per sub-rule 2(18)
Report Stage per sub-rule 2(19)
Concurrence and Third Reading per sub-rule 2(20).*

On the last Thursday sitting prior to the Remembrance Day Week, the remaining steps for Designated Bills and the business of supply and passage of The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act must be concluded. Any remaining steps not dealt with by the usual hour of adjournment will be deemed to be adopted and concluded. The House will not adjourn until royal assent has been granted.

Constituency Weeks

2(2) *The House shall not meet during the following Constituency Weeks:*

- (a) the week in which Remembrance Day falls if it falls on a weekday, or the week following Remembrance Day if it falls on a Saturday or Sunday ("Remembrance Day week");*
- (b) the week designated under The Public Schools Act as a spring break or vacation ("Spring constituency week");*
- (c) the week in which May 1 falls if it falls on a weekday, or the week following May 1 if it*

falls on a Saturday or Sunday ("May constituency week");

- (d) the week commencing on the third Monday of October ("October constituency week").*

Recall of the House

2(3) *If the Government advises the Speaker that the public interest requires the House to meet at any time because of an emergency or extraordinary circumstances, a reason for the recall must be provided. The Speaker must advise the Members that the House is to meet at the time specified by the Government and of the reason for the recall.*

Recalled House may meet for up to three weeks

2(4) *When recalled under sub-rule 2(3), the House is to begin to meet at the specified time, and unless adjourned earlier by order of the House, is to be adjourned by the Speaker, without a motion for adjournment at the usual adjournment time on the twenty-first calendar day after it was recalled. The House then stands adjourned to the call of the Speaker.*

Further recall of the House

2(5) *If the House is adjourned in accordance with sub-rule 2(4), the House must not be recalled again under sub-rule 2(3) until after the House has been in recess for a period of one week.*

Recall not prevented

2(6) *For certainty, nothing in this rule prevents the Government from recalling the House under sub-rule (3) at any time except sub-rule 2(5).*

Meeting outside sitting periods on agreement

2(7) *If the House Leaders agree, the House may meet at a time other than during a sitting period referred to in sub-rule (1).*

Specified Government Bills

2(8) *In order for a Government Bill to be specified, the following actions must take place:*

- (a) First Reading must be moved no later than the twentieth sitting day after presentation of the Throne Speech;*
- (b) Second Reading must be moved no later than the fourteenth sitting day after the First Reading Completion Day for Specified Bills; and*
- (c) The Bill has not been included on the list of Designated Bills tabled by the Official Opposition in accordance with sub-rule 2(9).*

Opposition Bills cannot be specified or designated.

Designation by Opposition parties

2(9) No later than the fourteenth sitting day after the First Reading Completion Day for Specified Bills, the Official Opposition may designate up to five Government Bills for the purpose of further consideration at a later sittings period. If The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act is identified as a Designated Bill, it counts as two of the five Bills that can be designated. If there is a second Opposition party, the division of Designated Bills is four for the Official Opposition and one for the Second Opposition Party. The Interim Appropriation Act may not be designated under this rule.

Second Reading moved for Specified Bills

2(10) On the same sitting day identified in sub-rule 2(9), and after Bills have been designated by the Opposition parties, the House is to not see the clock until the Second Reading motions have been moved for Bills the Government identifies as specified, excepting Designated Bills. On this day, the Minister, Critics and each Independent Member may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes each per Government Bill moved for second reading, followed by an up to 15-minute question and answer period for each Bill conducted according to the provisions of sub-rule 136(5).

Second Reading Completion Day for Specified Bills

2(11) On the following sitting day after the actions under sub-rule 2(10), the questions for Second Reading of Bills the Government identifies as specified must be put.

Committee Completion Day for Specified Bills

2(12) No later than the thirteenth sitting day after the Second Reading Completion Day for Specified Bills, Standing Committees must complete consideration of any Specified Bills that have been referred to those committees and report those Bills to the House on the following sitting day.

Report Stage Completion Day for Specified Bills

2(13) No later than the third sitting day after the Final Committee Report Day for Specified Bills, report stage on each specified Government Bills must be completed.

Concurrence and Third Reading Day for Specified Bills

2(14) No later than the second sitting day after Report Stage Completion Day for Specified Bills —

or in the event no report stage amendments have been filed, no later than the fifth sitting day after Final Committee Report Day for Specified Bills — Concurrence and Third Readings of Specified Bills must be completed. On this day, the Minister, Critics and each Independent Member may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes each per Government Bill moved for Concurrence and Third Reading. The House cannot adjourn until royal assent has been granted.

Actions to complete Second Reading, Report Stage and Concurrence and Third Reading of Specified Bills

2(15) If the actions referred to in sub-rules 2(11), 2(13) and 2(14) have not been completed by the noted date, the following provisions are to apply:

- (a) The House will not adjourn on that day until the Speaker has put all the applicable questions on all Specified Bills.
- (b) If by 3:30 p.m. Routine Proceedings has not concluded, the Speaker must terminate Routine Proceedings and proceed to Orders of the Day.
- (c) At 4:00 p.m. the Speaker will interrupt debate and put all questions on the remaining Bills with no further debate or amendment.
- (d) Matters of privilege and points of order will be held until all votes are completed.
- (e) Despite sub-rule 14(4), divisions on these Specified Bills cannot be deferred.

Actions to complete Committee Stage of Specified Bills

2(16) If the actions referred to in sub-rule 2(12) have not been completed in committee by the noted date, the following provisions are to apply if a committee is sitting:

- (a) If a Committee considering Bills has not completed public presentations, it must close public presentations at 9:00 p.m. By unanimous consent the deadline can be extended to 10:00 p.m. The public has the ability to provide written submissions for an additional 24 hours.
- (b) At 11:00 p.m. any member of the Committee who wishes to move an amendment to a Bill must file 20 copies of the amendment with the Clerk of the Committee, and the Clerk

must distribute the amendment to members of the Committee. After that time, an amendment may be moved only if copies of it were filed with the Clerk and distributed as required by this rule.

- (c) At midnight the Chair of the Committee must interrupt the proceedings and, without further debate or amendment (other than an amendment distributed as required by rule (b)), put every question necessary to complete clause-by-clause consideration of the Bills under consideration.
- (d) The committee must report the Bills to the House at its next sitting. In the event that the Committee fails to report the Bills at that sitting, the Bills are deemed to be reported to the House, as amended by the Committee (if applicable) and the report is deemed to be received by the House at that sitting.

Designated Bills

Second Reading Completion Day for Designated Bills

2(17) Within two sitting days of the session resuming, the question for Second Reading of Designated Bills must be put. Emergency recall sittings are exempt from this provision. On this day, the Minister, Critics and each Independent Member may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes each per Government Bill moved for second reading, followed by an up to 15-minute question and answer period for each Bill conducted according to the provisions of sub-rule 136(5).

Committee Completion Day for Designated Bills

2(18) No later than the ninth sitting day after the Second Reading Completion Day for Designated Bills, Standing Committees or Committee of the Whole must complete consideration of any Designated Bills that have been referred to those committees. Standing Committees must report those Bills to the House on the following sitting day while Committee of the Whole can report Bills on the same sitting day once consideration of the Bills is completed.

Report Stage Completion Day for Designated Bills

2(19) No later than the third sitting day after Final Committee Report Day for Designated Bills, Report Stages of designated Government Bills must be completed.

Concurrence and Third Reading Completion Day for Designated Bills

2(20) No later than the second sitting day after Report Stage Completion Day for Designated Bills — or in the event no report stage amendments have been filed, no later than the fifth sitting day after Final Committee Report Day for Designated Bills — Concurrence and Third Readings of Designated Bills must be completed. On this day, the Minister, Critics and each Independent Member may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes each per Government Bill moved for Concurrence and Third Reading. The House cannot adjourn until royal assent has been granted.

Actions to complete Second Reading, Report Stage and Concurrence and Third Reading of Designated Bills

2(21) If the actions referred to in sub-rules 2(17), 2(19) and 2(20) have not been completed by the noted date, the following provisions are to apply:

- (a) The House will not adjourn on that day until the Speaker has put all the applicable questions on all Specified Bills.
- (b) If by 3:30 p.m. Routine Proceedings has not concluded, the Speaker must terminate Routine Proceedings and proceed to Orders of the Day.
- (c) At 4:00 p.m. the Speaker will interrupt debate and put all questions on the remaining Bills with no further debate or amendment.
- (d) Matters of privilege and points of order will be held until all votes are completed.
- (e) Despite sub-rule 14(4), divisions on these Specified Bills cannot be deferred.

Actions to Complete Committee Stage of Designated Bills

2(22) If the actions referred to in sub-rule 2(18) have not been completed in a Standing Committee by the noted date, the following provisions are to apply if a Standing Committee is sitting:

- (a) If a Committee considering Bills has not completed public presentations, it must close public presentations by 9:00 p.m. By unanimous consent the deadline can be extended to 10:00 p.m. The public has the ability to provide written submissions for an additional 24 hours.

- (b) At 11:00 p.m. any member of the Committee who wishes to move an amendment to a Bill must file 20 copies of the amendment with the Clerk of the Committee, and the Clerk must distribute the amendment to members of the Committee. After that time, an amendment may be moved only if copies of it were filed with the Clerk and distributed as required by this rule.
- (c) At midnight, the Chair of the Committee must interrupt the proceedings and, without further debate or amendment (other than an amendment distributed as required by rule (b)), put every question necessary to complete clause-by-clause consideration of the Bills under consideration.
- (d) The committee must report the Bills to the House at its next sitting. In the event that the Committee fails to report the Bills at that sitting, the Bills are deemed to be reported to the House, as amended by the Committee (if applicable) and the report is deemed to be received by the House at that sitting.

Actions to Complete Committee of the Whole Stage of Designated Bills

2(23) If the actions referred to in sub-rule 2(18) have not already been completed in Committee of the Whole, the following provisions are to apply:

- (a) If not already in Committee of the Whole by 4:00 p.m. the House must resolve into Committee of the Whole.
- (b) At 4:00 p.m. the Chairperson must put the remaining questions without further debate or amendment to conclude consideration of the legislation before the Committee.
- (c) Matters of privilege and points of order will be held until all votes are completed.
- (d) Despite sub-rule 14(4), divisions on these Specified Bills cannot be deferred.

If no Speaker

2(24) If there is no Speaker, the Clerk is to act in the Speaker's place under this rule.

THAT sub-rule 4(5) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Committee of Supply Friday Sittings

4(5) Once consideration of departmental estimates has begun, the Committee of Supply may sit on Friday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. if

the House Leaders from all recognized parties provide written notice to the Speaker by 5:00 on the previous Wednesday.

4(5.1) When the Committee of Supply sits on Friday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. the Speaker must adjourn the Thursday sitting on Friday at 12:30 p.m.

4(5.2) Any Friday on which meetings of the Committee of Supply are held shall be considered to be a sitting day of the Legislature.

THAT sub-rule 4(6) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Intersessional committee meetings

4(6) During intersessional periods, any day on which meetings of Standing or Special Committees are held shall be considered to be a sitting day of the Legislature, and the Speaker shall record the number of sitting days which are Committee days. Despite sub-rule 92(8), ten calendar days notice is required for intersessional committee meetings.

AMENDMENT

THAT sub-rule 4(6) be amended to add the following words after "Legislature":

"but are not to be included in the count of the sitting days for Specified or Designated Bills,"

THAT the following be added after sub-rule 4(6), effective April 20, 2016:

Intersessional committee meetings to hear public presentations

4(7) Despite sub-rule 4(6), Standing Committees cannot meet intersessionally during the months of January, February, June, July and August to hear public presentations unless:

- (a) All recognized opposition parties have granted leave on the record; or
- (b) House Leaders of all recognized opposition parties have countersigned the letter from the Government House Leader calling for an intersessional committee meeting.

THAT sub-rule 9(1) be repealed and replaced with the following:

The Speaker's duties

9(1) The Speaker shall preserve order and decorum and enforce the Rules, and shall decide all questions of order without appeal.

THAT sub-rule 19(4) be repealed and replaced with the following:

Use of electronic devices

19(4) Members may use electronic devices in the House and in Committee in silent mode. During Oral Questions, such devices may only be used in the Loges.

THAT Rule 23 be repealed and replaced with the following:

Routine Proceedings

23(1) Routine Proceedings in the House at 1:30 p.m., and at 10:00 a.m. when it sits on a Friday, is as follows, unless the House orders otherwise:

- Introduction of Bills
- Committee Reports
- Tabling of Reports
- Ministerial Statements
- Members' Statements
- Oral Questions
- Petitions
- Grievances

Order after daily routine

23(2) After the daily routine of business, the Orders of the Day shall be considered as follows, subject to rules 29, 32(4) and 45(1):

- Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne
- Budget Motion
- Committee of the Whole House, for considering Bills
- Committee of Supply
- Report Stage, Bills reported from Committees
- Government Bills—Concurrence and Third Readings, Second Readings
- Government Motions
- Opposition Day Motions

Resolving into Committee of the Whole or of Supply

23(3) Whenever the Order of the Day is called for "Committee of the Whole House, for considering Bills" or for "Committee of Supply", the Speaker is to leave the Chair and the House is to resolve itself into the Committee.

Private Members' Business

23(4) Subject to sub-rule 4(3), Private Members' Business shall be considered as follows when the House sits on Tuesdays and Thursdays:

Tuesday:

10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (Private Members' Hour)

- Private Bills
- Public Bills
- Private Members' Resolutions
- Motions

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon (Private Members' Hour)

- Private Members' Resolutions
- Motions
- Public Bills
- Private Bills

Thursday:

10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (Private Members' Hour)

- Public Bills
- Private Bills
- Private Members' Resolutions
- Motions

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon (Private Members' Hour)

- Private Members' Resolutions
- Motions
- Private Bills
- Public Bills
- Deferred votes from previous Tuesday
- Private Members' Business at 11:55 a.m.

Divisions during Private Members' Business

23(5) A division requested during a Private Members' Hour on Tuesday must be deferred to the Private Members' Hour the following Thursday. The deferred vote shall take place at 11:55 a.m. on Thursday, and despite rule 14(4) shall not be further deferred.

23(6) A division requested during a Private Members' Hour on Thursday takes place immediately.

23(7) In the case of a division occurring pursuant to sub-rule 23(6), after the division is requested or after the vote is recorded on a division, the House shall consider the next item of business only with leave or if at least 30 minutes remain in that Private Members' Hour.

Private Members' Bills Question Period

23(8) Following the Sponsor's opening speech on the Second Reading of a Private Members' Bill, a ten minute question period on the Bill may occur.

During this question period:

- (a) questions may be addressed to the Sponsor by any Member, with the first question being asked by a Member from another party, followed by a rotation between parties;
- (b) each Independent Member may ask one question; and
- (c) no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

THAT the following be added after Rule 23, effective April 20, 2016:

Selected Bills

23.1(1) Each recognized party may select up to three Private Members' Bills per session to proceed to a Second Reading vote.

Bills to proceed to a Second Reading vote

23.1(2) Each Independent Member may select one Private Members' Bill per session to proceed to a Second Reading vote, and despite Rule 68(1), an Independent Member will not require a seconder to move each Reading motion for their selected Private Members' Bill.

Written notice

23.1(3) Written notice of each Bill, indicating the sitting day and time when the vote will occur, must be provided to the Speaker by the House Leader or the Independent Member no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled end of the Fall Sittings.

THAT the following be added after Rule 26:

ORAL QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

26.1(1) The time allowed for Oral Questions shall not exceed 40 minutes.

Rules of debate apply

26.1(2) The rules of debate shall apply to Oral Questions.

Time limits on questions and answers

26.1(3) Questions and answers in Oral Questions shall not exceed:

- (a) 60 seconds for Leaders of Recognized Parties.

- (b) 45 seconds for other Members and Ministers.

Order of questions

26.1(4) Following a general election and before the first House sitting period, the House Leaders must jointly advise the Speaker of the order, by party, in which questions will be asked during Oral Questions. The order will be followed for the duration of each Legislature, unless the composition of the parties in the House changes, in which case the House Leaders must, before the next House sitting, advise the Speaker of any change to the order in which questions are to be asked.

Prohibition on Points of Order and Matters of Privilege during Oral Questions

26.1(5) The Speaker shall not consider Points of Order or Matters of Privilege during Oral Questions.

THAT sub-rules 28(3) to 28(6) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Filing of Motion

28(3) An Opposition Day Motion shall be filed with the Clerk on a sitting day before the House adjourns, or before the usual adjournment hour, whichever is later.

Placing on the Order Paper

28(4) An Opposition Day Motion shall be placed on the Order Paper on the sitting day after filing, notwithstanding sub-rules 63(1) and 67(2).

Consideration of Motion

28(5) An Opposition Day Motion shall be considered on the same day it appears on the Order Paper.

Notifying House Leaders

28(6) The Clerk shall notify House Leaders and Independent Members on the day an Opposition Day Motion is filed.

THAT sub-rule 28(8) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Not for Second Reading or Concurrence and Third Reading

28(8) No motion under this Rule shall be for Second Reading or Concurrence and Third Reading of a Bill.

THAT sub-rule 28(14) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Debate limited to one sitting day

28(14) Debate on an Opposition Day Motion is to be limited to one sitting day. The House shall not adjourn until all Members wishing to speak to the motion have done so.

THAT sub-rule 30(1) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Orders not taken up

30(1) Subject to sub-rule 23(3), Written Questions, notices of motions by Members, and orders not taken up or proceeded with when called, may be allowed to stand and retain their precedence; otherwise they shall be removed from the Order Paper.

THAT Rule 31 be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

PRIVATE MEMBERS' RESOLUTIONS**Definition of "resolution"**

31(1) In this Rule, "resolution" means a vote, motion, resolution or address, but does not include a motion for the first, second or Concurrence and Third Reading of the Bill, or a motion to refer a Bill to a Committee.

Submitting a resolution

31(2) Each Private Member may submit one resolution per legislative session to the Clerk, who shall determine if it is procedurally correct.

Resolutions cannot be amended

31(3) Resolutions cannot be amended, unless by unanimous consent of the House.

Time limit of debate

31(4) Each resolution is to be considered for no more than three hours. At the end of the three hours of debate, or if there are no more Members wishing to speak, the Speaker must put the question.

Private Members' Resolution Question Period

31(5) Ten minutes prior to the end of the second hour of Private Members' Business, the Speaker shall interrupt debate to allow a ten-minute question period on the resolution under consideration. If a deferred vote under sub-rule 23(5) has been scheduled for this time the Speaker shall interrupt debate five minutes prior to the end of the second hour.

During this question period:

- (a) questions may be addressed to the Sponsor by any Member, with the first question going to being asked by a Member from

another party, followed by a rotation between parties;

- (b) each Independent Member may ask one question; and
- (c) no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

This ten minute question period shall count as part of the three hours of debate on the Resolution.

Tuesdays–Government Resolutions

31(6) Each Tuesday the Government House Leader or designate shall announce in the House which resolution will be debated during Private Members' Business on the following Tuesday morning.

Thursdays–Opposition Resolutions

31(7) If there is one Recognized Opposition Party, each Thursday the Opposition House Leader or designate shall announce in the House which resolution will be debated during Private Members' Business on the following Thursday morning.

Opposition Resolutions—more than one Recognized Opposition Party

31(8) If there is more than one Recognized Opposition Party, the Opposition House Leaders must submit to the Speaker an agreement that specifies which party's private member resolutions will be debated during Private Members' Business on each Thursday morning during the session. The House Leader of the party whose members' resolutions are to be debated the following Thursday morning shall make the announcement required under sub-rule 31(7).

Independent Member resolutions

31(9) One resolution submitted by each independent member will be scheduled for debate on a Tuesday morning and announced by the Government House Leader.

Seconder not required

31(10) Despite sub-rule 68(1), an Independent Member will not require a seconder to move their resolution.

Resolutions not disposed of

31(11) When a resolution is called for the first time by a House Leader of a recognized party during a Private Members' Hour, and

- (a) the resolution is not disposed of within that hour; or
- (b) the Member is not present or does not proceed with the resolution at that time;

the resolution is to be placed on the Order Paper at the bottom of the list of resolutions.

Request to "stand" or "adjourn" matters

31(12) *Despite sub-rule 35(1), during Private Members' Business, no Member may ask that a matter be allowed to "stand" and no motion to "adjourn" can be made respecting a resolution.*

THAT sub-rules 32(3) to 32(6) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Limitation on debate

32(3) *The debate on the motion for approval by the House in general of the budgetary policy of the Government, and any amendments thereto, shall not exceed six sitting days, including the day of the presentation of the Budget.*

Precedence on Order Paper

32(4) *The Order of the Day for resuming debate on the motion for approval by the House in general of the budgetary policy of the Government, and any amendments thereto, shall take precedence over all other motions for the same day.*

Interrupting debate

32(5) *Despite sub-rule (4), the Government House Leader may interrupt the debate on as many as two sitting days to call Government business.*

Disposal of questions

32(6) *On the sixth of the six days, at 30 minutes before the ordinary time of daily adjournment, unless debate has previously been concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the main motion, and any amendments thereto.*

Speaking times in debate

32(7) *No Member may speak for more than 20 minutes in this debate.*

Exceptions

32(8) *The 20-minute limit does not apply to the Leader of the Government, of the Official Opposition, or of a Recognized Opposition Party.*

A Leader who has not spoken for 20 minutes in this debate may, by giving written notice to the Speaker, designate one Member who may speak in the debate for as long as the Member wishes. If the Member then speaks in the debate, the 20-minute limit applies to the Leader.

Termination of debate

32(9) *On the eighth sitting day after the main motion has been moved, at 30 minutes before the ordinary time of daily adjournment, unless debate has previously been concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the main motion, and any amendments thereto. The Speaker shall not hear Points of Order or Matters of Privilege until all questions relating to this debate have been disposed of.*

THAT Rule 34 be repealed and replaced with the following:

Matters of Privilege

34(1) *When a Matter of Privilege arises it shall be taken into consideration immediately, except during Oral Questions.*

34(2) *A submission from a Member raising a Matter of Privilege should conclude with a motion giving the House power to impose a reparation or apply a remedy.*

THAT the item "MATTER OF PRIVILEGE" in the APPENDICES be repealed.

THAT sub-rule 36(1) be repealed and replaced with the following:

Setting aside regularly scheduled business of the House

36(1) *After Petitions, any Member may move to set aside the regularly scheduled business of the House to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, of which the Member has given prior notice to the Speaker not less than 90 minutes prior to the start of Routine Proceedings.*

THAT Rule 38 be repealed.

THAT sub-rule 43(2) be repealed and replaced with the following:

Exceptions

43(2) *The 30-minute limit does not apply to:*

- (a) the Leader of the Government or of a Recognized Opposition Party;*
- (b) a Minister moving a Government Order; or*
- (c) a Member making a motion of "no confidence in the Government", or the Minister replying to the motion.*

A Leader who has not spoken for more than 30 minutes in a debate may, by giving written

notice to the Speaker, designate one Member who may speak in the debate for as long as the Member wishes. If the Member then speaks in the debate, the 30-minute limit applies to the Leader.

THAT sub-rule 43(4) be repealed.

THAT Rule 44 be replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Limitation of debate on Address in Reply to Throne Speech

44 *The proceedings on the Order of the Day for presenting and debating the motion for an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, and on any amendments proposed thereto, shall not exceed six sitting days.*

THAT Rule 45 be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Precedence on Order Paper

45(1) *The Order of the Day for resuming debate on the motion for an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne shall take precedence over all other motions for the same day.*

Interrupting debate for Government business

45(2) *Despite sub-rule (1), the Government House Leader may interrupt the debate on as many as two sitting days to call Government business.*

Disposal of questions

45(3) *On the sixth of the six days, at 30 minutes before the ordinary time of daily adjournment, unless debate has previously been concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the main motion, and any amendments thereto.*

Speaking times in debate

45(4) *No Member may speak for more than 20 minutes in this debate.*

Exceptions

45(5) *The 20-minute limit does not apply to the Leader of the Government, of the Official Opposition, or of a Recognized Opposition Party.*

A Leader who has not spoken for more than 20 minutes in this debate may, by giving written notice to the Speaker, designate one Member who may speak in the debate for as long as the Member wishes. If the Member then speaks in the debate, the 20-minute limit applies to the Leader.

Termination of debate

45(6) *On the eighth sitting day after the main motion has been moved, at 30 minutes before the*

ordinary time of daily adjournment, unless debate has previously been concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the main motion, and any amendments thereto. The Speaker shall not hear Points of Order or Matters of Privilege until all questions relating to this debate have been disposed of.

THAT sub-rules 50(3) and 50(4) be repealed and replaced with the following:

Decision

50(3) *The Speaker shall decide the point of order and the Speaker's decision is not subject to appeal to the House and cannot be debated.*

Points of order ruled on by Chairperson

50(4) *Rulings on points of order by a Chairperson in Committee of Supply and in Committee of the Whole House are not subject to appeal, while rulings of a Chairperson on points of order in a Standing Committee can be appealed.*

THAT Rule 60 be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Written Questions

60(1) *Each Member may place up to five Written Questions on the Order Paper per session. A Written Question may seek information from:*

- (a) a Minister of the Crown relating to public affairs; or*
- (b) another Member relating to any Bill, motion or other public matter connected with the business of the House in which the Member may be concerned.*

In putting any such Written Question, or replying to it, no argument or opinion shall be offered or any facts stated, except so far as may be necessary to explain it.

Responses by Members

60(2) *A Member replying to a Written Question must do so within 30 days of the Written Question appearing on the Order Paper.*

Written Questions listed

60(3) *A Written Question that remains unanswered will be listed on the Order Paper once every two weeks.*

Replying to Written Questions

60(4) *A Member replying to a Written Question shall table the answer in the House or, if the House is not in session, follow established intersessional*

tabling provisions in accordance with sub-rule 24(2).

THAT sub-rules 60(4) and 60(5) be repealed.

THAT Chapter V (Rules 61 and 62) be repealed.

THAT the following be added as Chapter V (Rules 61 and 62), effective April 20, 2016:

CHAPTER V

CONDOLENCE MOTIONS

Condolence Motions

61(1) A condolence motion is to be considered during the Fall Sittings. A condolence motion may be considered during the Spring Sittings only by unanimous consent.

Notice not required

61(2) Despite Rules 43 and 63, a condolence motion is moved without notice during Orders of the Day.

No amendments

61(3) A condolence motion is not subject to amendments and speaking time limits do not apply.

Moment of silence

62 At the conclusion of the speeches the Speaker puts the question and asks Members to signify their approval of the motion by rising in their places for a moment of silence.

THAT sub-rule 75(1) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Rules observed in Committee of the Whole

75(1) The Rules shall be observed in a Committee of the Whole House, insofar as they are applicable, except the Rules requiring seconding of motions, limiting the number of times of speaking, and, in the case of the Committee of Supply, requiring Members to rise to speak. The speaking time limit in Committee of the Whole is five minutes.

THAT sub-rules 77(1) and 77(2) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Speaking Times in the Committee of Supply

77(1) With the exception of opening statements, Members shall speak for no more than five minutes in Committee of Supply debates.

Opening Statements

77(2) Opening statements from Ministers and critics from Recognized Opposition Parties shall be restricted to 10 minutes.

THAT the following be added after sub-rule 77(16), effective April 20, 2016:

Matters under advisement

77(16.1) During the consideration of departmental estimates and the debate on the concurrence motion in the Committee of Supply, when a Minister takes a question under advisement he or she must, within 45 days of the question being asked, respond to the question in one of the following ways:

- (a) in the Committee of Supply before the conclusion of that department's estimates:
 - (i) by providing the answer verbally, or
 - (ii) by tabling the answer;
- (b) in the Committee of Supply during the debate on the concurrence motion:
 - (i) by providing the answer verbally, or
 - (ii) by tabling the answer;
- (c) in writing:
 - (i) by tabling an answer in the House, or
 - (ii) if the House is not in session, by following established intersessional tabling provisions in accordance with sub-rule 24(2).

THAT sub-rule 78(4.3) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Limits on number of times Ministers can be called
78(4.3) The First Minister is only eligible to be called once on the concurrence list for a maximum of three days, while the other Ministers of the Crown can be called a maximum of three times.

THAT the following be added after sub-rule 84(4):

Rules Committee to meet twice per year

84(5) After consulting with House Leaders of recognized parties and each Independent Member, the Government House Leader shall call a minimum of two meetings per year of the Standing Committee of the Rules of the House.

THAT sub-rule 92(5) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Sitting past midnight

92(5) Except with the unanimous consent of the Committee, a Standing or Special Committee must not hear public presentations past midnight. After concluding public presentations, by unanimous

consent the Committee may sit past midnight to consider a Bill clause by clause.

THAT sub-rule 92(6) be repealed, effective April 20, 2016.

THAT sub-rule 111(1) be repealed and replaced with the following, effective April 20, 2016:

Meetings

111(1) After consulting with the PAC Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, the Government House Leader shall call a minimum of nine meetings of the PAC per year. To the extent practicable, the meetings shall be held at regular intervals.

THAT the following be added after sub-rule 136(4):

Government Bills Question Period

136(5) Following the Minister's opening speech on the Second Reading of a Government Bill, a question period of up to 15 minutes on the Bill may occur.

During this question period:

- (a) One question at a time may be addressed to the Minister by any Member in the following sequence:
 - (i) first question asked by the Official Opposition critic or designate;
 - (ii) subsequent questions asked by critic(s) or designate(s) from other Recognized Opposition Parties;
 - (iii) subsequent questions asked by each independent Member;
 - (iv) remaining questions asked by any opposition Members.
- (b) No question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Agreements

Your Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on June 26, 2015:

- THAT the Clerk's office be authorized to update Appendix E of the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings to accurately reflect the speaking time provisions contained within.
- THAT the Clerk may re-number the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and make other minor corrections that in no way alter the intended meaning of these Amendments.

- THAT the Clerk prepare revised rule books incorporating all amendments, additions and deletions.

- THAT these amendments to the rules are permanent.

Mr. Marcelino: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Logan (Ms. Marcelino), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Any further committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: Seeing none, we'll move on to tabling of reports.

Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister responsible for the Civil Service): It is my pleasure to table the Civil Service Superannuation Board 2014 Annual Report.

Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance): I'm pleased to table the report on amounts paid or payable to members of the Assembly for the fiscal year ending March the 31st, 2015.

Mr. Speaker: Any further tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, we have Dave and Sharon Ritchie, former coach of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, who is in town for recognition of the 1990 team that won the Grey Cup, along with their friends who are hosting them, George and Verna Froese.

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome all of you here this afternoon.

Also, sitting in the public gallery we have with us today Andréa Rondeau-Brown and Eman Marrakchi, who are the guests of the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko).

And also seated in the public gallery we have with us today Glenn Nanka, coach for south Winnipeg soccer club, who are the guests of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau).

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Floodfighting Equipment Ministers' Meeting

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Following the November 2015 NDP—or '14 NDP Cabinet shuffle, there was a meeting between the Minister of Infrastructure and the newly appointed Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) and the minister of local government.

Will the Minister of Finance confirm that this meeting was called for the purpose of discussing the \$5-million untendered contract for floodfighting equipment?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Well, Mr. Speaker, we've had many meetings. We've had many meetings on various issues relating to flooding and, indeed, many issues relating to this.

And, in fact, contrary to media reports, the minister of local government and the department of local government indicated very clearly that BMF would not be an appropriate source, not, by the way, that it's not appropriate to have funding for First Nations under BMF, it is, and not, by the way, because it's inappropriate to have funding for flood mitigation. But what was clearly indicated at the time was the degree to which BMF is for permanent flood mitigation.

So it was an option that was brought forward, in fact, recommended, as a potential funding source by the department and not proceeded with. In fact, we went to tender and, in fact, no contract has yet—

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

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, the minister says there were many meetings, but this is a very particular meeting we're discussing.

Multiple sources have confirmed that in November, following the NDP Cabinet shuffle, the Minister of Infrastructure met with the new Minister of Finance and the new minister for local government and that this meeting was to discuss the \$5-million untendered contract for floodfighting equipment.

My question for the Minister of Finance today: Will he confirm that this meeting was to discuss the use of the Building Manitoba Fund to pay the invoice

on the \$5-million untendered contract for floodfighting equipment?

Mr. Ashton: Again, Mr. Speaker, I think the member didn't hear the answer to the first question, and I want to indicate that, indeed, BMF was considered as a potential funding source. That, by the way, doesn't preclude going through a tendering process. But it was rejected because BMF, while it can provide funding for local governments, including First Nations, has not been used for flood equipment; it's used for permanent flood mitigation. So it was rejected.

And, indeed, the member's wrong. The matter did go to tender and, in fact, no contract has been awarded. The only funding for flood equipment has actually gone through the federal process, not the provincial process.

Mr. Friesen: The minister knows full well there are big questions about the timeline on all of this.

In November of 2014, the Minister of Infrastructure met with the new Finance Minister, with the new minister for local government. They discussed the \$5-million untendered contract for floodfighting equipment. Sources indicate that at this meeting the Minister of Infrastructure was advocating for the use of the Building Manitoba Fund to pay the invoice on that \$5-million untendered contract for floodfighting equipment, and all of this came after the October 8th Cabinet meeting.

Will the minister come clean today, the Minister of Finance, and admit that the NDP was still pursuing a \$5-million untendered contract for flood equipment in November of 2014?

Mr. Ashton: Speaking of coming clean, I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition is now going to take the opportunity to withdraw the comments that he made in the House last week, which were offensive to this House, or whether he's decided to perhaps make those comments outside of this House where there's a very different standard. And I say that, Mr. Speaker, because the bottom line here is the member opposite has no point.

BMF was considered. It is appropriate for permanent flood mitigation. It was clearly identified by the department, by the minister, as not being appropriate for a funding source for this. Going to BMF does not preclude going to a tender. We did not go to BMF. We did go to tender and no contract has been awarded.

So, again, the members opposite do not have a point. If there's any concern about tendering processes, Mr. Speaker, perhaps they should talk to the federal government because the only flood equipment—

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

Floodfighting Equipment Building Manitoba Fund

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Well, as the minister well knows, in November of last year there was, indeed, a meeting between the minister of MIT, the newly appointed Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), the minister for local government.

Will the minister of MIT confirm that he promoted the \$5-million untendered contract for floodfighting equipment at this meeting, after being turned down by Treasury Board?

* (13:50)

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Well, Mr. Speaker, I would again point out the silence from the Leader of the Opposition is deafening. It's this—I think the third day he's had the opportunity to withdraw the scurrilous comments he made last week, not involving just myself but people outside of this House. And I think the silence is deafening from the Leader of the Opposition that he has not taken the opportunity today to get up on his feet and indicate that he was wrong to use that kind of scurrilous attack that really raises questions about this new Mr. Positivity that we're seeing from the Leader of the Opposition and how serious it is.

But I want to stress again that we did consider BMF—we've been very upfront, Mr. Speaker, I've been very upfront on the public record—as the funding source. That does not preclude going through tender. But we did not proceed with looking at the BMF because it was clearly intended for permanent infrastructure, not for flood equipment. So it was considered and we did not proceed with it, period.

Mr. Helwer: It sounds like something the minister should have known before approaching the fund, then. Obviously, he met with those two ministers and this meeting was set to develop—to discuss the payment of the \$5-million untendered contract to NDP political friends and donors. Manitobans paying more and getting less.

Will the minister of MIT confirm that this meeting was to discuss the use of the Building Manitoba Fund to pay the invoice for the \$5-million untendered contract for floodfighting equipment?

Mr. Ashton: You know, Mr. Speaker, one of the problems when you read from prepared notes is that you don't listen to the previous answers, and I've answered this question repeatedly.

And I'll repeat for the member opposite, first of all, there was a tender. A tender was put out. No tender has been awarded. Second of all, the only tender, Mr. Speaker, only equipment that has been purchased is through the federal procurement process, not the provincial.

And third, we did look at BMF as a funding source. We have BMF funds in MIT and various other departments, but we, on consultation with the department of local government, it was very clear that's for permanent flood mitigation, Mr. Speaker, not for flood equipment. So we did not proceed with funding under BMF.

We did proceed to tender. The members opposite are wrong.

Mr. Helwer: Well, again, obviously, the meeting happened. It was to discuss the \$5-million untendered flood equipment by using the particular source that the minister has said he knew couldn't be used. So, obviously, he got a big no at this meeting.

Will the minister just come clean and admit that the NDP was pursuing a \$5-million untendered contract for flood equipment in November of 2014?

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I remind the members opposite again that in July of 2014 we opened the emergency outlet. We were dealing with significant opposition from First Nations who had concerns about a number of issues, including fisheries.

And I'd refer members opposite to a Free Press story, in fact, of July the 11th, where the headline states very clearly that First Nations sought additional flood protection. And we identified in negotiations, discussions with the First Nations, that they had put forward an emergency operation centre proposal back in the spring. So we did, Mr. Speaker, commit to the \$5 million worth of equipment.

But I want to stress again, Mr. Speaker, the equipment was the desire of the First Nations. They obviously want to have the same kind of equipment the Province had and municipalities had. And it did

go to tender, Mr. Speaker, so the members opposite are wrong.

Floodfighting Equipment Contract Tendering Process

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, six questions, six straightforward questions, in fact, and not one denial that a meeting took place where the issue of the tender was discussed and where the issue of floodfighting equipment promised in July, and fought for by the minister and the Premier for months, that it should be an untendered sole-source contract, not one denial that the meeting took place. Therefore, one would be led to believe that it did take place.

Now, if it took place, my question is this: When three ministers of the government meet in November to discuss the payment of a \$5-million untendered contract, did they do this with the full knowledge and approval of the Premier of Manitoba?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to congratulate the Bombers for winning the season opener. It's a promising beginning to a new season, and I also want to acknowledge Coach Ritchie for the contribution he made back in 1990 in *[inaudible]*

And this question is about a untendered contract which did not occur. This question is about an untendered contract which was not awarded. This question is about a meeting which did not happen.

What we have had is we've had a tendered process, Mr. Speaker, a contract not yet awarded about flood protection equipment that was required and desired by the Interlake tribal council which was sourced through federal funds. It is now being reviewed by the federal government.

We continue to want to invest in flood protection for all Manitobans. We're going ahead with the Lake St. Martin permanent channel. We're going ahead with the temporary channel being made permanent.

And I can see by your hands you want me to complete my answer in the next question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pallister: I'd like him to start his answer with the next answer.

You know, just because somebody tries to crack a safe open and doesn't get the combination right

doesn't change the fact that they tried to get into the safe.

And the fact is the Premier has never denied that for months he and his colleague tried to push forward an untendered \$5-million contract. They made the promise in July, the invoice was sent out in August, they repeated the promise time after time, and none of them, not one of them, has got up and denied that they tried to push really hard to get that \$5 million washed out for their friends.

Now, the Premier's spokesperson claims—not the Premier, mind you, but the Premier's spokesperson—claims that the Premier ordered a \$5-million contract to go to tender on October 9th, but the Premier has never provided any proof of that, and no one else has either. And the Premier refuses to answer when he ordered it to go to tender. In November, three of his ministers meet to discuss diverting money to this a month later, so it doesn't make any sense.

The Premier either kept the door open for an untendered contract in November or three of his ministers went rogue on him. So which is it?

Mr. Selinger: The short answer is none of the above, Mr. Speaker.

The requirement and the direction was to go to tender after a fulsome Cabinet discussion on it. It proceeded along that path. It was in fact tendered, not yet awarded. Federal government came in, provided resources. That was the way the Interlake tribal council secured additional flood equipment.

We have worked with all the communities in Manitoba to do permanent flood protection. That's why we're building these major outlets. That is the history of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. This is a province that has experienced very severe floods throughout its entire history, and governments are tasked to respond to the priorities of Manitobans, and one of the priorities of Manitobans is to keep communities safe. We have done that.

When the members opposite were in office, Mr. Speaker, they had the opportunity to upgrade the Winnipeg flood protection. They did not take advantage of that; we did. We spent nearly \$650 million providing one-in-700-year protection to the city of Winnipeg. We protected the Red River Valley. Now we're doing the same thing for the people of the Assiniboine valley, Lake Manitoba, Lake St. Martin, Brandon—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister's time on this question has elapsed.

Mr. Pallister: They care so much, Mr. Speaker, they trot out a promise to buy floodfighting equipment almost a year ago and haven't done it yet. That doesn't demonstrate caring.

The real priority here for the Premier and his colleague was to push through an untendered contract for \$5 million to a friend of their party.

Now, the Premier desperately tries to deflect, to hide the truth of dysfunction within his own government, but the Premier either knew about the November meeting where three of his ministers discussed this \$5-million untendered contract yet again, a full month after he says he ordered it to go to tender, or he didn't know about it and his Infrastructure Minister went rogue on him. It's one of the two.

Now, when this meeting took place in November of 2014, had the Premier lost control of his government entirely or was the Premier still trying to divert untendered contracts to NDP political friends? Which is it?

Mr. Selinger: The member opposite has received several donations. Some of them come from companies that opposed the Wheat Board. Is that the reason he opposed the Wheat Board or was that a truly held belief on his part that it was time to change that organization, Mr. Speaker? He has received funding from people that are in the real estate business. Is that the reason he 'opposes' rent controls? He has received funding on organizations that have been concerned about consumer safety measures. Is that the reason he voted against safety measures? He has received funding from employers that may not have wanted to see improvement to worker safety. Is that the reason he opposed that?

Mr. Speaker, we have healthy debates. There is a consensus in Manitoba that communities should be protected from floods. We have moved on that with investments in permanent flood protection, with 'invements'—investments in temporary flood protection, with investments in emergency air ambulance services to make sure people could be safely looked after when they are surrounded by water. All of these things are to address the priorities of Manitobans.

* (14:00)

The members opposite vote against it; we move forward and make Manitobans safer.

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

Tendering Timeline

Mr. Pallister: Well, let's think about it. The Premier and his party take \$1 million-plus from Manitobans in subsidy without their permission. Is that why they couldn't care less about Manitobans' best interests? Is that the reason?

We—our party gets donations of—on average, under \$200 from Manitobans, and we raise twice as much money because we are responding to the needs of Manitobans and the Premier is not, and his party receives. That's why we get donations, Mr. Speaker, because this is a Premier—you know, frankly, Mr. Speaker, this Premier, for months, condoned and supported the Infrastructure Minister in his attempts to operate in a clear conflict of interest to try to direct the \$5-million untendered contract to his pal for Tiger Dams, and multiple sources confirm that the minister persisted in that effort after the Premier claims—or at least his spokesperson claims—that he ordered these things to be tendered.

Now, in November, the same month that this was going on, the former minister for municipal affairs said, I regretted to understand that the Premier wasn't so much interested in my advice as he was in validation.

Would the Premier admit today—his ministers resigned in November, that same month—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition's time on this question has elapsed.

Mr. Selinger: This is the first government in the history of Manitoba to ban corporate and union donations, first government in the history of the province, only the second government in the history of the country to do that. How do the members respond? They opposed banning corporate and union donations. They still oppose banning corporate and union donations.

We have put limits on the amount an individual can contribute to a political party of \$3,000. They don't support that either, Mr. Speaker. We've got more transparency, we have more limits, and we have banned corporate and union donations. That

allows for democracy to be shared by everybody that wants to contribute to it.

What do they want to do? They want to go back to the old days. They want to go back to the way it was when four–five major brokerages made very significant contributions totalling over \$200,000 after they profited from privatizing the telephone system in Manitoba. That's the days they want to go back to.

We want to go forward, build a stronger Manitoba, safer from floods, better jobs and a stronger economy. They don't want to do that. That's what we want to do.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister's time on this question has elapsed.

Mr. Pallister: First government in the history of Manitoba to accept a \$1-million subsidy, demand it, in fact, from unwilling Manitobans. This is the first government to run on a promise not to raise the PST and then to break that promise and raise it in spite of that, the first government to take away the right of Manitobans to actually vote on that proposal.

This is not a record to stand up and be proud about; it's a record to be ashamed of. That's why the Premier tries to deflect attention to other issues.

Now, for months the Premier condoned and supported his Infrastructure Minister to direct the \$5-million untendered contract to a friend of the party's. In that same November that the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) was continuing to persist in that pursuit, the former minister for Jobs and the Economy, the Treasury Board minister, said, it's become clear that if you're in a position where you support the point of view of the Premier, your priorities and projects move up the queue ahead of what was once a government plan and what would, indeed, be the priorities of Manitobans.

Would the Premier agree that this is a very good reason why his rebellion occurred and why his people deserted him, because he refuses to put province ahead of partisanship?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, when what's now termed the great recession occurred in '08-09, we made a decision to move forward and keep the economy going in Manitoba. We did that with governments all across the country, a variety of political stripes. We generated some revenues to invest in infrastructure, which is what Manitobans said was their No. 1 priority.

We had a flood in 2011 that cost 1 and a quarter billion dollars, and then we had a report that says, you should spend at least another billion dollars over the coming years to protect communities so they don't go through that experience again.

When the original floodway was built, Mr. Speaker, and the diversion channel was built, it put at risk a number of First Nations communities in what might be called a sacrifice zone. They were never protected from the waters that were going to go through Lake Manitoba into Lake St. Martin. That—in 2011 those communities bore the brunt of the flooding that occurred in the province. We're rebuilding those communities now, in partnership with them, in partnership with the federal government, so that they will not flood again. They will be on higher ground; they will be on safer ground; they will have new homes and new infrastructure.

We voted to do that. The members opposite voted against it.

Mr. Pallister: The Premier's 'wight'—right on one assertion only, Mr. Speaker, and that is that the people around the lake, and particularly Lake Manitoba, bore the brunt of flooding, and that's true. But 11 months ago, he promised to buy floodfighting equipment and hasn't bought it. And, in fact, five years ago, there was a flood, and they're still having coffee parties rather than digging the permanent outlet.

Now, for months, the Premier has tried to push through a \$5-million untendered contract and he condoned the actions of his Minister of Infrastructure. Only now his spokesperson claims that he wanted it to go to tender in October. Yet he still had a rebellion of five senior members, including three former Treasury Board members, and there's a reason they rebelled.

Now, that same November that the minister opposite was persisting to try to push through this contract for his pal, these members left, and they had reasons for leaving. The former Finance minister said, remaining in Cabinet with integrity is no longer an option, and she considered those words before she spoke them.

Would the Premier admit today that his ministers resigned because they cannot serve a Premier who places party ahead of province?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, what we have consistently done is put the public interests ahead of

the cheap shots from the Leader of the Opposition every single day in this House.

That's why we moved on record investments in flood protection. That's why we moved on record investments in infrastructure. That's why we generated additional revenue to do that, because that has allowed Manitoba to be one of the top three economies in the country at a time of great economic fragility. That has allowed Manitoba to have one of the best job creation records of anywhere in the country.

And even the very right-wing think tank called the Fraser Institute commends us for the high degree of private sector job creation which has been created in this province. Even the business-friendly Canadian Federation of Independent Business identifies that business optimism is going up in Manitoba and the number of full-time jobs that they intend to create is going up.

More jobs for young people, better investments in flood protection, better investments in the economy, Mr. Speaker, more opportunities for people to live and work in—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister's time on this question has elapsed.

Lake St. Martin Emergency Outlet First Nations Fisheries Agreement

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, last July, the Minister responsible for Infrastructure, the member from Thompson, announced that the province would be opening the emergency channel from Lake St. Martin to Lake Winnipeg via the Dauphin River. The minister said that it was urgent and absolutely imperative that this get open.

Would the member confirm today that this emergency channel is running at its full capacity as he promised?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): Mr. Speaker, the member is quite correct. We did open the emergency outlet because of the flooding situation, and particularly the impacts on Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin.

And there was a protest, I believe, in around July 5th of 2014. This protest on site was later supported, I think, July 11th, by the AMC, by the Interlake regional tribal council, by First Nations in the area and fishers in the area. And it did prevent, at that point in time, further opening of the outlet. In

fact, there were protests that continued some time afterwards.

We did work with those First Nations. We did do some further enhancement of the channel later in the year, Mr. Speaker. And, indeed, we were initially prevented from operating fully, but it did operate—

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

Mr. Wishart: Mr. Speaker, maybe I should answer it for him, then. The answer would be no.

We all know that this channel was the site of the fishermen's protest, which led to two programs being offered, one to the Lake St. Martin fishermen where they're paid not to fish and a second one to Dauphin River First Nation where they're paid only if they fish. Total cost is about 3 and a half million dollars.

I wonder if, in return, the First Nations had, in fact, agreed to the opening of the emergency channel, and if they did that, why isn't it done?

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I point out that I put on the record before that we had, several months afterwards, after we'd agreed to the principle of settling issues related to fisheries, where we had a significant number of meetings. My colleague the Minister of Northern and Aboriginal Affairs was the lead minister in terms of this. We worked with fishers; we had a number of meetings with fishers directly as well. So it took several months to get agreement.

* (14:10)

And I want to stress again, both in terms of the flood equipment and in terms of the fisheries, these were issues that were raised by the First Nations in opposition to the operation of the outlet, Mr. Speaker. And it's critical for us to have a working partnership with those First Nations, not just for the emergency outlet but for the permanent outlet, by the way, which is not being built through coffee parties. We're doing the detailed design work.

The Leader of the Opposition is wrong. Maybe—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister's time in this question has elapsed.

Mr. Wishart: Yet again I'll have to answer for the minister. The answer is no.

A year after the minister announced it was urgent, it is not done. Compensation was announced, but it's not yet paid to the fishermen. The outlet is

still not at capacity and some hydrologists estimate it is less than 40 per cent.

Isn't the minister's get-it-done attitude, and image, taking quite a beating on this project?

Mr. Ashton: You know, Mr. Speaker, I note that about a year ago I offered the Leader of the Opposition a briefing on the matter and he still continues to run around to talk to people affected by flooding at Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. I think one time he said it could be built in three years, one time he said two. He said he can do it in a year. I don't know what planet the member opposite is from.

But we have the same kind of a commitment to build the emergency outlet into a permanent outlet that we did in terms of the original floodway built by Duff Roblin, the floodway expansion built by this government. It takes several years of detailed design, getting environmental approvals, and it takes at least three years to construct it.

So to members opposite, yes, we did get 'er done when it came to the emergency outlet, and we're going to get 'er done when it comes to the permanent outlets too.

ER Services Provision Record

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, under this NDP government, ER problems have gotten worse.

Heather Brenan was stuck in an ER for four days. Then she was sent home in a taxicab where she died on her doorstep. Heather's daughter Dana feels that the health-care system under this NDP government failed her mother and that her mother should not have died.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health: Will she admit that her mismanagement of the health-care system is failing patients?

Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Health): I'd like to thank the member for the question.

The events that happened and the tragedy that befell the Brenan family is something that I think every Manitoban is very heart—there's a heartfelt sadness there, and I can assure the member that when the report comes out we will be looking forward to the recommendations there and what can move forward.

I can also assure Manitobans that much work is being done in the ERs on an ongoing basis to ensure

that all Manitobans get the care that they deserve, the care that we want for all of our families.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, last week a Winnipeg woman arrived by ambulance at the St. Boniface hospital ER. She had sharp chest pain, shortness of breath and numb arms. She waited over seven hours, never saw a doctor, so in frustration she left and she became one of 25,000 patients who left an ER in the last year without being seen.

The NDP promised to fix that problem and they failed.

I'd like to ask this Minister of Health to explain: Why do they keep breaking their promises and failing Manitoba patients?

Ms. Blady: Again, I'd like to thank the member for the question.

If the member knows of a particular case or if the family involved in a particular case wants to come forward and contact my office, I would appreciate hearing from them because the only way things can change is if we know what's happened. And so, again, my door is always open. I know I have met with other members of the opposition and public members to ensure that cases are addressed.

So, again, we are continuing to invest. We are continuing to build on these kinds of findings, and, again, I'd like to assure Manitobans that when they come to an ER, we have hard-working doctors and nurses there to look after them.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, this NDP government has promised over and over and over to fix ER problems. Instead, many would say that our ERs are now in crisis.

Besides a significant ER nursing shortage, today we learned that Winnipeg ERs are short six ER doctors. Mr. Speaker, that is bad news for patients.

So I'd like to ask this Minister of Health to tell Manitoba patients who are stuck waiting for ER care: Why do they keep breaking their promises and failing Manitoba patients?

Ms. Blady: Mr. Speaker, we've been working hard with Manitobans and with front-line medical staff. The fact that we have 665 new doctors, over 3,700 new nurses, we are doing those kinds of things. We are investing.

We are also doing things like bringing the CancerCare hub to emergency departments. We are working with the Emergency Paramedics in the

Community and building QuickCare clinics. So we are continuing to work with the professionals, with the RHAs.

Members opposite don't even have a plan. I will remind the members opposite of the interview with CJOB and Charles Adler's famous words that they don't have a plan. So we have a plan. We're working. We're moving forward. All they've got is criticism and no plan.

Tiger Dam System Effectiveness of Equipment

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, we know that the flood task force report authored by eminent authorities in the field said Tiger Dams were ineffective on lakes where there are waves. The report also said that the second-hand tube-type diking materials provided by today's NDP government were often found to be defective.

It was inexcusable to consider not tendering the Tiger Dams contract but even more so to be promoting Tiger Dams as the best option to help people on Lake St. Martin.

Why was the Premier and his government even promoting the project for Lake St. Martin when there was no evidence it would work to help the community?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have acquired a variety of tools to help fight floods. Tiger Dams is one specific tool which has an application in certain situations. We've got Aqua Dams which apply in other situations. We have HESCO Barriers which apply in other situations. We have traditional sandbags which have been used by the millions in Manitoba. We've introduced super sandbags which are very large sandbags which could be deployed very quickly and protect against large amounts of water coming into an area from doing that.

So you have to use the appropriate technology for the appropriate situation at the appropriate time, and that mix—we take the advice of our professionals on what mix of materials and technologies we need, and we follow that advice. That's what we've done in all the floods that we've dealt with and will continue to do so.

Peguis First Nation Flood Protection Supply of Floodfighting Equipment

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, on April 30th, 2014, when I asked the Premier about

flood protection for Peguis First Nation, he replied, and I quote: We've provided them with resources for additional super sandbags and Tiger Dams.

It's a puzzle that the Premier would say the resources have already been provided for Peguis in the Interlake in April 2014, and then in July 2014 he was considering an untendered contract for more Tiger Dams for the Interlake.

I ask the Premier to tell us today: What was the inventory provided to Peguis? When was it provided? And what shape was the inventory in on April 2014 when the Premier said that Peguis already had lots of provincially provided super sandbags and Tiger Dams?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): I thank the member for the question.

We always make materials and technologies available to communities when they need it. When they are at risk, we make extraordinary efforts to bring materials and supplies into place. The member's—and that's what we do with every community in Manitoba when they're in a situation of imminent disaster, Mr. Speaker.

What we were discussing after that was permanent resources for the Interlake group of tribal councils to have their capacity, their own capacity to be able to respond to situations impacting on their communities. The federal government was interested in that. The Interlake group was interested in that. We were interested in that, and we tried to find a way to move forward on that. In the outcome, Mr. Speaker, the federal government provided \$5 million.

We're still working with those communities. When there's a threat or a risk, we will be there with them. We're still looking at additional capacity for those communities. We want communities to have the tools they need to protect their citizens from flooding.

Permanent flooding protection is always the place to go. That takes time to put the permanent flood protection in place. In the short term, we make emergency supplies available.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is caught in a pickle of his own making.

In April 2014, the Premier said in this Legislature that lots of super sandbags and Tiger Dams had been provided for Peguis First Nation. If the Premier is now unable to keep track of where he

spends Manitobans' money, he can't expect Manitobans will believe he's the right person to be Premier.

I ask the Premier: What had happened to the super sandbags and Tiger Dams that the Province had provided to Peguis First Nation in April 2014 that were gone so that a completely new and very large order of \$5 million for Tiger Dams had to be considered three months later in July 2014, an emergency measure?

* (14:20)

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we bring in equipment and technologies every time there's a spring flood threat in Manitoba. Every time there's a summer flood threat in Manitoba, we order additional equipment.

The Interlake group was looking to have their own supply of equipment to have a permanent ability to respond to floods. They actually do have quite a bit of equipment out there already. I've seen some of that equipment in action. I've seen the technology they have where they can fill up several sandbags all at the same time in a circular fashion with a machine invented by a person in Manitoba to reduce the amount of labour it takes and to increase the speed at which you could get sandbags in place.

There's always a demand for more equipment. We provide equipment on an emergency basis. We work with communities on a long-term basis to see the kinds of equipment and technologies they need, and while we're doing that we're building permanent flood protection in communities, individual flood protection throughout the Interlake, community diking programs throughout the Interlake, permanent channels out of Lake Manitoba. The emergency channel will be made permanent, Mr. Speaker.

All of those investments will cost hundreds of millions of dollars but will keep Manitobans safer, and that's the goal, Mr. Speaker.

Birds Hill Provincial Park Facility Improvements

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, you know, I read with interest over the weekend that the Leader of the Opposition wanted to be more positive. I had my doubts, and today sounded a lot like every other day. They're chasing after stuff that don't exist, and there isn't a single good thing going on anywhere in Manitoba according to members opposite.

So I will attempt a little bit of leadership by example. I will show them. You—they are more than welcome to go door to door and tell Manitobans their province sucks. I would welcome that campaign strategy from them. They're well on their way.

So here's how you ask a positive question about Manitoba. Manitobans, believe it or not, care about the environment. I wonder if the Minister of Conservation could inform us of a new initiative that we just announced today which brings more benefits to Manitobans—

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

Hon. Thomas Nevakshonoff (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship): I want to thank the member for asking a question about our parks here in Manitoba, because this is the parks province.

I was very honoured to spend the morning with the Premier (Mr. Selinger) at Birds Hill Provincial Park where we announced enhancements to the lake there. We were accompanied by Lynne Skromeda, the executive director of the Winnipeg Folk Festival, where this worthy event is held. Significant improvements to the lake: 15,000 square metres of additional water space on the lake. We've doubled the size of the beach. This is Manitoba's busiest, most active park, within 30 minutes of the city of Winnipeg.

Beach safety, in addition, Mr. Speaker, I want to add that this will be one of the safest beaches given that we've increased staff there during peak times; there will be 20 people, all in all.

Future works—

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

Manitoba Hydro CEO Resignation

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, over the past weeks and months, we've seen a number of staff leave this province for greener opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the minister responsible: Why did the CEO for Manitoba Hydro announce he's moving on? Manitobans are tired to have—paying more and getting less.

Hon. Eric Robison (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro): Let me, first of all, wish

Mr. Thomson the very best. Along with his family, he's made a decision to move on to other opportunities in his life, and I wish him and his family the very best of luck in their future endeavours in British Columbia.

And Mr. Thomson has done a credible job in trying to improve relations with Aboriginal people, particularly, in the province of Manitoba, other groups as well. So I commend the work that he has done and I wish him well into the future.

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, the PUB has to endure hours and hours of hearings, comments made by mismanagement of this NDP government, more than 20 per cent increases in hydro rates over the past three years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: What is the balance—or the payout for this individual going to be for leaving this province?

Mr. Robinson: Well, that is something that's going to be worked out between the board and the CEO in the time to come.

And I just want to respond to the earlier question that the member had. I believe that we're making the proper investments today as we get into the future. I think that we have a low-cost, reliable source of homegrown energy that's going to benefit not only our generation but, indeed, the generations to come.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: It is now time for members' statements.

Soccer in St. Norbert

Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, this weekend, sadly, Canada's participation in FIFA Women's World Cup came to an end, but I know many families in St. Norbert are still gearing up for the rest of their soccer season.

Today I have a special guest in the gallery named Glenn Nanka. Glenn is the coach for the U-9 boys Black Shadows soccer team with the South Winnipeg Community Centre. This fearsome eight- and nine-year-olds can really tear up the pitch. I know for a fact, as I was—as they were generous enough to let me guest coach them this spring.

Believe me when I say that these boys know how to have fun, keep active and really show off their skills.

Glenn is a long-time soccer coach who doesn't hesitate to give up his warm-weather evenings and weekends to spend at the soccer practices and tournaments. He was a soccer player himself until high school and has been coaching kids—his kids ever since they could kick a ball at three years old.

It's so important that our young people have sports and recreation opportunities close to home. The South Winnipeg Community Centre and St. Norbert Community Centre work closely every year to make sure that this happens. They also do a great job of encouraging and mentoring volunteer coaches like Glenn, including reimbursing volunteers who want to take soccer coaching courses. This gives them the tools they need to help everyone have a fantastic time on the field.

A huge thank you to Glenn and all the other coaches, directors and volunteers who encourage our budding athletes every step of the way.

Concours d'art oratoire

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Some of the province's most talented, young French speakers headed to the 30th National Concours d'art oratoire at the Hotel Novotel in Ottawa on May 30th.

The competition exists to increase and enhance students' interest in learning French and language skills, public speaking skills, confidence when using the French language, self-esteem and a sense of achievement. The national competition was hosted by the Canadian Parents for French. Provincial winners from across Canada participated in this esteemed national event and four Manitobans placed in the top three places in several of the categories.

Manitoba had two first-place winners, one second-place winner and one third-place winner at this national level competition. Pol Ferrers placed first in extended core french, Kayla Peters placed second in late immersion, Andréa Rondeau-Brown placed third in early immersion and Eman Marrakchi placed first in the francophone category.

Over \$160,000 in scholarships to the University of Ottawa, Université de Saint-Boniface, the University of Prince Edward Island, the University of Moncton and the Université Sainte-Anne were awarded to students. The success of our Manitoba students demonstrates the high quality of French

language learning programs and options that are available in our province.

The Concours d'art oratoire would not be possible without its sponsors including le Bureau de l'éducation française, Université de Saint-Boniface, Société franco-manitobaine.

I would like to thank the parents, teachers and volunteers for encouraging students to learn the French language. I would also like to acknowledge the staff of the Canadian Parents for French Manitoba including: Paulette Vielfaure Dupuis, CFP Manitoba president; Catherine Davies, executive assistant. Lastly, I would like to thank Pol, Kayla, Andréa, Eman and many young French speakers in Manitoba for demonstrating interest in the French language and representing Manitoba so well.

Thank you.

Asham Stompers

Hon. Melanie Wight (Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities): Arnold Asham, owner and operator of Asham Curling Supplies on McPhillips Street, founded the Asham Stompers in 2002 with a mission to recapture and preserve the history of the Metis people through the traditional dance of the Red River Jig. Everyone in this Metis and First Nations jigging group is related in some way to Reedy Creek, Manitoba, and they wish to inspire and bring hope to young people in the Aboriginal community by bringing their traditions to the world stage.

*(14:30)

Mr. Speaker, the Asham Stompers have performed over 100 times a year since they were founded and dance to standing ovations everywhere they perform. Here is just a small sampling of the many places they have performed: the World Curling Championships, the Blue Bombers halftime show, Dauphin Countryfest, the Aboriginal music awards, live on APTN, as well as at the 2010 Four Host First Nations Aboriginal Pavilion at the Vancouver Olympics, where they were lauded as being a highlight of the event.

Always looking for ways to share culture, heritage and the beauty of our province, Arnold also founded Stomperfest. This summer will be the 12th annual Stomperfest, hosted by the Asham Stompers and held in Reedy Creek. This is a beloved, family-friendly, long-weekend festival, which brings exceptionable—exceptional music and traditional dance to Manitobans.

For all his exceptional work, Arnold has won the Excellence in Aboriginal Business Leadership Award, the Manitoba business leadership award and the Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award. The Asham Stompers have also won the tourism award for Aboriginal tourism.

He has spent a lifetime sharing the strength of living traditions, promoting Metis and First Nations culture, and inspiring Canadians.

Thank you, Arnold Asham, for your contribution to Manitoba.

J.D. Lees

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): It's my pleasure to honour in this House this afternoon Mr. J.D. Lees, who, after 33 years of teaching at the Steinbach Regional Secondary School, has chosen to retire following this school year.

Mr. Lees, or as he is better known as J.D., took an active interest in the lives of his students beyond school. Many years ago, near the beginning of his teaching career, he gathered up a group of students to begin a local access TV show called The Regional, which broadcast the happenings of our school. He recruited a group of us somewhat shy students, got a few cameras and created not just a weekly TV show, but fond memories, memories that I'm often glad are only captured on inaccessible Beta-format tapes.

In addition, having been an executive assistant to Sterling Lyon before teaching, he shared his love of politics with those students who were interested, and I was interested. Because of J.D. and his willingness to teach and mentor beyond the classroom, I became involved in political activities and was able to travel to Ottawa and work on a national political convention at a relatively young age.

In fact, many young people were impacted by J.D. and his willingness to invest time in his students well beyond the classroom. He challenged us to defend our positions and beliefs, but did so respectfully. He gave us outlets to be creative in ways that we could hardly have done on our own.

And, when he got married, there were a number of his students in attendance, just down the street here at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, because his students were more than just students to him, they were also his friends.

I'm sure there are many things that J.D. helped me learn in the classroom but, frankly, they seem relatively small in comparison to how he impacted so

many of our lives by challenging us far, far beyond the prescribed curriculum.

After 33 years J.D. is retiring from the SRSS, and he told me last week that he feels he is leaving on a high note because his last year of teaching was so enjoyable. He will be able to spend more time with his family at his summer property and dedicate to his G-Fan Magazine and annual convention, which is dedicated to fans of Godzilla, and the time that I have doesn't allow me to explain the Godzilla fascination, Mr. Speaker. And, after all these years, I hardly understand it myself.

Thanks, J.D., for being a great teacher whose impact was never confined to the classroom. There are many of us who will forever impacted by you. Enjoy your retirement.

École Bannatyne Parent Council

Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Health): Along with teachers, principals, educational assistants and faculty staff, there's another group of people who give our kids the best possible school experience—parent councils and school volunteers.

École Bannatyne School has one such fantastic group, and I could never cover all of the ways they work for students in one short statement, but today I'd like to highlight three of their projects that deserve special recognition.

First is Bannatyne's playground revitalization. This beautiful outdoor learning area includes an outdoor classroom, a stage, natural musical instruments, a running track, a maze and more—all elements that stimulate a child's creativity and gives them another place to learn.

The second is their ongoing support for helping students go to Festival du Voyageur. École Bannatyne's parent council raises enough funds every year to send all the grade 3 to 5 students to Festival, while also putting on a Festival-themed school assembly for the students in kindergarten to grade 2 so that everyone can get a taste of the voyageur life. As a French-immersion school, it's very important to Bannatyne staff and to the students and families that they get to experience this part of Franco-Manitoban culture.

And the third project, which keeps getting more and more popular every year, is the parent council's community literacy evening event in April. Working together with teachers and staff, the parent council plans a literacy evening every year with a

number of literacy- and numeracy-themed stations. Mr. Speaker, this gives the students a chance to share their love of learning with their families, and this year well over 300 parents, step-parents, grandparents and guardians attended, a record turnout for them.

We are lucky to have such dedicated volunteers in Kirkfield Park who truly go the extra mile to make school memorable, educational and fun, and I hope everyone enjoys their well-deserved summer vacation, and we'll see you next September.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: Seeing no grievances, orders of the day, government business.

House Business

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Firstly, I'd like to announce the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on July 8th, at 7 p.m., to consider the following reports: Auditor General's Report, Annual Report to the Legislature, dated March 2014, chapter 5, Lake Manitoba financial assistance program, parts C and D; Auditor General's Report, Follow-Up of Previously Issued Recommendations, dated May 2014, section 15, Food safety; Auditor General's Report, Follow-Up of Previously Issued Recommendations, dated May 2015, section 6, Food safety.

Witnesses to be called include the minister and deputy minister of agriculture, food and rural initiatives, and the minister and deputy minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on July 8th, 2015, at 7 p.m., to consider the following reports: Auditor General's Report, Annual Report to the Legislature, dated March 2014, chapter 5, Lake Manitoba financial assistance program, parts C and D; Auditor General's Report, Follow-Up of Previously Issued Recommendations, dated May 2014, section 15, Food safety; and the Auditor General's Report, Follow-Up of Previously Issued Recommendations, dated May 2015, section 6, Food safety.

And the witnesses to be called include the minister and deputy minister of agriculture, food and rural initiatives, and the minister and deputy minister of Health. And that is for information of the House.

* * *

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

Mr. Chomiak: I would like to call third readings on Bill 200, The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act; Bill 206, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Employer Advisers); Bill 212, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Gift Card Inactivity Fees).

After that, Mr. Speaker, we would like to call second reading, Committee of the Whole House and concurrence and third reading on Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act.

May we have leave to have concurrence for the Committee of the Whole and third reading on that bill?

Mr. Speaker: Under orders of the day, it's been indicated to the House that concurrence and third readings, we're proceeding with bills in the following order: Bill 200, followed by Bill 206 and then Bill 212; followed by second readings of Bill 214 and then Committee of the Whole, Bill 214, and then concurrence and third reading of Bill 214.

And is there leave of the House to go to committee of the House, that we'd be able to proceed when we get to Bill 214, that it would go to Committee of the Whole and then, after that, by concurrence and third reading for the same bill?
[Agreed]

* (14:40)

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 200—The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay. We'll start by calling Bill 200, The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act.

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): I move, seconded by the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Wishart), that Bill 200, The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les armoiries, les emblèmes et le tartan du Manitoba, reported from the Standing

Committee on Social and Economic Development and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Friesen: It's my pleasure to stand and speak on Bill 200, to put a few more words on the record with respect to this important bill that would recognize a new emblem in the province of Manitoba.

As we have discussed at previous readings of this bill, Manitoba, of course, has many symbols, many official symbols, all of them important in their own right and all of them that denote certain things about our province. I often take the opportunity to remind our young visitors to the Legislature, when school groups come here, often a good starting point for discussions with young students is talking about symbols, because, of course, when those school buses full of kids pull up, one of the first things they see is the Golden Boy on top of the roof of this building. And one of the things they see immediately following, as they gather by the main staircase, the grand stair, they see the two bison at either side of the grand stair. So it provides a good start-off point to talk about symbols and their importance to this province, and, of course, we have many symbols.

And in recent years, we've adopted new symbols, so not just the ones we are familiar with like the plains bison, not just the prairie crocus, not just the Golden Boy. But now in more recent years, this province has added symbols like an official soil; many people are not aware that the black chernozem is the official soil of Manitoba. Manitoba now has an official fish; I believe it's the walleye is the official fish of Manitoba.

And today I would like to reaffirm my strong belief that the next symbol that this province should adopt is, of course, an official fossil emblem. And that emblem, as we have discussed in the last number of weeks in this Legislature, the emblem being put forward is that of the mosasaur, commonly referred to as Bruce the mosasaur.

Bruce, the most famous specimen, housed, of course, in the Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre in the city of Morden, and many people across this province have had the opportunity to see Bruce in what is now called the Mosasaur Hall. More people have now been stopping in again because, just earlier this year, they have unveiled the latest specimen, which is Suzy the mosasaur. So now the Mosasaur Hall in CFDC has two official mosasaurs there. The

fact of the matter is we know that the specimen that is exhibited there is the largest specimen in the world. So that's not just an accolade for the city of Morden but also an important symbol for the province of Manitoba.

I would add that the recently released motion picture Jurassic World—spoiler alert—I think features the mosasaur prominently in the film. And I will try not to give away all the details for those of my colleagues who have not yet seen the movie, but I have it on good authority that the mosasaur figures prominently toward the end of the movie and has a very, very decisive role. Now, I won't go any nearer to the plot than that, but how exciting for our province.

What a great opportunity to recognize a new symbol, exactly at a point in time when the world is seeing this motion picture. I understand, I think it broke every record for the first weekend release, and the numbers were just staggering in terms of the revenue generating—generated. So right now, dinosaurs are huge. Right now, fossils are huge, and what an important time for our province to recognize a fossil emblem.

And as discussed before at the third reading—the report stage, I did note, Mr. Speaker, that with respect to this bill it was the suggestion of witnesses at committee to actually strike the words marine reptile from the bill's wording so that this new emblem would be recognized as just a fossil emblem. That made it simpler, of course, to say and perhaps simpler for people to latch onto and, of course, we understand that the reason we can do that is because it has the full support of the scientific community in Manitoba.

I believe that there was that—there was a group struck by the minister that was to investigate and look at various candidates and to see what would be the best recommendation for a new fossil emblem for Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm—I proceed on the basis that we will get this job done, that royal assent will come and that we will soon be able to start talking about forging a new lapel pin and I would—for one, would be very, very proud to have the emblem of the mosasaur on the lapel. I know that it would have tremendous interest to those same school groups who come here to visit the Legislature who are interested in the emblems of Manitoba.

It will be a proud day for our province, a proud day for the city of Morden, a proud day for the Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre, but indeed it would be proud for all of us because this is a symbol that continues to garner more and more attention in professional circles and worldwide.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the mosasaur becoming our official fossil emblem. I think this is a good step forward. It's been recommended by a number of professional sources, as we heard at committee, and I think is fitting that we are recognizing the fact that we have a major place of mosasaur and marine fossil reptile bones here in Manitoba and that the museum in Morden has been right at the forefront in helping show these marine reptiles, including Bruce the mosasaur to Manitobans and to the world.

I think this is a positive step and I'm certainly ready to support this. I know from my own experience blogging that one of the most popular posts I ever put up was on Bruce the mosasaur, far more popular than most of the political posts I do. So Bruce the mosasaur wins out, and he's going to win out today with becoming our fossil emblem.

So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on this matter?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: House ready for the question? The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 200, The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act.

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

Bill 206—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Employer Advisers)

Mr. Speaker: Now, proceed to call Bill 206, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Employer Advisers).

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye): I move, seconded by the member from Brandon West, that Bill 206, the workers compensation amendment act, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Smook: Presently, the Workers Compensation Board does not provide for an employer adviser. Employee advisers are available for anyone who may have a claim for compensation, but there is presently nothing available for a worker—or, sorry, an employer adviser.

*(14:50)

The bill would amend the act to provide for the appointment of employer advisers to assist employers in relation to claims for compensation by workers.

Presently, the entire cost of workman's compensation is covered by employers. They bear the brunt of it, so it's only fair that they have somebody to turn to to understand what is happening. There's a lot of small business out there who really don't understand the system or know how to navigate it. So having an adviser that they can turn to is really important. I mean, it's only fair that they are picking up the entire cost of workman's compensation that they should have somebody that they can turn to.

I know that there's a lot of instances that I've heard from people where they're lost; they don't know who to turn to; they make some phone calls. But if they have a definite place and somebody who's definitely set to help employers, it would definitely benefit them. And we know that small business is a very important part of Manitoba's economy, so because they are bearing the cost it's only fair that they do have somebody that they can turn to in a time of need.

I would ask all members opposite to please vote for this as it's all about fairness as well; it's not just about the workman's compensation board. We understand workers need advisers for help because they're—they need to navigate the system as well. So I would just ask that they take a good look at this bill and pass it.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Erna Braun (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I will be speaking in opposition to this bill.

Our government has a very strong record of protecting Manitoba workers, and we continue to make sure that Manitoba workplaces are among the safest in the country and we do that by working collaboratively with employers as well as the workers.

As a major part of our five-year plan on injury and illness prevention, the Workers Compensation Board created SAFE Work Manitoba which focuses on prevention through safe practices, safe behaviour and safe environments, because we believe every worker should come home safe at the end of their shift. And this they have done in conjunction with employers as well as workers.

SAFE Work Manitoba offers safety resources and health resources to employers as well as employees, and they do so in 18 different languages. For the coming years SAFE Work Manitoba has set goals to help develop more industry-based safety associations. We are working with employers to establish safety associations that are based on the circumstances within their industry and, actually, just a number of weeks ago we saw the first safety association established in 20 years by working collaboratively with the industry, with the employers and the motor—pardon me—Motor Vehicle Safety Association is that association that was developed over the course of the last year.

We are—we have amended the Workers Compensation Act to strengthen injury prevention and increase penalties for claim suppression. It's important for workplaces to be safe and the WCB has incentives for employers which will facilitate safer workplaces.

We believe in working with small businesses and that's what the Workers Compensation Board has done. They want to make sure that businesses are safe, workers are safe and the employers are a part of that complement to make sure that that happens.

We've introduced a number of incentives to help small businesses so that they can continue to flourish in Manitoba. Workers Compensation Board and SAFE Work Manitoba are also looking at ways of improving supports that will be flexible not only for workers, but also the employers so there are opportunities for employers to get the supports that they need in the course of the work with dealing with their claims.

The Workers Compensation Board service—serves employers through these—their practices advocate. Employers are able to proceed to the Fair Practices Advocate to help support them in issues where they feel that they'd been treated unfairly.

So I think that through the Workers Compensation Board there are adequate things that they—are available to employers to support them with

claims they feel where they've been treated unfairly. So I think that the WCB already has in place numerous different avenues for employers to be able to be supported in the course of reviewing claims.

Thank you.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Just before recognizing the honourable member for River Heights on this matter, I'd like to, as has become our tradition here, to recognize our pages who are on their last day with us in this Assembly.

And, of course, we have three pages are with us this afternoon, and it'll be their last day helping us out.

And, of course, I'd like to start first with our page Vida Ebadi, and Vida was recently graduated from Kelvin High School with an average of 89 per cent. Vida was born in Afghanistan but left when she was two years old, and from there they moved to Russia and then to Canada when she was four years old. Next year, Vida will be attending Carleton University for public affairs and policy management, and we wish her well in her future endeavours and hopefully that she'll come back to Manitoba.

Wish you well. Thank you for your help to the Assembly.

We also have with us for the last day, we have our—one of our pages, Vanessa McKay. Vanessa has just completed grade 11 at St. James Collegiate and after grade 12 wishes to attend the University of Winnipeg, not sure at this point in time what career, but page—average at in school is 95 per cent and enjoys—or pardon me, Vanessa enjoys outdoor activities, especially rock climbing. And Vanessa will be school president for the St. James Collegiate for the coming year.

And also our last day for our page Samantha Booth. Samantha attends Niverville Collegiate and has just graduated grade 12, taking a year off to work in St. Pierre and Steinbach hospitals and intends to pursue a career in corporate law. Samantha immigrated from England and became a Canadian citizen the 25th of June, and also her parents became Canadian citizens on the same day. And we wish her well in her future endeavours and thank her very much for the service to the Assembly.

I thank honourable members while we recognize our pages and honour their service to the Assembly.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Now we'll move on to the honourable member for River Heights.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Just briefly, Mr. Speaker, I note that in spite of the words of the minister, that there are still employers who are feeling that they're not getting the help and advice that they need in order to steer things and to help them. And I think this is not an unreasonable proposal, to have these advisers, and I would be prepared to support this bill.

Ms. Jennifer Howard (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I just want to put a few words on the record about this bill.

I am also standing in opposition to this bill. I appreciate very much the words of the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Smook) and the member for River Heights and their intention to ensure that employers have good information about their responsibilities under The Workers Compensation Act. And I appreciate the words of the minister laying out how that is happening and appreciating that there's more work to do.

My fear about this bill is that it may put the Workers Compensation Board into an untenable position of being asked to fund attempts to suppress claims. Claim suppression is illegal. In this Legislature, we brought in laws to strengthen the fines for that. And at committee, I think we heard clearly that what the hope was from the representative there for the CFIB was that these people would act for—as advocates for employers and would encourage them to appeal claims. And that is very different than having somebody in a position to talk to you about your responsibilities and rights under The Workers Compensation Act.

Mr. Speaker, we know that one of the ways claim suppression happens is employers, very few, because the vast majority of employers appreciate their responsibilities and know them and exercise them, but a few—there are a few employers out there who will try to discourage their workers, their injured workers, from putting forward claims by making it a practice to appeal every claim, whether they believe they have grounds or not, and making it as difficult as possible for that injured worker to secure the compensation to which they're entitled. So because I believe that this bill could put the board in

the position of having to fund that kind of practice, I am standing opposed to it.

The other thing I want to remind the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Smook), you spoke about the fact that the workers compensation system is paid for by employers. That is part of a historical trade-off. The trade-off for that is that employers can't be sued by employees when they're injured. That is why it is an employer-funded system. And I think that, for many, many employers, not all of them, they appreciate this kind of system of insurance where they know that they can't be sued, they know that there is a system of checks and balances.

So I just wanted to make it clear to this Legislature why I will be opposing this piece of legislation today.

* (15:00)

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

House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House in concurrence and third reading of Bill 206, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (Employer Advisers).

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please signify by saying nay.

An Honourable Member: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In the opinion of the Chair, the Nays have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division.

Bill 212—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Gift Card Inactivity Fees)

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call, under concurrence and third readings, Bill 212, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Gift Card Inactivity Fees).

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): I move, seconded by the member for Southdale (Ms. Selby), that Bill 212, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Gift Card Inactivity Fees); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur (frais d'inactivité applicables aux cartes-cadeaux), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Swan: I'll be very brief this afternoon.

Of course, gift cards are part of the retail landscape in Manitoba and, indeed, across the country. And back late in 2006, this government did the right thing and brought in amendments to The Consumer Protection Act to provide that gift cards issued for consideration that are sold to consumers cannot have an expiry date. That was certainly the right thing to do to give consumers the confidence that the gift cards that they would buy and give to other people would hold their value indefinitely.

However, under The Consumer Protection Act and the regulations as they presently stand there are certain exceptions, and at present it allows certain sellers of gift cards to charge an inactivity fee if the cards are not used for one year. That inactivity fee is \$2.50 per month or \$30 per year. When you consider that the average gift card that's purchased is between \$50 and \$100, it doesn't—it's quite easy to see that it doesn't take long for the entire value of those cards in certain circumstances to disappear if the cards aren't used.

The particular sellers that are able to do this are shopping centres. They sell gift cards which can be used in a number of different retailers within their premises, and it really is a fee that consumers are paying for the privilege of having somebody else hold on to their money.

This will really create a level playing field between retailers—some of whom may have hundreds, or in the case of a Tim Hortons, maybe even thousands of outlets across the country—with shopping centres who may have gift cards that can be

used for multiple retailers but who are all under one roof.

I want to thank Gloria Desorcy of the Consumers' Association of Canada, Manitoba Branch, who came to committee to speak in favour of the bill. Her comments were fairly short and to the point: Consumers who spend money to buy a gift card expect the recipient of that gift card will get full value for the money spent. I can't really improve on that, Mr. Speaker, so I won't.

I would point out that Manitoba consumers will still want to be cautious when buying prepaid cards issued by banks which may be beyond the jurisdiction of provincial law. But, certainly, consumers, when this bill takes full effect, will have confidence that if they go to Polo Park or St. Vital or any other shopping centre, they will know that the recipient of that gift card will be able to use it without the fear of the card losing its value.

I do, as I did at second reading, just want to put a brief comment on the record. At second reading we did do a little run through of the new rules that I think everybody in this House will be happy to see passed into effect. I think there was some helpful questions put forward by the opposition. I also want to thank other members of the opposition for useful questions at the committee hearing. I think it was very helpful.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do look forward to the passage of this bill. I think we all look forward to an early proclamation date and the amendment of regulations.

And, Mr. Speaker, this bill is not a huge deal, but it is a good deal, and we want to give Manitoba consumers just a little better deal.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): I do wish to speak very briefly on Bill 212.

We have now seen it as a commonplace when you want to gift something to an individual and they've basically got everything in the world anyway, so you buy them a gift card. And a lot of individuals are under the impression that the gift card, whether it's used once or whether it has not been used for a year, that the amount of money that's placed on that card stays there. And, I know, for myself, I've purchased many of these and I've been told after I gifted it that, you know, you have to be very careful because within a year they start taking money off the

card as being an unused card. Or, if you have a \$100 card and you happen to use \$47 on it, after you use it, they start taking a monthly fee off, and I understand that the bill in front of us will rectify that situation.

And, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that concerned me about the other system was that the rules were printed, but they were printed in such a fashion that you would actually have to take a lot of time to actually read through them all to figure out that there was a system whereby they would take money off of that gift card. And pleased that this bill has been moving forward; it went to committee and the presenters seemed to be in favour, which is good. We have a great system here in this province that individuals who have concerns or support the legislation have that right. And it seems to be something that is universally accepted not just by the retail community but also by consumers.

And, Mr. Speaker, very pleased to see this bill continue on its process to royal assent.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on this matter? House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 212, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Gift Card Inactivity Fees).

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

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 214—The School Bus Driver Day Act

Mr. Speaker: We'll now move to second readings, Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Steinbach, that Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act; Loi sur la Journée des conducteurs d'autobus scolaires, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ewasko: I'm pleased to introduce Bill 214—or speak to Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act, aimed to recognize the important work of school bus drivers in Manitoba. This bill would legislate the third Wednesday of April as School Bus Driver Day.

School bus drivers provide an essential and often overlooked service in our communities. The efforts of Manitoba school bus drivers truly provide parents, caregivers, teachers, education professionals and school divisions with a valuable service. They carry the immense responsibility of safely transporting large numbers of students on a daily basis both to and from school but also on field trips, sporting events and other important trips.

School bus drivers are often students' first and last point of contact within their school day, and they act as leaders to the students who they transport. In addition, Mr. Speaker, to the safe transport of students, school bus drivers must ensure the proper behaviour of students on their bus, teaching kids the important lesson of how to properly act in groups on vehicles. School bus drivers are also responsible for teaching students how to be safe on and around roadways.

While we have days to recognize and thank other members of the educational community, the valuable contributions provided by school bus drivers are often unfortunately overlooked. Especially in rural and remote areas, school bus drivers are essential to families for whom there are few options for getting to and from school by ensuring that the transportation is not a barrier to access to education. Their services help to mitigate geographic and socio-economic challenges that burden some families with school-age children. To these families, the school bus driver's fundamental to their child's education.

School bus drivers also play an important role in keeping our children safe while they are between the care of their families and their schools. Bus drivers are not only responsible for the safety of students within their vehicles but also that of students around their vehicles. As students cross streets at some of the busiest hours of the day, their bus drivers enforce rules so that drivers are cautious and alert.

*(15:10)

The PC Party appreciates the service that school bus drivers provide to ensure all Manitoba students have proper access to education. We understand that all youth in all parts of Manitoba, and no matter where they live or what their race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation or culture may be, must be given equal opportunities for the best quality education in early years and later. We expect all members of this House will be recognizing the

essential work of school bus drivers in voting in favour of this bill, Mr. Speaker.

I want to put a few extra words on the record today, Mr. Speaker, mentioning my long-time school bus driver for myself, Mr. Arthur Ludzig [*phonetic*], who at one time, I mean, he was there when I had entered kindergarten and had a little bit of a walk to catch that bus. It wasn't quite a quarter mile, but it was a fair distance for a young person getting on a bus in rural Manitoba, and he was also the bus driver when I graduated from high school as well. So 13 years of riding Mr. Ludzig's [*phonetic*] bus, and I know that some days he was the most gentlest of giants, and other days he was the scariest thing next to anybody you could imagine, especially if you got out of line on that bus.

Unfortunately, Mr. Ludzig [*phonetic*] had passed away a few months ago, and I wanted to, hopefully, have his family here to celebrate this School Bus Driver Day Act with them as well. But many of the thousands of bus drivers that take on that responsibility to again be the first point of contact with our children in this province to the ones who are the last point of contact—contact at the end of the day when they drop them safely off at home, they are definitely tasked with some very tough situations on a day-to-day basis.

And so, with that, I appreciate the opportunity to get up and speak to Bill 214, and I look forward to the government side voting in favour of this bill and moving it forward on to committee stage.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): You know, it's, I believe, important that we recognize school bus drivers. They play a pretty important role in looking after our children, transporting them safely, getting them to school, and sometimes transporting them on trips and on journeys for other reasons. And so I welcome this bill coming forward and hope we can move it forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on this matter?

Is the House ready for the question?

The question before the House is second reading of Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act.

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

Mr. Speaker: Just prior to going to call Committee of the Whole, I'd like to, because one of our pages wasn't here when I introduced the pages and thanked them for their service to the Assembly, Vanessa McKay, of course, I've read to members of the Assembly about her involvement in grade 11 at St. James Collegiate. And, of course, she wishes to attend the University of Winnipeg, and her average currently in school is 95 per cent, and she enjoys rock climbing. And, of course, we'd like to thank Vanessa for her service to the Assembly, and while she's here at the time, so thank you very much, Vanessa.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Okay, we'll now proceed to call Committee of the Whole.

Madam Deputy Speaker, will you please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill 214—The School Bus Driver Day Act

Madam Chairperson (Jennifer Howard): Will the Committee of the Whole House please come to order.

The committee will be considering Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act.

Does the bill sponsor, the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, have an opening statement?

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I do not.

Madam Chairperson: He does not. We thank the member.

Does any other member wish to make an opening statement on Bill 214?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection): Just a couple of quick comments with regard to this school bus driver awareness day act.

As a parent who had children, of course, take a bus to school every day for many, many years out by Lorette, and also as a former schoolteacher, bus drivers, quite frankly, I don't think—I think everyone here will agree that they don't get thanked enough for all that they do.

As a teacher, you're in a classroom of 25 kids to 30 children, and you have a little bit more freedom as opposed to a bus driver who has those 60 kids in a bus driving to school and also after school, and

students can get a little rambunctious, of course, maybe more on the way home from school. And so we need to—we really need to take time to thank and acknowledge everyone involved with our children's education, including school bus drivers.

Bus drivers must take on the massive responsibility that comes with their jobs and they carry our most precious cargo. And our government is very, very pleased to make a couple of comments with regard to this legislation, and school bus drivers awareness day act, I believe, recognizes bus drivers in a way that we all would want them recognized and thank them for the great job they do.

Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Seeing no other members, we'll move to consider the bill clause by clause. The title, preamble, and enacting clause are postponed until all other clauses have been considered.

Clause 1—pass; clause 2—pass; clause 3—pass; preamble—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

This concludes the business before the committee.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Ms. Jennifer Howard (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole House has considered Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act, and reports the same without amendment.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

* (15:20)

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS (Continued)

Bill 214—The School Bus Driver Day Act

Mr. Speaker: We will now proceed to call under concurrence and third readings Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer), that Bill 214, The

School Bus Driver Day Act; Loi sur la Journée des conducteurs d'autobus scolaires, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ewasko: Just to put a few additional words on the record and to add a few brief statements to what I've already put on the record in second reading, we hope that all members of this House can appreciate the contributions of the school bus drivers in the safety and prosperity of our children. The safety and well-being of members and communities throughout the province is truly enhanced because of the contributions and commitment of those school bus drivers, Mr. Speaker.

We expect all members of this House will recognize the essential work of school bus drivers in voting in favour of this bill, and I'd—and I would like to thank all members of this House for moving this bill to third reading and—because it is very important that students' families and all Manitobans recognize the essential services provided by school bus drivers in joining the Progressive Conservative Party and recognizing them with the introduction of School Bus Driver Day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on this matter? House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 214, The School Bus Driver Day Act.

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

House Business

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

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you please canvass the House to see if there's leave to waive rule 91, and if there's also leave to bring forward a motion to amend the committee report from the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to waive rule 91? *[Agreed]*

And is there leave to bring forward a motion to amend the committee report from the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House? *[Agreed]*

Okay. The honourable Government House Leader. Leave has been granted.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), that the First Report of the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House received on June 29, 2015, and subsequently amended be concurred in.

No, wrong motion.

I move, seconded, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member of Steinbach

THAT the First Report of the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House received by the House on June 29th, 2015, be amended in section 2(1) by deleting:

The government may call the House into session for four additional sitting days in June after the first sitting day in June to complete the consideration of specified bills. On the last of these four sitting days the remaining stages of specified bills not dealt with by the usual hour of adjournment will be deemed to be adopted and concluded. The House will not rise until royal assent has been granted.

And replacing it with:

The government may call the House into session for four additional sitting days in June after the first sitting day in June to complete consideration of specified bills. On the last of these four sitting days the remaining stages of specified bills not dealt with by the usual hour of adjournment will have all remaining questions put to a vote following the provisions outlined in section 2(15). The House will not rise until royal assent has been granted.

And that the report be further amended in 2(1) by deleting:

On the last Thursday sitting prior to Remembrance Week, the remaining steps for designated bills and the business of supply and passage of The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act must be concluded. Any remaining steps not dealt with by the usual hour of adjournment will be deemed to be adopted and concluded. The House will not adjourn until royal assent has been granted.

And replacing it with:

On the last Thursday sitting prior to Remembrance Week, the remaining steps for designated bills and the business of supply and passage of The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act must be concluded. Any remaining steps not dealt with by the usual hour of adjournment will have all remaining questions put to a vote following the provision's outlined in 2(21) and 2(23). The House will not rise until royal assent has been granted.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak), seconded by the honourable member for Steinbach,

THAT the First Report of the standing committee—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense? Dispense.

Any debate? Any further debate on this matter?

Ms. Jennifer Howard (Fort Rouge): Just a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Is this the amendment that you're asking for debate on? Will there be a further motion of concurrence after this and an opportunity to debate?

Mr. Speaker: Yes. It'd be both the amendment and then the motion itself, for information of the House.

I thank the honourable member for the question.

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader—honourable member for Steinbach.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Yes, just briefly, Mr. Speaker, the amendment is to clarify the intent, which was always the intent, to ensure that all votes come to a third reading vote in the Assembly.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, for purposes of clarification, I, too, want to put on the record that that was, and that is, the intention of this particular amendment.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on the amendment?

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

Mr. Chomiak: I move, seconded by the member for Steinbach, that the First Report of the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House received on June 29th in 2015 and subsequently amended, be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, the honourable Government House Leader.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you please canvass the House to see if there is leave to bring forward a motion—concur in the committee report?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to bring forward the motion for concurrence in Rules of the House? Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

Does the honourable minister wish to reread this? No, okay. I think it's on the record already. I think all honourable members have heard it, but I'm going to read it back.

It's been moved by the honourable Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Chomiak), seconded by the honourable member for Steinbach, that the First Report of the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House received on June 29th, 2015, and subsequently amended, be concurred in.

Is there any debate?

Ms. Howard: I wanted to take the opportunity to put a few words on the record regarding the rules. It's been the focus of much effort.

And I want to start off by saying how much I appreciate the work of House leaders past and present who have worked together to come up with the rules package, and I think there's much in this rules package that is worthy. But I also have some concerns and I think that it's important to put those concerns on the record.

I don't intend to hold up the passage of these rules. I fully accept that this is the will of this House and the caucus that I belong to and the opposition caucus.

But I also know that some day in the future, people will be looking back as they contemplate the rules again, and I want to ensure that there is somewhere on the record a few notes of caution so that when these rules are reviewed by whatever House leaders are around then, that they can evaluate whether the rules met the promise that everybody hoped for when they were passed.

I want to talk, first of all, about my experience as House leader, and one of the things that I, in retrospect—I maybe didn't appreciate it so much at the time, but in retrospect have come to appreciate is the role of negotiation in this Chamber. And I think that

that is something that is maybe unique to our Legislature, I think happens less in other legislatures, although, really, none of us actually knows what it is like to be in another legislature. Every legislative body has its own culture; this place has its own culture.

* (15:30)

And I know in the past, you know, we may have impugned that culture and not appreciated it, but there have been some good things about it, and one of them, I think, has been the requirement for House leaders to negotiate, not just to negotiate the end of a session, but really to negotiate every day. That was certainly my experience as House leader.

And I don't mind sharing with the House that, as a newly minted government House leader, I sometimes had the attitude that I was the government House leader and I was going to say what was going to happen and that was that. And, given my worthy opponents on the other side, I quickly found that that was not the right way to do business.

But I have to say that I think part of that was the discipline that came from knowing that the opposition, with a few words, with a tactical point of order, could delay the work that I was trying to get done, and knowing that there was a date coming in June whereby I had, as my mission, to pass the bills and budget of the government. And so I quickly learned to find ways to get along, to save the real disagreement and the real time to decide that this is the line that I can't cross, to save those for the things that were important.

And I think that led to a lot of fruitful discussions between me and opposition House leaders. I had the great pleasure to work with both the former MLA for Morris, Mavis Taillieu, and the current MLA for Steinbach. And I hope that when they speak of me, they also speak with grudging appreciation for the times that we negotiated. I found them both worthy negotiators.

But something important happened in those day-to-day discussions. And people—members of the House may not know this, but House leaders work together to determine what you're going to talk about every day. We work together to determine—some bill is coming up, it's really important that one member wants to speak to it, that member can't be there for some reason, and so we make sure that it comes on a day when that member is prepared to speak to it.

I think House leaders, past and present and future realize that we owe not only a responsibility to our caucus, but we owe a responsibility to this Chamber and to everyone in it, to make sure that every day moves along smoothly, but also that each member's rights to participate is protected. Those negotiations have resulted in things like the passage of private members' bills, some important legislation that was passed that I think has done good things here in the province. It led to amendments coming forward and being passed to government bills. It led to additional committee meetings where there was further opportunities to ask questions and hold to account Crown corporations and other government entities.

I also think that requirement to negotiate and the knowledge, as a government House leader, that there was no guarantee that everything a government put forward would pass also brought some discipline to the legislative agenda. It meant that, and I think this has always been true in Manitoba, that for a government to be successful, it had to ensure that it was always working to build consensus on its agenda, both in the public, but also to some degree in this Chamber, because it's those very few pieces of legislation where we have not been able to find a way, even if we disagree, to see some good in it passing, those very few instances, and I think I could count them on one hand, where the system has broken down or where we have found ourselves in this Chamber long into the summer.

And I know that that—the predictability of the session is what is the crowning achievement of these rules, but, really, the number of times that we found ourselves here all summer were few. And I would submit that they were those times when there was a very real and legitimate difference of opinion, where there was no opportunity for consensus building or compromise.

But it is a—and I think it exercises an important discipline, on whoever the government of the day is, to know that if you're going to bring legislation forward in this Chamber, you have to have done the homework. You have to have done the groundwork to ensure that it is passed by the opposition, because the opposition ultimately holds a hammer where they can hold up legislation for a long time, as we've seen.

I also want to—I hope the member of Steinbach will indulge me, but I want to share with this House, in the long, hot summer of 2013, one of the things that I will always remember from that are the

conversations that we had away from the glare of this Chamber, away from the need to fly our partisan flags, that were sincere and real, about real issues that were being faced in this Legislature and debated in this Legislature, where I think we found the opportunity to move beyond the black-and-white positions that our parties had taken and to appreciate that, really, there was a lot of grey. And in that grey to find some ability to agree—a lot of disagreement—but an ability to appreciate where each other was coming from, and that is the power of this Chamber.

We all come here from different backgrounds, from different geographical spots, from different families, and I would say that as you age, probably, your group of friends and acquaintances narrows so that more and more the people you associate with think like you, more and more the people you associate with have the same background as you, and being a member of this House gives us an opportunity to talk to and learn from and share with people who, frankly, in the normal course of our lives we may never cross the street to say hello to.

And that's what I found in that summer, that I had the opportunity working with members of this House and the opposition, to find a new appreciation for where they were coming from, to take the time outside of here to actually listen to their positions. And not that I think we changed any minds—either of us, any of us—but I do think that that was a gift. And that would not have happened, I think, had I been a House leader under these rules, knowing that everything I put forward was going to pass eventually.

I also want to speak for a moment to the importance—and I do think that the rules committee and the people who have worked on these rules did appreciate this and take this into account and went to great pains to protect the rights of opposition and minority views—I want to for a moment talk about why that's important. I think increasingly, Mr. Speaker, in our country, in our province, we've come to mistakenly believe that our system is a system of executive power, is a system of government that is based on executive power and executive privilege, and that isn't what our system of government is. It wasn't what it was designed to be. Our system of government is one of parliamentary democracy, and that means that the leaders, the premiers, the prime ministers are held to account by their Cabinet, by their caucus and by the opposition. It isn't true in our system of democracy that a

government gets elected and can do whatever it wants for four years until the next election.

Accountability is not only exercised on election day in this form of government. Accountability should be exercised every day, and one of the places where that accountability is exercised is in this Chamber by giving every member who represents constituents—because, ultimately, that is who we are accountable to and that's who the government is accountable to through the members of the Legislature who are here by giving us an opportunity every day to make sure that we can stand up and debate and ask questions and take sometimes a very long time to come to a conclusion. But I think that's—that—I think that is an important feature of our government and I think it has been forgotten.

You know, the best remembered, the most historical action in this Legislature was the act of one member, the act of one member saying no, the act of one member denying unanimous leave, and that member was Elijah Harper on the Meech Lake Accord. That's what this Legislature is best known for. It's not known for any government bill or any opposition private members' bill. It's not even—I hesitate to inform the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen)—known for the filibustering of the bill to raise the provincial sales tax. The thing that this Legislature is best known for is the role of one single member to say no. And that right of that member is protected in this Legislature and still protected under these rules. Unanimous leave is still required to not give notice. But I think it is worth a moment of reflection that had these rules existed and the government of that day brought in the act to assent to the Meech Lake Accord in the right time frame, there is nothing any member could've done to stop it. That bill would've come to a vote at the prescribed time and been passed, and I think we lose something because of that.

I also just want to say that, you know, I believe, in the future there will be days when we will look back at these rules and we will bless them and we will bless the people who came up with them, and they will work far better than we expected. And there will also be days that we will curse them, and that is because we are humans and we are imperfect, and any rules that we create are going to be imperfect.

* (15:40)

And that's why I think it's important that we are open to the possibility that if the rules don't work as we hoped, if the opposition finds that its ability to

oppose is hampered, if the government finds that its ability to govern is too restricted, then there will be an opportunity to take another look at these rules.

Absolutely these rules give us predictability and I know how important that is. I know the members opposite and members of the government have spoken about how important it is to recruit people to come into elected life, that they know that there is some predictability, especially for members with families, that they see this, and they see this uncertainty created around when will the Legislature end, and they are dissuaded from a life in politics.

I haven't found that, frankly, in my conversations ever with a candidate. I have found that they are fully aware of the sacrifices that are required. Maybe none of us know until we get here. I certainly didn't. But they are aware that this is not a life like any other life. This is not a job like any other job and it requires sacrifice. Their question is not, tell me about all the sacrifices required. Their question is, is it worth it? Is giving up that time with my family, is giving up perhaps professional advancement, is putting up with the sometimes unkindness and lack of grace and respect that happens in this Chamber, is it worth it? Will I be able to make a difference as one person, whether I'm in government or opposition? And that's what determines whether people sign up for this life, I think, is the belief that they will be able to make a difference in their communities.

And so it would be, I think, a sad day if, in the quest for predictability, we shortchanged the ability of one member in opposition or in government to make a difference.

And so I want just to say that when these rules are reviewed in the future as they will be, that I hope the people who are in charge of looking at them then, that they're reviewed for their ability to encourage co-operation, to encourage negotiation, and to encourage accountability, not merely for their ability to give us a predictable calendar. That is not the measure that we should judge the rules of this House by.

And I believe that the people, again, who have come up with these rules, who've worked hard on them, have paid attention to that. I in no way want to diminish their work and I in no way want to diminish the result. But I do want to send the message to future legislators that when they look at this, know that there were concerns that these rules would lead to a different culture in this place, a culture where there was less negotiation,

there was less co-operation, and where there was less accountability. And I hope that I'm wrong and I'll be happy to be proved wrong. But I also want whoever's looking at these rules in the future to look at them knowing that there were reservations.

And with that I want to, again, thank all the House leaders, the clerks, who I know have worked tremendously hard on this. I want to thank them for all of that work that they do and I will look forward to watching and learning how these rules will shape the culture of this place in times to come.

Finally, I want to say that this Chamber works or not because of us. No rules, no codification of behaviour can replace good intention and good will of the members in this Chamber, which is sometimes been lacking, maybe more lately than in any other time in our history. It works or doesn't work because of us. And so the last thing I would like to say is, I ask for us to try to bring the values of grace and respect back to this Legislature as much as possible, to do our job, to passionately pursue what we believe we were sent here to do, to passionately oppose, to passionately propose, but to do all of that remembering the basic humanity in each of us, and honouring that. And I think if we do that, then we will fulfill our oath to our constituents and our oath to make sure, as we pray every day, that we're forming good laws in this place.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Goertzen: I want to thank the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) for her eloquent comments, and they were eloquent, and I always listen to intent when she speaks because she always has something meaningful to say, and today was no exception, Mr. Speaker.

I remember well the many evenings where we spent negotiating, or talking perhaps as much as negotiating at times, during the issue around the PST and I learned a great deal too during that time. And I said at that time, and I think I even said it in print—some of my colleagues might have cautioned me not to—but that I have great respect for her and for the work that she did at that time and continues to do, Mr. Speaker. And so nothing that I would say would diminish that.

I also want to, again, like I did last week and others did, thank the many people who were involved in this, to thank my colleague from Spruce Woods who enjoyed—I don't know if he enjoyed it, but he joined me in the negotiations. He'll speak for

himself whether or not he enjoyed it. I want to thank the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) who—I think my wife told me to stop getting emails from him at 1:30 in the morning, and so hopefully that will—this will bring that to an end at least for the foreseeable future. I thank the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) who gave great input in terms of the need to ensure that independent members are protected within the rules, and he brought a unique perspective to that, and also the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) who brought great expertise in terms of being an opposition House leader at a different time as well. I thank all of them for their contribution.

I also want to again reiterate my thanks to the Clerk's office and to all those involved with the translation and with legal work for getting us to this point at least. And we relied on their expertise greatly and their advice, and we spent many, many hours together, and I hope that the fruit of that bears out in the future.

Just in terms of a couple of the things that the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) raised, I certainly have heard from individuals who found it difficult to consider running for public office because of the uncertainty of the hours around this House. Not everybody—I agree with—there are many who will look at many other factors. But I have heard of those considerations, and perhaps some of it has to do with which areas you represent. Certainly, if you are a member of rural Manitoba who live further away than I do, and I'm lucky in terms of my location, but the difference of sitting an additional two or three weeks isn't just getting home at 5:30 instead of maybe a little bit earlier; it's not getting home at all. I think of the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) and the member for Thompson, the aforementioned member for Thompson. For them, it's not an issue of whether or not they sit in additional weeks in the summer and only get home for supper at 5:30; they're not getting home at all during a lot of those weeks. So a lot of it has to do with geography. A lot of it has to do with, of course, your own family situation, Mr. Speaker. And we strove to try to find that balance.

It's important that almost every other legislature in Canada has these type of—this type of balance. They all do it differently. They all do it with their own sort of unique way, but almost all of them have some certainty in terms of how they govern their affairs here in the Legislature. And we tried to find that Manitoba balance and tried to find the right way.

It's somewhat ironic, I think, and maybe ironic is the wrong word, but the general principle of holding over and having the opposition being able to hold over bills for six months or more under these rules actually came from discussions that me and the member for Fort Rouge had over the PST debate. And I took her advice to heart then, and I remember many of our conversations, and we had that discussion about how do you find the balance about allowing government to have their mandate to get their agenda that they've been given the mandate from the public, how do they have that right to get their agenda through while ensuring that the opposition, who also has a mandate to put up vigorous opposition when they feel it's in the best interest of Manitobans, how do you ensure that they have their mandate fulfilled as well? And the sessional agreement that we came up with, or that collectively, the Legislature came up with, I would say, coming out of that was that—the holdover provision. And I thought that that was a good balance. When I look at past bills that have caused consternation or acrimony here in the Legislature, they often were held over for six, seven months. The member for Thompson was involved in some of those. And that really allowed the opposition, and it certainly allowed us as an opposition, the time to get people rallied and to be able to come to the Legislature and to write letters and put pressure.

Ultimately, I recognize, and it's been my experience in opposition, that the greatest pressure that gets borne on government isn't us in the Legislature necessarily holding up legislation or doing what we do and ringing the bells. To a larger part, that's lost on many of the people of the public. It really is the public engagement and having them say to government through the individual constituency meetings or through letters or through petitions or through rallies or committee that something is not acceptable. And that's really where the pressures come to bear. In many ways, I think this will give the opposition, whoever the future opposition might be, and whether we continue in opposition, the ability to do more of that and the ability to actually have the time to be more aggressive in terms of organizing when they've holding over bills.

* (15:50)

If there's one real concern I have about this package, and I mentioned it both at committee on Friday and also to the Government House Leader and the member for Thompson, is I'm concerned that it might almost become a cultural expectation that

the budget get held over into the fall. I would have preferred a different system so that the budget couldn't always be designated to be held over to the fall, because, really, the budget is what governs and what drives a government overall, and I would've preferred a system where, had the budget been brought in at a certain time, an early date, that it could have been passed sooner. But that's not a concession that I was able to achieve.

And so my real concern is that it's almost going to become the default position for oppositions to look to holdover the budget. But I also think that that gives great negotiating power to the opposition and that the opposition will routinely be able to extract concessions or different sorts of things by having that debate about when the budget's going to pass, because the government's going to know that they have the opportunity to hold it over late into the fall and that causes all sorts of issues in government, as the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) knows, having been foreign finance—former Finance minister. So, in fact, I think that gives the opposition tremendous negotiating power.

I think there are other, many—and far too many to list, but there are many other places within this package where we tried to achieve that balance to ensure that opposition could negotiate, whether that's on specified bills, for example, government will not always be able to get their agenda in on the time frames that they allow, and that means that government will go to opposition and say, we think this is important, we want these bills passed before the House rises in the spring or whatever the day is, and that'll be a negotiation point for opposition. There are many places in this package where opposition will have as much, and, I would argue, perhaps greater, ability to negotiate than they do now, but still allowing them to have that predictability, Mr. Speaker.

I do agree very much with the member for Fort Rouge when she says that she hopes that these rules, and I hope all rules, will get reviewed regularly. She's absolutely right.

And I'll take my responsibility for this, as having been House leader for the last three years and a shorter iteration before, that we should have been meeting much more often as a rules committee. And that's not—and we put into these rules that the rules committee needs to meet twice a year. That's not so much to me a rule change as it is a culture change.

We have to culturally start thinking about how this place runs differently, recognizing that, not unlike a sporting event, there are lots of things that happen on the field that are combative and that are aggressive and that can be very strongly done, but we all operate under a set of rules that have to work for all of us. And I think that the constant review of the rules—now, of course, the rules aren't going to change as significantly as they are today every time that the rules committee, but there are always things that need to be changed.

And we got a list of potential rule changes from the Clerk's office about a year—maybe more than a year ago, and two years ago, I think the member for Fort Rouge was still the House leader at the time—a lot of them were very routine and really sort of small changes, almost wording changes on the Order Paper, and yet we didn't meet as a rules committee and we couldn't get these things cleaned up, which would affect nobody, but make their lives a lot easier in many ways. And I think that we need to have that sort of culture of ensuring that that rules committee is done in a bipartisan way that works for all of us, that it's done regularly and that we get into that habit.

The Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) and I are trying to do some of those things, whether it's pairing—I mean, too often in this place, we—I've heard from members who've said they've missed their kid's grad or they've missed significant things in their family's life because, you know, their whip wouldn't let them go, and we kind of fell out of this, you know, this habit of having pairs. So we've tried to do some pairing over the last week. I look at the government whip, he knows what I'm talking about in terms of having pairs over the last little while, because people shouldn't have to miss significant family things because they're here in the Legislature. But that's also not a rule thing, that's a cultural thing. And so the member for Fort Rouge is right, I mean there has to be a different change in terms of how we deal with things.

Now, that means that, you know, the passion that we have over issues is always going to be there. And there'll be times in the future where there'll be that. Those concerns will rise again. And there's going to be that passionate debate. And the opposition will be able to holdover bills, as long as they held over the PST bill or longer than we held it, but we might holdover a bill that the government brings in if they're re-elected. That part of it won't change. That always has to be here. It has to be a part of it. But I do think that this will give more balance. It gives

more balance in terms of the ability for the government to be able to plan, to be able to have an agenda, and the opposition to be able to rally support against things that the public decides that the government shouldn't be doing. That's the balance we've tried to achieve. Is it perfect? I'm sure it's not. And I certainly give my commitment to the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard), and all members of this House, that we will continue to meet as a rules committee. We'll meet again in fall, perhaps twice in the fall, and it'll be in the rules that we'll meet twice a year to ensure that that is a continuous process.

And I leave that on the record for future House leaders because, thank God, I won't always be the House leader for our party. I think I'm already into overtime in terms of, you know, the normal course of things. But whoever the future House leaders are, I mean, we want them to know that that is, in fact, the intention of this, that it becomes a cultural change and that people understand that we need to ensure that the rules work for all of us and provide an effective balance.

So I believe we've hit the target. Is it perfect? It's not going to be perfect. Are the rules ever going to be perfect? They won't be. But I don't think the rules that we have now work particularly well either.

And I know that the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) was more passionate than I was a few weeks ago, now, about his comments—and I won't repeat them lest we have another matter of privilege. But they weren't working. They weren't working well for any of us. I mean, we have to be able to say to—*[interjection]* Yes, I mean, the member's right. We rarely sit through the summer, but we're always planning to sit through the summer, all of us. And we don't know if we're going to sit through the summer or not and so you don't know whether you can, you know, book constituency events, whether you should be able to have meetings with constituents, whether you can go on a family vacation. And, you know, the public might think that that happens too often, but we know, as legislators, we work pretty long hours sometimes and it's hard sometimes to plan a family vacation because you don't know if you're going to be sitting in the summer. And I'm talking about us as MLAs. And I look at the staff of the Legislature; they have a hard time planning their vacations or when to have people in here or not have people in here, when to have the pages in here. And it's just not operating the way I think people would expect a government to operate.

So is it perfect? It's not. Do I think it's a lot better than we have now? I absolutely do. And I commit for as long as I'm House leader to continue to work in a co-operative way to try to ensure that the changes that happen with rules will continue to happen in a way that try to make it fair and balanced for everybody in this House and to improve the operation of this Legislature.

Thank you very much for all those that are involved.

Ms. Erin Selby (Southdale): I, too, wanted to put a few words on the record.

The member for Fort Rouge, of course, speaks with great knowledge, having been a House leader, and I have great respect for what she had to say. And I would agree with what she had to say. But I will put a few of my own words on the record, although I don't expect to speak with as much knowledge as she has.

I think everyone in this House would agree that it is a privilege to do this job. I don't think any of us take it for granted, and we certainly shouldn't. But I also think that we would probably admit to our close loved ones, to our friends and maybe to each other, that this job can also be rather inconvenient at times. We work long hours. We've all talked about the fact that it is an incredibly unpredictable job, but it's also—can be a very frustrating job. It can be frustrating when the opposition or even my own caucus can't see what seems to be so obvious to me, to what I know to be in true in my heart. But that's democracy.

We have rules here in this House to keep us civilized. We have rules to allow us to speak freely without persecution. I'm not a former House leader. I wouldn't claim to be an expert on the rules of the House, and I would agree that the rules that we have right now are definitely not perfect. But that is also democracy. It's messy, and it's often without a black or white answer, even though here in the House we're expected to say yea or nay, nonetheless.

In the House, as well as in our society, which is democratic, majority rules. Democracy says that these new rules will pass and, therefore, I'll respect that democracy. It's been—I've been assured by House leaders past and present that the new rules will further democracy, that they will further participation and modernize the House. I do hope that time proves their opinions correct and their intent true. Rules are

critical to democratic balance, and I hope they've maintained that balance for Manitoba. Thank you.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Steinbach, on a point of order.

Mr. Goertzen: I'm asking leave of the House to not see the clock until 6 o'clock or to extend today's sitting 'til 6 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, you don't need a point of order to ask for leave of the House, so I'm going to have to say there's no point of order.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: But, having heard the honourable member's request, I'm going to put the question to the House.

Is there leave of the House not to see the clock until 6 p.m. today? *[Agreed]*

Thank you.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: On House business? Okay, the honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, will you please canvass the House to see if there's leave to waive the House sitting for private members' business tomorrow morning, with the understanding the House will be meeting in the afternoon for routine proceedings and orders of the day?

* (16:00)

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to waive private members' business tomorrow morning, Tuesday morning, with the understanding that the House will meet in the afternoon for routine proceedings and orders of the day? *[Agreed]*

* * *

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I, first of all, want to say some thank-yous, some thank-yous to the House leader for the Conservative party and the House leader for the NDP party, to the MLA for Thompson and to the MLA for Spruce Woods, who all made contributions in the meetings that we've held, quite a number of them in the last several weeks, in order to get this rules package put together.

I also want to say a thank you to our Clerk, Patricia Chaychuk, to Rick Yarish, who put in

extraordinarily long hours, often on weekends and in the evenings to make this—these rule changes a reality. And there were many who supported our Clerk and the team—legal people who looked very carefully over this, the translators, and I think that we owe a major debt of gratitude to all of you who have been part of this and to everyone who has contributed.

And I think it's important to note that it wasn't just the people sitting around that committee, but this was based on discussions and experience over quite a number of years, and input from a variety of people which led to the final rule changes that we have here.

I have had to function, because of my position, for House leader for—as of—I think, probably, for eight or nine years, so it's been an experience working with a number of different House leaders. I was involved in the discussions which led to the last major change we had in rules in 2001-2002, and there were a lot of good ideas put forward and some productive changes that were made at that time. We were able to move for a while to a more regular scheduled calendar, and I personally think that a lot of the ideas could have worked with—and—but didn't work, in part because it was left to the decision by the government of the day when they would start the session in the spring, and we ended up moving later and later, and that got us into a position where we were not able to get the job done by the middle of June.

And so one of the positive developments in this set of rules is that the House must start early in March to make sure that there is enough time so that we should not be jamming ourselves up into the June end date for the spring part of the sitting, and we should have, because we're able to hold some bills over, the ability to extend things and discuss things continuing into October-November to wind up areas, the complete set of bills.

There are a couple of points which I think that it's important to make. I thank the MLA for Fort Rouge for her comments. I thank the MLA for Southdale for hers. The comment—the MLA for Fort Rouge commented that she thought, well, maybe with these changes, you know, the one individual person, Elijah Harper, stopping the 'prograss' of the Meech Lake Accord could not have happened. Interestingly enough, and I talked briefly with the MLA for Thompson about this, what we have here is deadlines, right, where you have to have first reading

by a certain date, second reading by a certain date, if you want to get a bill passed.

The Meech Lake Accord would have been a bill which came in after those deadlines, I believe, and so there would've had to be the same back and forth in negotiation that there was at the time of the Meech Lake Accord in order to get this passed. And so if we had the Meech Lake Accord situation in precisely the same way, I believe that Elijah Harper could've still stood up and stopped it. The MLA for Thompson who was there can probably comment on that as we, you know, as we move forward.

There is one aspect, and I've discussed this at the committee stage—or at the committee meetings that we held—that I have a concern about and that I want to put on the record not only that concern, but the nature, the essence of the discussions that we've had. You know, under these rules there are timelines for the committees to have met, and we have what I believe is a wonderful extraordinary and very important tradition which we all, I think, as MLAs believe in, that any Manitoban should be able to come forward and present and have an opportunity to present at committee stage.

Now, we all know that not everybody who puts their name on the list, you know, is actually able to attend on a particular day, but we schedule the committee meetings now and make sure that there is sufficient time that everybody can be called twice, and that it is a reasonable assurance and a reasonable process so that everybody who really wants to come forward and present has that opportunity. And we have not put in this—these rules the rule that everybody, you know, must be able to present, because the consensus among those in the committee meetings was that this was such an important facet of the way this Legislature works, that any party who try to cut people short would be seen as severely curtailing democracy as we know it in Manitoba.

And I think that the—you know, there were some suggestions for rule changes, but it would've—none were good enough. And I think that the final analysis was that the—you know, we have to recognize that at some point there is a certain honour to being an MLA here and part of that honour is be part of a Legislature where, you know, all Manitobans have an opportunity to come forward and present, and that is something that we must make sure continues to be available.

And it could be a challenge where we have a large number of presenters on bills in the future, and

it is my view that that's one of the things that House leaders will have to talk about ahead of time to do some planning to make sure that it happens. And I just want to make sure that it is understood, right, that this is what those of us who are sitting around the table felt is that we were leaving this to the House leaders of the future to do this in a responsible way and figure out a way to make it happen.

The—there are a number of other things that I want to comment briefly on. I believe there's going to be a very large number of areas, as the MLA for Steinbach has already indicated, where there will be an ongoing need for dialogue and discussion and give and take in order to get things done. I think that this has been a very important part of this Legislature and I foresee that this is going to be a continuing very important part of the Legislature as, indeed, the MLA for Steinbach, the House leader for the Conservatives, has already pointed out.

* (16:10)

This is not meant to put us as MLAs in a straitjacket, but it's to give us, you know, the ability to have a schedule which we can rely on much more than we've been able to rely on in the past. There may be some years, indeed, where the emergency provision is used, and my prediction would be that it may happen a little more often in the year right after an election because, you know, it's not as easy to predict exactly what the demands and needs of a new government are going to be and the timelines that they would want. But those emergency—provisions for emergency sessions are there and will be, we believe, in the discussions that we've had, that they are sufficient that a new government will be able to plan and be a responsible government for the province from whatever party or background that government may be.

I know, from the point of view of an independent member, that there are a number of things that I have looked very carefully at as this bill—as this set of rules has come forward and tried to make sure that if we have—where we have independent members in the future, they will be well served by the balance that it is here, and also that if there is a third party, which is a recognized party in the Legislature, that that third party will also be well served.

And, you know, it could be that it is a party of—you know, it doesn't necessarily have to be a Liberal Party; it could be other parties. It could be that one of the NDP or the Conservatives come down at some

point in the future to be third party. So this is something which is going to serve everybody, I believe, as a fairness to those who are not represented by as many people in the Legislature, that we have these trade-offs and the ability for all MLAs here to serve people well.

There are a number of things which are not in the rules but which, you know, as somebody who's an independent member, I will mention briefly my experience. You know, one of the things which has often been challenging, frustrating is not knowing what precisely is going to be the agenda in an afternoon session, and, you know, learning what the agenda's going to be, whether it's Estimates or bills or Supply, halfway through question period is—makes it a little bit difficult to plan at times. I have to be very flexible. I have to be prepared for just about anything. Maybe that's one of the interesting and exciting and challenging reasons for being here, but there's no rule which says that you've got to have that agenda in advance, but, you know, I hope that it's something that future House leaders will be able to, you know, share a little bit earlier on. And, in fact, in fairness, there have been times when I've been able to get, you know, notice by about mid-morning of what's going to happen in the afternoon, and that makes a big difference, but it's not always the case. And so there is—needs to be under the current circumstances, and I'm sure it will continue, some ability to be flexible.

I want to mention a moment the—and express, as has already been done to some extent, the vision that we all shared in the committee that there would be an ongoing review of the rules. I think that, you know, in many circumstances, it may be small changes that will happen in the future, but there may from time to time be larger changes such as we have on this occasion.

But I think that, whatever happens, it's vital that there be an ongoing review, that the rules committee meets on a much more regular basis than it has in the last decade, and that we're, you know, prepared and feel that this is a work in progress, that these are not a perfect set of rules, but I think that they will be an improvement, and with a little luck they will last for at least a decade before they need to be—have a complete overhaul, and maybe they will last longer. We will see.

I think the—those are the major points that I wanted to make.

I just want to conclude by thanking all who participated once again and to hope that this provides on an ongoing basis for this Legislature to be a productive place for the laws of Manitoba to be produced and for decisions around government and budgeting to be discussed and debated and moved and passed.

So thank you.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Today, I think, is a historic day for this Legislature, and I want to put on the record that I look forward, once these rules are passed, to perhaps going back to what I said a couple weeks ago to—rephrasing it—that we may become the most functional legislature in Canada. And I say that in all seriousness, because I view the rules reforms that we're bringing in today as probably the most significant that I have seen in my time in this Legislature, probably some of the most significant reforms we've ever had in the Manitoba Legislature.

And I want to start by thanking all those who've been a part of this. Our Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) and the Opposition House Leader, I can't say enough about how much they have made this a 24/7 occupation. Those who've been involved with some of the discussions, member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen), myself. I want to thank Pat Chaychuk, our Clerk, and Rick Yarish. I was struck by the way that one of the sacrifices one makes when you're involved in these kind of things. I actually missed the grad at R.D. Parker Collegiate. I'm proud to be a grad of R.D. Parker Collegiate. It was last Thursday and, of course, our Clerk is also a grad of R.D. Parker Collegiate. And it really, you know, is—it struck me as we ironically were working on these rules how, you know, how much we do make in the way of sacrifices in this Legislature. In some cases, perhaps, to be expected, but degree to which over time we've recognized that there is a better way.

I'd like to put on the record, by the way, that we started—many years ago we used to have three evening sittings. We used to sit until 6; we used to basically have a sessional calendar that would end with what was famously called speed up. We'd have three question periods, and I only saw this once, and it was this frenetic end to a session. I—you know, I saw entire sessions sweep by in 24 hours because that was the way we functioned then. And I can tell you what it did do, and I really do believe this, it provided a real disincentive for many people to enter politics. And I do believe we've significantly

changed that. And I want to echo the comments of the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) because I think he echoed the degree to which—as we even make further progress in terms of predictability in terms of rules—it does make a difference. I can tell you I have had people who have asked me directly, in fact, asked me before the last election if we sat all summer. And I actually told them, well, no, we've actually found a way to deal with that. I—little did I realize that, well, we sort of did and sort of didn't.

But, you know, I want to stress one thing. It's not just about predictable. In fact, it's about far more than that because, you know, there's not one member of this House, I think, who would only look at the predictability as being the key factor. For me, I start with the principle that this is about a government's ability to govern and an opposition's ability to oppose, including being able to fully use our committee structure which is unique across the country in the sense that we do allow all Manitobans to present on all bills that go through to committee. And I want to stress that that balance is something that is integral on this bill.

I have the experience of having been in government and in opposition and I have the experience of being opposition House leader for 10 years. And I want to stress, by the way, that in the entire time I've been here I've only ever seen one major piece of legislation die because of procedural matters, and that was in the French language issue in 1983. Every single other session that I've been here, Mr. Speaker, and including when I was opposition for House leader for 10 years, well, we had some pretty controversial bills. For some reason in this province labour bills often tended to be controversial. We had, obviously, the sale of MTS which was controversial.

* (16:20)

But in each and every case, with the old rules, what we had, Mr. Speaker, is we had, for example, when MTS was sold, we actually didn't sit in the summer. We did have a sessional calendar that year. We had something that really parallels what we have in the rules before. And in many other cases, what we had was, we had—and I think the Opposition House Leader summed it up quite well when he said that you entered a certain kind of a twilight zone in the time of the Legislature where we really didn't know what was going to happen for a week or two, or even a day or so in advance, and somehow we managed to work through it.

And I do acknowledge that what the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) said, the role of House leaders, but I what I want to stress is, I think we're a pretty good opposition for ten years, and I'd like to think we're a decent government, too, but I want to focus on all the opposition side. Because what these rules do is these rules give significant ability for an opposition to function, and function even more effectively than under the current rules, and I want to address why.

First of all, there's a guaranteed ability for the opposition to delay up to five bills, including on the budget. And I do agree with the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) that should not be the normal course. But if you have a controversial budget, there should be the ability for the opposition to do that. If there are controversial bills, there should be the ability to do it. That's important for any opposition.

Second of all, the clear reform of our committee structures in terms of public presentation. You know, we've evolved from a time where we sat 'til 2, 3, 4 in the morning, Mr. Speaker. I actually—I guess I could put on the record, you might describe as a filibuster—I spoke all night in committee, okay, on MTS.

What these rules do, they allow for greater certainty for members of the public and they take out any tactical ability by a government—I'm not suggesting a government would necessarily do that—but a tactical ability to somehow shut down the Legislature. So the ability to delay is guaranteed here.

We've reformed the Opposition Day motions; they're far more timely, they allow for all members to speak, they allow us to continue to deal with that, Mr. Speaker, in terms of that. And we've structured a calendar that fundamentally protects the right of an opposition in terms of notice.

And I do want to put on the record that the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) is correct. I'm reminded this last couple of weeks of Meech Lake, 25 years ago. I was the House leader at the time. Of course there, there were two calendars. There was the calendar of the federal government on the passage of Meech Lake. But, again, the reason it failed in this House was because of lack of adequate notice. We have built in that provision.

So I'll make an argument right now that this actually strengthens ability of an opposition to delay and oppose. Now I know some people will say, you know—and I certainly appreciate this perspective—that

the moment you bring in these kind of reforms, you take out certain tactics.

Certainly, we've now recognize, Mr. Speaker, that we have an elected Speaker, and like virtually every other legislative body in the Commonwealth, we will actually be moving to remove the challenge to a Speaker on a matter of order. And let's not forget that it is the role of the Speaker to determine matters of order where it's a very different case in terms of matters of privilege, where the Speaker's role is to determine if it's a prima facie case. But we've done that and I realize that takes out the tactic of bell-ringing to some degree. But I often had a great difficulty explaining to people how when we want to debate something that's controversial, what we do is we actually repeatedly—we did it in opposition, so this is not a shot at anyone—what we do is we call a vote on a matter of order, and then we have the Speaker announce, call in the members, then we all leave for an hour and come back later.

You know, I did make some reference to sort of Monty Pythonesque moments. That's always the one that strikes me, is something rather Pythonesque in this Legislature. And I've always felt, Mr. Speaker, and I think we all have, that when you have a real issue, what you want to be able to do is to debate it but you also want to be able to take it to the public. And certainly members opposite have done that on bills that they've disagreed with in their role in the opposition. It's something that we do as well.

And I want to stress one thing that I realized early on, as opposition House leader, and as someone that followed the rules for a number of years even prior to that, under our current rules, there's 101 tactics you can use but you don't use all of those tactics. You know, there may have been some controversial debates where we used more than others, but, you know, the point is that it's not having 101 tactics that makes a difference, which, if you're in opposition, what really matters is the strength of your argument and the ability to get the people of Manitoba on side.

And why would I make that point? Because what this does, it takes out this, you know, why are we going to be sitting in the summer? Are we going to be sitting in the fall? It gives an ability to an opposition to say, this is a controversial bill. In our view we are going to oppose it, and it will be held over until the fall. It will be held over in a way which will allow for full and proper consideration by the public. That is something that, in reality, is not the

case under the current rules because, despite all the theoretical rules, Mr. Speaker, I pointed out, just a couple weeks ago, somehow we managed to end up in a situation we're going to sit until November.

An Honourable Member: December.

Mr. Ashton: December, sorry. I know some of us were, I think, starting to think we should be singing I'll Be Home for Christmas.

But, you know, Mr. Speaker, we then engaged in discussion. There is a sessional calendar not related to the rules, but I think it features a transition to the new rules. But I want to stress, again, that we all recognize we could sit here forever. What really matters is the degree to which a government can govern and an opposition can oppose.

So I want to suggest as follows, as well, why it's also important why we recognize the importance of what we're doing today.

The rules committee, Mr. Speaker, this is, again, rather Pythonesque. I know we have a rules committee. I think it's met once in the last decade? Once in the last decade. I mean, you know, there is a famous Monty Python skit where, you know, rule No. 4—there is no rule No. 4. Well, we have a rules committee that never sits. Well, maybe once. What we have mandated here—and this is very important, and I want to address that because I know that the member from Fort Rouge raised it, for the first time we're going to have mandated meetings of the rules committee that recognize that we've brought in a new framework, a new structure for rules, that there may be some need to tweak it, to change it, to add to it, perhaps even to review some of the fundamental provisions of it, and that is important because this allows anyone—and this includes the opposition and includes the independent members, or if there's a second opposition party, to have a say in terms of the rules. So I believe it recognizes that the rules in this Legislature are organic, they are changing in a significant way today and I think they will change in the future.

So I want to stress, and I want to put this on the record, it is not just about a more predictable calendar, although that is important. I think it's important for all members of this House—I know, over the years, I've missed not only, you know, graduations, family events, other events, and, you know, I think it is an important element. We do have personal lives, you know, families. I've always felt it's particularly difficult here for members of this

House with young families and the lack of predictability, absolutely. But there's not a single person who was involved in the discussions, or I think any MLA that used that as being the only factor. This is about the broader principle.

I, as someone that sat in this House in government and opposition, would not support any rules changes, any package of rules changes that I believe would weaken the ability of an opposition to do what its role is, Mr. Speaker. And I think what—I would sum this up in terms of my comments here today is what this reflects is a rather unique time when, in this Legislature, we all have, I think, a similar perspective. Some of us have been in both government and opposition, some only in government, some only in opposition. And I'm always reminded, I think it was Sterling Lyon many years ago, used to talk about all governments are temporary governments—I think that was the phrase he used, you know, some more temporary than others. But there will be a time when governments will change, people will be in a different role.

What we've come together, I think, with here is a package of rules reforms that reflects not the position we are in today, but the position the Legislature will be in in the future, and that is why I consider it a great legacy. I want to, again, thank the House leader, the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak), who's put a lot of energy into this, the Opposition House Leader. I want to stress that not just in our rules committee discussions, but in any and all of our discussions, we went out of our way to talk about all of the key elements, including the role of the opposition, and I do believe that this will stand the test of time.

* (16:30)

What we're doing today, Mr. Speaker, may seem pretty inconsequential to many other legislatures across Canada and across the Commonwealth, because we're really doing really what they have done for many years. But, you know, for us I—you know, I don't even consider it a leap of faith because I think we've all realized that the current rules need a significant change. So I want to put on the record that all of those factors were considered, and if people want to look back on the Hansard I think they'll see that there was healthy consideration of the role of everyone, including the opposition.

I do believe these are legacy changes. I do believe we are making a dramatic improvement for our functioning in terms of the Manitoba Legislature,

but it's not over yet. I'm sure there will be further improvements, further enhancements to the various aspects of our rules in the future.

But, Mr. Speaker, mark my word, this is a historic day in terms of this Legislature, and it's something I'm very proud to be part of not just in terms of any of the internal discussions, but the fact that we as MLAs, all 57 of us, I think, recognize the need to move forward. This rules package moves forward.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on this matter? House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is the motion to concur in the committee report of the Standing Committee on the Rules of the House as amended.

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

House Business

Mr. Goertzen: Yes, on a matter of House business.

I want to table for the House a signed memorandum of understanding between myself, the Government House Leader and the independent member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), and I want to read it into the record, if I might.

The undersigned have, on behalf of our respective party leaders and our respective caucuses, come to an agreement on the following actions and time frames for the Assembly during sittings in October and November of this year.

The remaining steps for the business of Supply and passage of The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, BITSA, must be completed by November 5th, 2015; consideration of the main Estimates and of the concurrence motions must be completed and must be done to allow the necessary votes on BITSA and Main and Capital Supply to be completed on November 5th, 2015; the honourable Jon—the honourable member for River Heights will be able to bring forward a private member's bill without requiring a seconder, so the House will need to give leave on the record to waive the requirement for a seconder; intersessional committee meetings will be held in September on government bills that have second reading agreed to by the time the House rises for the summer; committee meetings will be held for Manitoba

Liquor and Lotteries, Workers Compensation Board, Manitoba Public Insurance and Manitoba Hydro at the Standing Committee of Crown Corporations by November 5th, 2015.

And again, this is signed by the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak), the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) and by myself as the Opposition House Leader, for the information of the House.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader—the honourable member for Steinbach.

Mr. Goertzen: And now in relation to that, Mr. Speaker, I'm asking if there is leave of the House to allow the member for River Heights to move reading motions for one private member's bill this year without requiring a seconder for the motions?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to allow the honourable member for River Heights to move reading motions for one private member's bill this year without requiring a seconder for the motion? Is that agreed? [*Agreed*]

* * *

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

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, on House business.

Debate on second reading of Bill 24, The Wildlife Amendment and Fisheries Amendment Act, and Bill 34, The Safer Roads Act (Drivers and Vehicles Act and Highway Traffic Act Amended), and I will be providing further information to the House as we proceed.

Mr. Speaker: So we'll be calling bills in the following order: Bill 24, The Wildlife Amendment and Fisheries Amendment Act, followed by Bill 34, The Safer Roads Act (Drivers and Vehicles Act and Highway Traffic Act Amended).

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 24—The Wildlife Amendment and Fisheries Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Starting with Bill 24, The Wildlife Amendment and Fisheries Amendment Act, the honourable member for Morris; I believe it's standing in his name.

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and it's almost anticlimactic following, obviously, some historic changes in the Legislature when it comes to the House rules that we all are

seeming to agree with. So, again, I do appreciate the work that my colleagues on all parts of this House have done in relation to achieving that agreement. But part of that agreement, obviously, was the role of opposition and government to get their mandate through, and, obviously, opposition to hold the government to account for the decisions that they make, as well as to maybe offer alternatives to issues that they—legislation that they bring forward or to relay concerns of individual citizens or groups to particular legislation.

In this the—in this case, Mr. Speaker, we're talking, obviously, about Bill 24, The Wildlife Amendment and Fisheries Amendment Act. Now, part of this act, and I do appreciate the goal of the government in this that we're significantly increasing a number of the fines associated with the taking of wildlife. Obviously, a number—in a number of areas here in the province of Manitoba, especially when it comes to big game, to say that there is a big-game crisis in this province would be an understatement; in particular, the moose population in some of the areas of this province, it is below levels of sustainability. And so the ability for the government to put added value onto the poaching of moose and other game is of significant importance. I know, in some instances, the fines are more than doubling, in one case going from \$10,000 to \$25,000, in other cases going from \$50,000 to \$100,000. So these are not inconsequential numbers.

But that being said, the—while it is—while adding these new fines and obviously significantly enhancing these fines to deter individuals from engaging in, whether it's obstructing conservation officers or again—or taking wildlife, we need to make sure that the current system in place is fully being enhanced. And it seems just last year we were debating a bill on restitution within the Conservation department, so that if you killed, let's say, a bald eagle or you killed a walleye or—and everything in between, there would be a value attributed to that animal, and you would have to pay restitution above and beyond any fine imposed by government. And the challenge, obviously, is, again, the legislation in and of itself and the idea of placing, obviously, a value, especially a high monetary value, restititional value, on that wildlife is something to be considered. But here we are well over a year later to that original legislation and the government has yet to assign those values for restitution effects.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

So an individual that does kill, say, an eagle, as it currently stands, there is no value to place on that eagle as an additional restitution to go to the—to go into the fund to help educate Manitobans about the importance of the wildlife and to use to maintain and enhance their habitat.

So, again, once again, it's just another example of a government that brings in legislation but fails to follow through, obviously, on the next steps of that legislation, and in this case, Mr. Speaker, legislation that's well over a year old. So you—one has to wonder that when we bring in these new fines, whether or not we actually will have the conservation officers to follow through and act upon these fines and actually charge individuals.

* (16:40)

We've seen since just the last election a 10 per cent reduction in the budget of Conservation and Water Stewardship, a not insignificant amount. We hear regularly from conservation officers that they're—they are overtaxed in terms of their responsibilities and have little time to do many of the roles and responsibilities that they have historically done.

It wasn't that long ago here in the Chamber I made the minister aware of a situation in Brandon where an individual had attended the Brandon Conservation office in the middle afternoon—I think it was around 2:30 in the afternoon—to apply or receive some sort of permit, and they found the door locked. And then, finally, when they were able to engage a staff person, they found out that, no, they simply did not have the staff to be open. Now, I don't believe—at least the minister hasn't reported back to this House that anything was to be done in—*[interjection]*—nine minutes? I got lots of time. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe the minister has actually indicated on the public record whether or not anything has been done to ensure the availability of staff at that office. And again, that situation is symbolic of what's going on in Conservation and Water Stewardship across this province. Again, Mars Hill Wildlife Management Area—*[interjection]* Yes, nine more bills. Okay.

So, Mr. Speaker, we need to take a look. I do know that some organizations—the Manitoba Lodges and Outfitters Association—I know they are supportive of some aspects of this legislation, in particular, the fact that, obviously, the minister may now authorize third parties to issue licences and permits. The—we talk on this side of the House,

obviously, about the regulatory burden. This is an example of that regulatory burden that could be removed from the purview of the government into individuals or institutions outside of government that can provide and deliver that service, and this is a great example of that. I know previously the government has fought tooth and nail against this kind of reduction in terms of regulatory overlap or simplification of the system, but—so I think it's a good thing that they're finally moving along those ways.

As well, I mean, the—obviously, adding additional protection to some of the additional species in Manitoba to ensure their sustainability and that they will be available for future generations to enjoy, whether it's to hunt or simply to see in their natural habitat, is of importance.

Mr. Speaker, the one concern that, obviously, at this point—and I've spoken directly to the minister about—is the issue of unpaid fines. There does seem to be a situation where an individual may have an outstanding photo radar fine, and as a result of that may be denied a licence—a fishing or hunting licence under this act, which obviously requires a little more explanation.

And then, finally, Mr. Speaker, the entering into agreements with other jurisdictions: Again, I think it's important for that interjurisdictional constituency—or consistency so that an individual, say, from Red Deer who has been consistently charged with poaching wildlife, simply just can't come over here to the Whiteshell and get a licence and continue their practice of unsustainable—unsustainable harvesting.

So, with those brief comments, Mr. Speaker, I will allow debate to continue.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Mineral Resources): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe there's a motion on the Order Paper that I have—*[interjection]* Can I not interrupt? Okay.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Just to be clear, we are on the debate on second readings for Bill 24, the wildlife amendment act. Are there any further speakers to this legislation?

Seeing none, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Question before the House is indeed second reading on

Bill 24, The Wildlife Amendment and Fisheries Amendment Act.

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

Bill 34—The Safer Roads Act (Drivers and Vehicles Act and Highway Traffic Act Amended)

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): The next motion before the House is debate and second reading on Bill 34, The Safer Roads Act (Drivers and Vehicles Act and Highway Traffic Act Amended), standing in the name of the honourable member for Steinbach.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to put a few words onto the public record prior to this bill going to committee, and we are looking forward to it going to committee and having a public discussion in September, as now previously agreed to, and that'll give, I think, the public good time to digest the bill and to bring forward their own concerns or suggestions regarding the bill, or perhaps to come out and support it because people come out and they express support for bills as well, not just concerns.

This bill makes a number of changes to The Highway Traffic Act that will bring forward either stricter guidelines in terms of those who are driving over the limit when it comes to alcohol, even at the level of 0.05, Mr. Speaker, not simply the legal limit of 0.08. It has stronger restrictions for those who are drinking with alcohol with children in the vehicle. It also deals more strongly with the issue of texting and driving. And all of these, we know, are concerns. We want to ensure that those who are driving on our highways and our roads in Manitoba are doing so, not only responsibly, when it comes to obeying the rules of the road, but that they're not doing so in an impaired fashion. And, unfortunately, statistics will tell us that drinking and driving continue to be a significant issue in our province and continues to be something that many of us are concerned about.

The amendment to make things more punitive when an individual is driving with a level of alcohol and with the children in the car, I think, is something that's of interest and of value. I, you know, I— you wished that some of these could be governed by common sense and not by legislation, Mr. Speaker, but, unfortunately, sometimes, legislation has to be involved.

We know that the government brought forward, a few years ago, a bill that made it illegal to drive

with a child in the car while you were smoking. I've recently seen some statistics, I know it's not been very often that there's been convictions or—on that particular law, Mr. Speaker, either—well, I guess, one could hope that that's because the offence isn't happening very often, although I often worry that it's an issue of enforcement and not one of a lack of offenders.

In particular, when it comes to the issue of drinking and driving, Mr. Speaker, we know that, whether it's MADD Canada or others who advocate on this issue, they'll tell you that the greatest deterrent—the greatest deterrent—to drinking and driving is the chance that the offender thinks they have of getting caught, not the penalty, necessarily, because most individuals don't, when they're in that state, they don't really consider the penalty. It's often, though, when an individual's going out and they're going out drinking, you know, they would consider the chance that they're going to get caught drinking and driving, and that's not unlike any other sort of criminal offence, that the greater likelihood that an offender or a potential offender thinks of themselves getting caught, the more likely that they will not engage in that activity.

And so the issue is one of how likely is it that somebody believes that they will get caught drinking over the legal limit, whether that's the 0.08 mark, or, in this case, 0.05. And that relates to how many police officers there are on our roads in Winnipeg, in rural Manitoba and in our cities outside of the city of Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker.

And we certainly know that often our police officers who are being funded provincially in rural detachments are policing huge areas, Mr. Speaker, huge land-mass areas, where there are communities in between these massive areas, and that certainly is the case in southeastern Manitoba. But the presence of police officers is often very little, because it's very difficult for people to be in so many places, obviously, and to have a true presence of policing.

We also know that police are required to do so many more things, whether that is being at a hospital and having taken somebody in detainment who might be dealing with a mental health issue and they remain with the individual, then, until they're seen at a hospital. Often it takes hours 'til they're seen, Mr. Speaker, and that means that that police officer is tied up in the hospital and not able to be on patrol and to be doing things like looking for those who are drinking and driving.

So all of those are impediments, and that would be the same for texting and driving, and this is obviously something that wasn't an issue necessarily 10 or 15 years ago, when texting wasn't so predominant. Ironic that you're texting even as I'm speaking, Mr. Speaker, but I don't suspect that we'll outlaw that any time soon, although, I think that it actually is illegal in this House.

* (16:50)

But I will digress from that, Mr. Acting Speaker, and suggest that the ability for the police to be able to ensure that the law is being followed really falls on their ability to do active policing and the ability for them to be empowered to have enough individuals to provide a deterrent and to hope that those who are within the purviews of, perhaps, making a criminal act or one that violates The Highway Traffic Act believe that they're going to get caught.

So, of course, we hope and expect that all Manitobans will do what they can to keep our roads safe, that they will drink responsibly, that they'll act responsibly when they're out at places where they know that they'll be drinking or others will be drinking. We expect that they'll be focusing on the road whether—that's a lot of different issues that can cause individuals to drive imprudently and that they ensure that they keep their eyes on the road and that they're attentive because it's not just their lives that are risk but it's the lives of others who are on the road as well. And so they owe what I think we all would, to be respectful not only to ourselves and to the passengers we have but to others who are traveling on the roads and have that expectation of us as well.

So I look forward to sending this bill to committee and to hearing those who might have presentations on it in September and hearing their advice as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Question before the House is the debate on second readings for Bill 34, The Safer Roads Act (Drivers and Vehicles Act and Highway Traffic Act Amended).

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

DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT MOTION

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to call for the debate on government motion, standing in the name of the member for Steinbach.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): The motion before the House is debate on the government motion, standing in the name of the honourable member for Steinbach.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): We will be supporting this motion, and the motion—it's a long history, of course, how we got to this, and I won't force the House to listen to the entire history of this, but the motion will ensure that the House will adjourn tomorrow. We'll reconvene on October 20th and meet until November 5th. We'll then reconvene on November 16th and meet until December 3rd, and then next year, in 2016, we'll reconvene with the current session or with a new session on February 24th and then meet until March 15th, Mr. Speaker. I believe that's the motion that's before debate here in the Legislature.

I do think that this, Mr. Speaker—of course, this replaces the unanimous consent of the House to sit until December which will come as a great disappointment to many here, that we won't be sitting until December. And I apologize for not ensuring that that happened. I'm sure we would have all had a good time together doing that. But I do think it fulfills the spirit of trying to have predictable sitting times and predictability within this House to try to ensure that individuals who are trying to plan not only their personal lives but I think just as importantly and perhaps more importantly their—the role of their own constituents to be able to set up meetings and set up events and do that in a way that's respectable and respectful for those who we are meeting with because it is often difficult to make those commitments and then fulfill those commitments when we don't know when the House is sitting.

I think this also provides a fair amount of time for debate on legislation. The—one of the frustrations we've had, certainly starting with this session where we began late in April, is that there often isn't enough time to be able to debate legislation appropriately and properly, Mr. Speaker, and this allows that to happen, I think. We owe it to our constituents and to Manitobans to ensure that debate happens in a fulsome way—a word that's perhaps overused sometimes—but truly in a way that allows individuals

to be able to hear about legislation, know how it impacts them.

The rules that we've passed, I think, will go a long ways to doing that in the future, but this governs that in the interim until we get to the new rules in terms of the sessional calendar until after the next election. There are some of the rules, I know, that come into effect as of fall of this year, but the portions that relate to the calendar won't come into effect until after the election. And so it's important to have something that governs, that's respectable and respectful in the interim.

So I think we are prepared to see a vote on this. I would ask if you—before the vote—if you could read the motion into the record again. There may be others who want to debate the motion, and that's fine, but before calling the vote, if you could re-read the motion into the record prior to the vote, I would appreciate that.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Any further speakers to the motion? Seeing none, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): It has been requested that I read the motion again for the record, so here it is.

The government motion reads as follows: Moved by the honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak),

THAT this House rescind the previous agreement of June 4th, 2015, to sit during the months of July, August, September, October, November and December, and, despite Rule 2(1), sit during the following periods:

- a) Adjourn June 11th, 2015 in accordance with the Rules;
- b) Reconvene on June 16th, 2015 and meet until June 30th, 2015 with the understanding that if this motion is not concluded on June 11th, the House can be recalled by the government for June 16th under the emergency recall provisions;
- c) Reconvene on October 20th, 2015 and meet until November 5th, 2015;
- d) Reconvene on November 16th, 2015 and meet until December 3rd, 2015; and, lastly

- e) Reconvene the current session/or commence the 5th Session of the 40th Legislature on February 24th, 2016 and meet until March 15th, 2016.

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

What is the pleasure of the House in terms of its next business?

* * *

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Recognizing the honourable Minister for Infrastructure and Transportation.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Acting Government House Leader): As deputy House leader, I'd like to call the second readings, I believe, is the next—by agreement here—bills in the following order: bills 4, 30, 10, 13, 31, 28, 32, and 19. *[interjection]*

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Honourable government deputy House leader.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Acting Speaker, and a revised order for second readings, and it will be 21—*[interjection]*—30, yes, okay—followed by 30, 10, 13, 31, 28, 32 and 19. It's changed. It's good.

* (17:00)

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Honourable deputy government House leader, take 3.

Mr. Ashton: Just a deciphering of handwriting issue.

This is the order: It's not 21, it's 4, 30, 10, 13, 31, 38, 32 and 19.

An Honourable Member: Twenty-eight.

Mr. Ashton: Twenty-eight, yes; 28, 32 and 19 at the end.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): All right. Thank you, everyone, for your patience.

The business now coming before the House will be second readings on the following bills: Bill 4, 30, 10, 13, 31, 28, 32 and 19.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 4—The Farm and Food Awareness Act

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): So I'm now calling for second reading on Bill 4, The Farm and Food Awareness Act.

Recognizing the honourable acting deputy House leader.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Ms. Blady), that Bill 4, The Farm and Food Awareness Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House—*[interjection]* Minister of Agriculture.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): It has been moved by the honourable Minister for Infrastructure and Transportation, seconded by the Minister of Health, that Bill 4, The Farm and Food Awareness Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House, on behalf of the Minister for Agriculture.

Recognizing the Minister for Infrastructure and Transportation.

Mr. Ashton: I do want to put on the record my appreciation for the opportunity to bring this legislation forward on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture. Of course, we're dealing with this now on second reading, and I know the Minister of Agriculture will be participating in debate, both through committee and also through further stages of consideration.

I do want to indicate that it is a bill that I'm very interested in myself. I'm actually very privileged to have—to move it. I do believe the—I think the intent was stated quite clearly by the minister in first reading. And I do think it's important, by the way, that we do talk about the importance of agriculture in this province and the degree to which this legislation, I think, is an important part of raising awareness of agriculture. And I know members opposite will share that. I know certainly it's an issue that's near and dear to many members' hearts.

And I do want to indicate that, given the interests of time, I won't get into too much detail on the second reading of the bill. I do think it's fairly self-explanatory. The intent was put forward in terms of first reading.

And, again, on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, I do recommend it to the House, and I know he will be under—he will be participating in debate at a subsequent period of time.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): The Chair recognizes the honourable member for Midland.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): Speaking to The Farm and Food Awareness Act, I certainly appreciated the member for Thompson, his speaking favourably of agriculture and his deep and abiding

knowledge of that, and it was certainly interesting. And he could tell me about mining and I could tell him about agriculture, and we would have quite a conversation, so.

But it's certainly important that we all support agriculture. It's the food we eat each and every day that keeps us going, that our producers across the province, in all our sectors, do produce that food so that we can eat and we can maintain our healthy lifestyles here in Manitoba.

I want to first of all recognize the member, my colleague from Lakeside, that originally brought forward the resolution for the Agriculture Awareness Day in Manitoba, and it became a tradition here in the Legislature to take a day, I believe it's in March, that is—where agriculture is recognized for its importance.

To their credit, this government has brought in supporters, producers from within the agricultural field of new and exciting developments within the industry, and it's always interesting to hear from those people. I had a lengthy meeting with one of the participants from this last ag awareness meeting from February. I met with her recently about her food products, Canadian Prairie Garden, producing pureed foods using vegetables that would otherwise go to waste, and it's really interesting to see the technology and her—and listen to her story. It's certainly huge potential there.

So, with this bill, it actually enshrines it in legislation, the farm and food awareness day, in March and then also the Open Farm Day in September, which has been very successful too, where farms across the province have opened their doors, so to speak, and let those who are not familiar with agriculture in to see how their food is actually being produced. And so it's always been an interesting day for those people, and we want to see that continue, so this legislation enshrines that in there.

We do have a few concerns about some of the other aspects of the bill in that they are mandating Manitoba products be made, and it's sort of at the discretion of the Agriculture Minister how these products are used and how they're reported back. But, you know, we'll wait until this bill goes to committee, which we understand will be in September, and hear from the various agricultural groups too, as to what they have to say on it. And then we look forward to further debate of this bill after committee, and we'll see how committee goes,

and then we'll look forward to third debate—third reading debate later this fall.

So, with that, thank you, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few words on this bill.

I think it's really important that the Manitoba Legislature recognize the importance of agriculture to our economy, the importance of food and nutrition to the health of all Manitobans.

* (17:10)

And I look forward to continuing discussion at committee stage and look forward to the continuing recognition and remembrance of Agricultural Awareness Day and the agricultural week in September.

Thank you.

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

An Honourable Member: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): The question before the House is second reading on Bill 4, The Farm and Food Awareness Act.

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

Recognizing the honourable Minister for Healthy Living and Seniors.

Bill 30—The Non-Smokers Health Protection Amendment Act (E-Cigarettes)

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Okay, the next item before the House before I recognize the minister is Bill 30, The Non-Smokers Health Protection Amendment Act.

Hon. Deanne Crothers (Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors): I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Ms. Blady), that Bill 30, The Non-Smokers Health Protection Amendment Act (E-Cigarettes); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs (cigarettes électroniques), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Ms. Crothers: The use of electronic cigarettes and vaping devices has certainly exploded in the past few years, including, and most especially, among youth.

We need to act now to protect our kids from the known and unknown risks of these products, including the risk of nicotine addiction, and we need to set some clear and consistent regulations around the use of these products to protect Manitobans who don't want to be exposed and to make sure we're not renormalizing smoking.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 30 will amend The Non-Smokers Health Protection Act to include electronic cigarettes, addressing this emerging issue. The bill is primarily aimed at protecting kids from a product that's on the rise but has potential health risks.

And, although electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, as they are more commonly known, are not tobacco products, many contain highly addictive nicotine and they also represent a risk of renormalizing smoking behaviour. In addition, very little is known about what long-term health effects these products may have. As we don't want to discourage people from using them as a smoking cessation device, which we know some do, we also don't want to normalize something that could be harmful or that could take the place of cigarettes.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 30 represents a true made-in-Manitoba response to this emerging issue. The bill will prohibit the sale of e-cigarettes to minors, prohibit the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed public places and indoor work places with limited exceptions, restrict the display, advertising and promotion of e-cigarettes and prohibit the sale of e-cigarettes in pharmacies and health-care facilities. These restrictions are consistent with those currently in place for smoking and the display, advertising and sale of tobacco products. Also consistent with the rules for tobacco use, Bill 30 will permit group living facilities such as personal-care homes to have a designated room for use of e-cigarettes if they so choose, and hotels will also be able to designate rooms for e-cigarette use.

Bill 30 will also permit the use of electronic cigarettes in vapour product shops for the purpose of testing and sampling products. This bill also provides some flexibility to create regulations authorizing e-cigarette use in places where children are generally prohibited such as bars or casinos, and we'll do that in consultation with Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 30 is an important legislative measure that will help prevent the uptake of electronic cigarettes by youth and will protect the public from exposure to the vapour associated with

these products, as we still don't know what the health impact of that is.

Murray Gibson, executive director of the Manitoba Tobacco Reduction Alliance, said that these new measures will protect youth from nicotine addiction and the possible dangers of e-cigarette vapour and will curb the growing use of e-cigarettes by non-smokers. Five other provinces have, or are already in the process of placing, very similar restrictions on electronic cigarettes, and Health Canada is examining what steps they can take to address safety and health concerns around these products, and we look forward to that information when it becomes available.

As we've said from the beginning, our focus is on protecting kids and providing more uniform rules as to where these products can be used. Bill 30 will do that, and I'm very proud of the work that has gone in to creating this legislation, and I thank you for your time.

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): I'd like to put a few words on the record as well about the e-cigarette issue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's really no evidence that indicates at this point that e-cigarettes are harmful, but I do know a number of people, individuals who have used the e-cigarettes and have quit smoking, other ones that are only using e-cigarettes now and not smoking any other cigarettes, and I think that's a big deterrent to cancer and certainly something that CancerCare have taken note of as we've gone through this process.

What I see is—the minister talked about the seniors homes and designated rooms in a seniors for smoking. We know that there are some senior residences that allow smoking in the rooms and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's—for my part, there's no odour from these vapours—or vape machines, whatever you want to call them, the e-cigarettes. There doesn't seem to be an odour from them. There are some people that claim they can see—or smell an odour, but, at the same time, others say there isn't. So I don't have any personal experience with them; however, I do know that cigarette smoke does choke me up really bad, and these vape things don't do that for me. These e-cigarettes don't do that.

I would say also that we—right now our—we have the vape shops that are able to—you can go try these e-cigarettes out; you can test them, you—try different things in them apparently, at will, they sell there.

What this is, though—or what this does, then, is creates an unfair advantage for your convenience stores. If they had a separate room, that's basically all they need, then, is a separate room, and they could do the same thing. So I think you're creating an advantage for one particular group in the province of Manitoba.

The other issue is if we're going to regulate things that we don't have any idea if it has an effect on your health, it's going to create an underground for these which will make them a lot more available to the young people today. We don't want to see young people smoking. We don't want to see anyone under the age of 18 smoking. And I believe that the vape shops and convenience stores have to have ID, and that's a good thing. We want to see that this is restricted from the young people, but at the same time, we don't want to limit the uptake of this if it's going to help people quit smoking the regular cigarettes or cigars, so there's certainly an issue in that respect.

So we're certainly—we're not opposed to this bill, but we wonder if it isn't creating a two-tiered system where the convenience stores aren't able to serve their customers and the vape shops are able to do—advertise— openly advertise and test the equipment. I think that it should be the same for everyone.

Thanks very much.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we are looking at the matter of e-cigarettes and that we are looking at it carefully from a health perspective both in terms of the potential beneficial effects of e-cigarettes on stopping smoking and also at the other time, the side—the potential harmful effects of e-cigarettes on health. And I really look forward to committee stage and hope that we will have a number of experts there to present and to help guide this discussion.

Like the MLA from Emerson, I have, you know, heard a significant number of stories of people who have found that these cigarettes have been helpful in stopping smoking. On the other hand, I am aware of a study which was published in the *Annals of Pharmacotherapy* in November 2014 in which they looked at six clinical trials for the effectiveness of e-cigarettes as smoking-cessation aids.

* (17:20)

They found that compared with nicotine patches, e-cigarettes were associated with fewer adverse effects and higher adherence. But they also found,

disappointingly, was that long-term cessation was not sustained at six months. And so that's also, you know, an issue: How effective are they in terms of not just the short term, but the longer term? So that—there may be a significant benefit. Clearly, if we can help people to stop smoking, that's a very significant positive measure from e-cigarettes.

On the other side, you know, there are some critical questions that are not fully answered. These e-cigarettes don't contain tobacco, but they have propylene glycol and they produce a vapour instead of the smoke when they're used. The long-term effects of regularly inhaling propylene glycol is unknown, so that clearly is something that we would like to know.

The—there is a study which was published in Nature last year which looked at genetic changes in human bronchial cells grown in vitro in a medium exposed to e-cigarette vapour compared to changes produced by tobacco. And what they found, that there were genetic changes which were similar in both cases. Now, that's an in vitro study in a cell culture, and so it's not entirely clear that that applies to what happens in vivo in the body when somebody is smoking e-cigarettes. So that work needs to be done more so that we know more about the potential negative effects.

There was another study that found that e-cigarette use, like normal cigarette smoking, led to a reduction in exhaled nitric oxide, suggesting that e-cigarettes may alter lung function. But, clearly, there's much more work that needs to be done, because that alone would not be sufficient to give a really accurate indication of what happens in terms of lung function in people who are regular smokers of e-cigarettes.

There was another study published in environmental and scientific process impacts which compared the particles generated by e-cigarettes and normal cigarettes. They found there was a tenfold decrease in the total exposure to particulate elements using e-cigarettes compared with normal cigarettes, so a tenfold lower exposure to particulate elements would look like a very positive thing. They, however, found that emissions of metal like—metals like nickel, zinc and silver were higher in e-cigarettes.

So I—there's, clearly, based on what I've been able to find so far, much more research that needs to be done. It is timely that we are looking at this subject and I look forward to having this go to

committee, hopefully in September, and we're going to have more expert advice and continued discussion about e-cigarettes and the measures that should or should not be taken and how well this legislation fits with what is needed to improve the health of Manitobans.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Seeing no further speakers, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): Question before the House is second reading on Bill 30, The Non-Smokers Health Protection Amendment Act (E-Cigarettes).

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

Bill 10—The Municipal Amendment Act

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): The next matter before the House is second reading on Bill 10, The Municipal Amendment Act.

Recognizing the honourable deputy government House leader.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, on behalf of the minister of local government, seconded by the Minister of Housing, that the—that Bill 10, The Municipal Amendment Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

The Acting Speaker (Rob Altemeyer): It has been moved by the honourable Minister for Infrastructure and Transportation on behalf of the honourable minister for municipal affairs, and seconded by the honourable Minister for Housing, that Bill 10, The Municipal Amendment Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Mr. Ashton: This—it's important legislation. A municipal councillor is elected to represent the interests of citizens in their municipality and ensure desired services are provided. In several municipalities, councils have chosen to deliver municipal services both in English and French. Long-standing municipal bylaws define the services, such as signage and public notices, and they're available to citizens in both French and English.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

This bill recognizes the importance of French language services to citizens and supports the continued delivery of those services by municipalities. Given the importance of bilingual services, the amendments ensure that changes to bylaws to reduce existing services are given careful scrutiny by councils. The bill does this by requiring a larger majority of council approve the change to a bylaw as well as approval of the minister. Other significant changes such as selling parkland or land-use development plans also require a higher level of approval.

This bill is intended to ensure that French language services in defined areas through existing municipal bylaws are maintained in a newly amalgamated municipality where one partner municipality is bilingual and the other isn't. The bill will apply to all municipalities with a French language services bylaw, recognizing the importance of the French language services in municipalities.

C'est une loi importante pour la langue français, pour les services français aux municipalités bilingues au province du Manitoba.

Translation

It's an important bill for the French language, for French services in bilingual municipalities in the province of Manitoba.

English

And I look forward to debate and passage of this amendment.

Merci beaucoup.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to say a few words on this bill this afternoon.

We also look forward to it going to committee and to hear from those municipalities and those officials who might be impacted by it, of course. Not that we live in a world of suspicion, but, having had the last bills that are dealing with municipalities go through where municipalities weren't consulted, and I think, of course, about the amalgamation where there was a lack of consultation, where municipalities had that sprung on them and they weren't advised that it was coming, we think it's important that this bill be given the due scrutiny that it deserves, because there are often things, unfortunately, with this government, that

there's a lack of consultation, there isn't that true reaching out to the individuals and to the municipalities that are affected. So, you know, we're inclined, sometimes, to take the government at its word when they say that something's been requested or something's been asked for, but we've found in the past that that isn't always the case.

And so it's something that we are glad that this bill will be before the municipalities for the next couple of months and that they'll be able to have a chance to look at it in more depth and be able to come and present at it—to it in September.

I understand that they're either concluded their municipal meetings or annual municipal meetings or perhaps they've almost concluded them, Mr. Speaker, but I know they've gone through the province and had their regular meetings during the month of June, and it's not an unreasonable time to thank them for the work that they do.

Municipalities and municipal officials are, of course, at the—I hate to say the lowest level of government, because that sounds sort of as though it's derogatory. I would say they're the closest to the people in terms of their services to individuals and a very important part of government, and we know that they deal most directly with residents in the various municipalities. So certainly not a derogatory thing; in fact, very much a positive thing in terms of the work that they do. And we want to commend the councillors for their work and we hope that they'll have the opportunity to come to present to this bill in September, that they'll be able to come and make presentation and perhaps improve the bill.

* (17:30)

And I remember the words, because they weren't that long ago, of the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) who talked about the importance of our committee system, and we echo that, and I want to say in relation to the changes to the rules that he did speak strongly about the need to ensure that that committee process and the public presentation part of it be respected, and I absolutely think that that is the feeling and the intent of everybody who worked on the rules to ensure that the committee process is respected. And I think any government that didn't show it the proper and due respect would not do well, Mr. Speaker, in the court of public opinion. So I suspect that that'll be adhered to and, of course, in future rules committees, there may be discussions about how that can be ensured or strengthened.

But, in terms of this bill, we are certainly happy to see it move on to committee and to hear those presentations from the different municipalities who may be impacted, and we thank them for their fine work that they do in municipalities around the province, Mr. Speaker.

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

House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is second reading of Bill 10, The Municipal Amendment Act.

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

Bill 13—The Planning Amendment Act (Special Planning Areas)

Mr. Speaker: We'll now call for second reading, Bill 13, The Planning Amendment Act (Special Planning Areas).

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): I—on behalf of the minister of local government, I move, seconded by the Minister of Multiculturalism, that Bill 13, The Planning Amendment Act (Special Planning Areas); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire (circonscriptions spéciales d'aménagement du territoire), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation on behalf of the honourable Minister of Municipal Government (Mr. Caldwell), seconded by the honourable Minister of Multiculturalism, that Bill 13, The Planning Amendment Act (Special Planning Areas), be now read for a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

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

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the opportunity to bring this legislation in, and I think it's important to note we are delivering on our Throne Speech commitment to introduce legislation that creates a special planning area to support the expansion, trade and growth of CentrePort.

I have a particular role in terms of CentrePort, being Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. I'm very proud of the fact that we

have completed CentrePort Canada Way, opened at really an amazing time, Mr. Speaker, a major accomplishment. This legislation speeds up development approvals, will help attract new private investment and create jobs while ensuring local landowners and residents continue to participate in a public review process for planning and development. It creates an inland port special planning authority for CentrePort lands in Rosser. It will hold public hearings to provide advice or recommendations to the minister of local government on planning, bylaws, amendments, subdivision applications and other developments within the SPA. The new planning authority will also hear and make decisions on appeals to variance orders or conditional use applications.

Mr. Speaker, under the bill, the existing local planning authorities, Rosser council, South Interlake Planning District board, will be replaced by a multi-stakeholder planning authority that will also include, in addition to Rosser and the City of Winnipeg: CentrePort Canada; the WAA, the airports authority; and the province. The special planning authority will be chaired by a representative of the RM of Rosser. Rosser council have continued onput—input on development of lands, responsive development agreements, building permits. Oversight of construction activity is to remain with the local planning authority.

It's a key part of our strategy; it's very, I think, significant in terms of moving ahead with CentrePort. I would point out that we're also moving ahead on infrastructure side with the Headingley bypass. We will be actually having public meetings within a matter of a week or two on that. So, again, this is something that's a result of very significant work, a very significant amount of consultations. I want to put on the record, too, the particular support, certainly from the City of Winnipeg, but I think the RM of Rosser deserves particular citation here for their strong support for CentrePort, along, of course, with the City of Winnipeg.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for all Manitoba—

Mr. Speaker: Pardon me. Before I get to the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), I neglected to do one item.

I want to ask the honourable Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation whether it was his intent to table the message from His Honour—or Her Honour, pardon me. Was that the intent?

Mr. Ashton: Yes, indeed, the intent was to table the message from Her Honour—His Honour, sorry, this is—predates Her Honour. His Honour.

Mr. Speaker: Now that we've clarified that, the message has been read into the record from His Honour.

My apologies to the honourable member for River Heights for interrupting. I just wanted to make sure that that was taken care of first.

The honourable member for River Heights has the floor.

Mr. Gerrard: Well, I'm pleased to know that the second reading has been legally put forward and that we have that material tabled.

I think it's important for all Manitobans that we have a really well-functioning airport in Winnipeg and that it's supported by a CentrePort development which is functional and works well. That, of course, requires the co-operation of a number of jurisdictions, and it has been to date a little disappointing, the slow pace of development at CentrePort. And so I am hopeful that with this passage of this legislation that things can move further along.

I look forward to presentations from the RM of Rosser and from CentrePort at the committee stage and so we can continue this discussion and move things forward on this legislation. Thank you.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Just put a few words on the record on behalf of our caucus.

We, of course, were great supporters and are great supporters of CentrePort, Mr. Speaker, that initiative that had a great deal of support from the federal Conservative government both in terms of ensuring that it came to be and the infrastructure around CentrePort, and I know that there's more infrastructure to come.

But we very much believe that Winnipeg is the gateway for North America, Mr. Speaker, and we are located in such a way, particularly for flights, that it can be very much the centre of North America and that we could continue to expand the trade that we have in the province of Manitoba. And CentrePort is a key part of that, not the only part, but it is certainly a key part of it.

And so from its inception and from its initial thought, Mr. Speaker, we've been supportive of CentrePort and we want to see it succeed because we

know that if it succeeds, then Manitoba will also succeed as part of that. So we continue to look for ways to promote Manitoba and to let those who aren't aware of the Manitoba story that we have a great province, to not only boost manufacturing and to help individuals who are interested in having trade.

Mr. Speaker, we have some advantages in terms of location, obviously. We sometimes feel we're losing the advantage when it comes to issues of taxation and regulation, but those are more an issue of government. But we have, of course, the advantage of location, which is more a good fortune than of government. So we would like to take advantage of that as much as possible and to ensure that CentrePort is successful.

We look forward to those who might come forward and make presentations, and I also heard the minister talk about the exceptional work of the RM of Rosser and we certainly echo that, Mr. Speaker, and we look forward to those coming to committee in September who may be impacted directly by this and may have suggestions. We have a couple of months, of course, until that happens, and no doubt individuals that have an opportunity to review legislation and be able to bring forward different ideas that might strengthen the legislation, and we look forward to hearing those presentations.

And, ultimately, when this bill comes back to the House for third reading sometime in the fall, it might even be improved from the status that it is right now. But we are quite happy to see it go to committee—pass into committee today and to be presented in committee in September, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate? House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question for the House is second reading of Bill 13, The Planning Amendment Act (Special Planning Areas).

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

* (17:40)

Bill 31—The Registered Professional Planners Act

Mr. Speaker: We'll now call for second reading, Bill 31, The Registered Professional Planners Act.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I move,

seconded—on behalf of the minister of local government, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Ms. Irvin-Ross), that Bill 31, The Registered Professional Planners Act; Loi sur les urbanistes professionnels, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, on behalf of the honourable Minister of Municipal Government (Mr. Caldwell), seconded by the honourable Minister of Family Services, that Bill 31, The Registered Professional Planners Act, be now read for a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Mr. Ashton: I appreciate the opportunity to move this on behalf of the minister of local government.

Planners, of course, play a key role in helping manage changes related to land use and development in our communities. This bill protects the public interest by having increasing transparency and accountability in the planning profession. It ensures that qualified professionals practising planning are identified by the designation RFP, and this is important because it reflects the code of professional conduct and ethics, and I want to also indicate this is a title that will be reserved for members of the Manitoba professional planning institute. It's not a scope-of-practice legislation as in it does not prohibit individuals without the RFP—or pardon me, the RPP designation, such as architects or landscape architects, providing planning services.

One of—we're one of the last three provinces without it, and we believe this will be well-received. I should note that key stakeholders are in support of this, including the AMM, City of Winnipeg by council resolution, the Manitoba Capital Region partnership, which, of course, is 16 municipalities, Brandon and Area Planning District, Red River Planning District and the Manitoba Association of Landscape Architects, and I recommend it to the House.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I think this is an important step forward having the Manitoba professional planners institute. I note that we have been behind most other provinces, you know, that's something that we need to catch up. We may need to change the government to catch up in a lot of areas, but—that being said, you know, this is a positive step, and I look forward to this going to

committee and look forward to this moving forward and giving a better framework for planners in Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, under an abundance of caution, I'm asking leave of the House to not see the clock until second reading has been resolved on Bill 31, 28, 32 and 19.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House not to see the clock until we've concluded the matters involving bills 31, 28, 32 and 19? *[Agreed]*

The honourable member for Steinbach, to speak to the bill.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Yes, on this bill, Mr. Speaker, we certainly are looking forward to the comments from some of the groups that the minister referenced. He indicates that AMM, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, in favour of this bill, and we look forward to hearing from them, and we hope that they make a presentation. They'll have some ample time to consider the bill now in its current form, and they might have some suggestions for improvement.

Also, from the City of Winnipeg, he's indicated that a resolution was passed by the City of Winnipeg, and we would be open, of course, to hearing any suggestions that they might have, and we certainly do recognize the important role that planners play in our municipal governments and ensuring that things happen and that development happens in an orderly fashion in municipalities.

It's worth noting, not to prejudge the decision because I think it has to go to the Municipal Board, but the City of Steinbach recently came to an agreement with the RM of Hanover, its neighbouring municipality, to essentially double in size through an agreement that the RM of Hanover has agreed to provide. It's now going to be twice the size of the current city of Steinbach, and I think seven times as big as Winkler. I say that for my friend from Morden-Winkler.

But in terms of the—my understanding is that the city of Steinbach believed that under its current growth rate it could literally run out of room for development within eight years. And so the doubling of size through the agreement with the RM of Hanover will allow it to grow, of course, way into the future.

And we—I want to commend the RM of Hanover, first of all, because often there isn't that sort of neighbouring agreement, and then there isn't always that agreement to ensure that the planning happens in that way and often municipalities can be quite territorial. But in this case they worked together to ensure that they saw the greater good of the region. And we'll await, of course, the final decision from the Municipal Board, you know, on that. It obviously has to go through its due process and we respect that, but, certainly, to get to this stage it took a great deal of co-operation from the two municipalities, and I think that speaks well of that. And we look forward to the continued growth not only of the city of Steinbach, but, of course, the RM of Hanover which is also a very fast-growing municipality in the province.

So this professional designation that this bill creates, the minister indicates that we would be one of the last provinces in Canada to do it. I wish we could be a leader, Mr. Speaker, and not always one of the last. But I do think it's something that's better late than never and we look forward to hearing presentations at committee when this bill comes to committee in September.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on this matter? Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question for the House is Bill 31, The Registered Professional Planners Act.

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

Bill 28—The Personal Property Security Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Now proceed to call for seconding reading, Bill 28, The Personal Property Security Amendment Act.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): I move, on behalf of the minister, that—seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Ms. Irvin-Ross)—and that Bill 28, The Personal Property Security Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sûretés relatives aux biens personnels, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of the House.

Behalf of the—of water and tourism and a bunch of other things.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, on behalf of the honourable Minister of Tourism, seconded by the honourable Minister of Family Services, that Bill 28, The Personal Property Security Amendment Act, be now read for a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Mr. Speaker: Debate?

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, this bill assists targets of vexatious registrations and protects our citizens. It will put in place a streamlined fair approach to save our people from harassment through registration of a false or vexatious lien against the Personal Property Registry. This is the notice registration system which registers all encumbrances, provides registration services. People obviously would be aware of this through lenders, sellers, garage keepers, government agencies, purchasers, et cetera.

Vast majority are legitimate documents. There are problems with harassment. This will deal with vexatious registrations. And, Mr. Speaker, currently victims of these registrations must go to court to have the registration removed. This can be costly and time-consuming. Now the registrar will be able to deal with these matters without it going to court.

The person who's made a vexatious registration may be required to make future submissions only in paper form. The legislation will also apply to financial—or, pardon me, financing statements.

And included in the bill were two other amendments: an amendment to remove outdated references to writs of execution affecting land; and an amendment to allow for an interested party, such as the owner of personal property, to require a secured party claiming a security interest under a trust indenture to go to court to establish that the claim is still valid. For this purpose, security interests under trust indentures will be treated the same as other security interests. The amendment eliminates an anomaly that's been used to harass owners and personal property.

So, Mr. Speaker, this deals with vexatious registrations and will protect the owner's personal property against that vexatious activity.

* (17:50)

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Yes, and had the opportunity to meet with the department and the minister in regards to this piece of legislation. And we were told that often it seems to be public

officials, individuals that work for government, whether it's for a Crown corporation or even public servants, who perhaps will deny somebody a claim or will for some reason or another have to turn somebody's wishes down. And often they will turn around and put a vexatious claim against them on property that they own. And what this does is it makes it far more able to deal with the issue and not having to go to court and involve lawyers; the registrar will be able to deal with these issues. And, certainly, we as legislators know that there are times when individuals are not pleased with decisions we've made or decisions that we're about to make. And this was a means by which people could underhandedly get back at you.

The other point of this legislation is from here on in that you will have to be notified if such a claim is put against your property, which is something that should have happened long ago because you would go and want to sell your property and you'd find out that there was a claim against it or claims against it. And then you would have to go to court and have the courts remove it and you would have to pay to have that removed because you'd obviously get legal advice, whereas now, that'll be done through a registrar. So a piece of legislation that cleans up something that should have been cleaned up some time ago, and we'd like to see it move on to its final process.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on this matter?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a brief comment on this. I think it is, you know, important to be able to ensure that there's a method of dealing with vexatious complaints. At the same time, I think it's very important that a balance be struck so that individuals who have real concerns are not, you know, excluded based on their complaints being called vexatious. So, hopefully, the balance has been struck in the right way, and I look forward to discussion at the committee stage and hearing what presenters say. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on this matter?

House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is second reading of Bill 28, The Personal Property Security Amendment Act.

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

Bill 32—The Noxious Weeds Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call for second reading, Bill 32, The Noxious Weeds Amendment Act.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): On behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), that Bill 32, The Noxious Weeds Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la destruction des mauvaises herbes, be now read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I now realize that when I was gardening on the weekend back home in Thompson that I was actually preparing for this legislation, little did I know. And I can indicate that the purpose is to protect agricultural lands from the establishment and spread of noxious and invasive weeds.

The department has been responsible for noxious weeds since 1960, delegates enforcement to municipalities through weed inspector supervisors. As one of the Province's oldest pieces of legislation, it's interesting to note that this was first passed in 1871, one year after Manitoba became a province. The act has had many amendments. The primary objective of the act is to manage and control the spread of noxious plants that pose a threat to agriculture, the environment or human health, and that goal remains the same.

The act is long overdue for updating, and the rationale for proceeding includes: There are many weed species listed for destruction; there are 500-plus weeds listed for potential regulation, 100-plus of which are currently regulated; classification of noxious weeds into tiers allows for flexibility in regional control programs. This approach allows the destruction or control of noxious weeds depending on the weeds' classification distribution.

Noxious weeds will be scheduled by regulation to simplify the process of adding or removing them. New weed species that have potential to negatively impact agriculture and the environment need to be addressed in a timely manner. A new provision is added to allow the minister to be able to designate it a tier 1 noxious weed for a one-year period. Weeds are otherwise designated by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council.

The dollar value, the limit, the cost enforcement prior to regulatory approval, which is currently \$500, and the levy, which is \$10 an acre, is not in line with the current costs of controlling weeds. This provision allows municipalities to recoup their costs for weed control which will remain in the act, but the dollar values will be moved to regulation where they can be updated. The RMs that are not enforcing the act need to be accountable for not controlling noxious weeds, so introducing fines for non-compliant RMs as a less heavy-handed enforcement option when compared with the government assuming control of the operation.

The provision requiring noxious weeds to be cleaned from machinery and equipment has been extended from farm machinery to all machinery. This amendment falls in line with the department's support of increased biosecurity and is supported by commodity organizations. It complements the Conservation and Water Stewardship environment amendment act to safely manage and eradicate weeds.

I want to stress again that we often see these as being—having cosmetic impact, but they have very significant impacts. Many are noxious, invasive species, Mr. Speaker, and it does have a very significant impact, particularly on agricultural communities, so these are very important amendments to an act that has served us well but is in need of some modernization, and I urge members of the House to support it.

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I just want to put a few words on the record regarding The Noxious Weeds Act, and it's certainly in desperate need of updating. In fact, if you look at the original act, it's a very interesting historical document but not too relevant to modern agriculture and something that we need to work on because of the emphasis that's been taking place in the area of biosecurity not only—I mean, there are plant diseases, as well, that we should be probably looking at additional legislation around protecting properties from some plant diseases that could be brought in by foreign—or by people moving into the area or bringing equipment into the area.

But we've had, for some time, legislation on noxious weeds. There's been a review in place on what really should be a noxious weed because some things have evolved a bit. Many of the weeds that we as—in agriculture deal with are, in fact, invasive species that have come in modern times and certainly

have become significant problems across Manitoba, so we need to look at how we categorize these.

And I look forward, I think, to hearing from people in committee, and there is a lot of interest from people representing different groups as to how this is being handled and whether or not we should, in fact, be going as far as we have in terms of declassifying some of the noxious weeds and whether that impact will leave a lot more of them out there without any mandate on the part of municipalities and local governments to do anything regarding this.

So there'll certainly be an interesting representation to this, and we look forward to the debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Just, you know, a few comments. As has been already mentioned, this is an act which originated many years ago; it needs updating. I think that the issues that I would have, you know, some comment on, clearly there have been, and we've heard them recently in the context of people with Manitoba Hydro introducing not necessarily noxious weeds but other biological contaminants when they're visiting farms onto the fields. And it would seem to me that, you know, it's a pretty important area in terms of being able to help people in the farming community and, you know, make things as easy as possible in terms of producers and to decrease the spread of noxious weeds.

* (18:00)

I think that there are, as I've already talked about, people like Hydro workers who are going out on farms. There are other areas, from personal experience, where we have trails—Trans-Canada Trail—where you've got a lot of people walking that you have quite a potential for people to be carrying seeds, and that this is something that, you know, we need to be aware of as we're approaching this.

I think that it's quite likely that in the years ahead we're going to see some very different ways of detecting noxious weeds. The ability to detect very, very tiny amounts of genetic material from noxious weeds, it seems to me, is likely to come into play in the future in detecting whether or not and the extent to which we have noxious weeds present in areas of the province. And when we're looking at, you know, how you conduct that surveillance, because it's an issue of scale, the Province probably has a fairly important role because, certainly, if we're looking at

genetic approaches, it's probably less likely that individual municipalities would be able to get into this area as much as the Province might be able to.

I think it's also important that, when we're looking at getting rid of noxious weeds, that there could easily be genetic approaches again which could be used to prevent growth or spread of particular individual plants. It's something that, you know, is more—further probably in the future than genetic detection of noxious weeds, but, again, would need the Province probably to be involved in to make sure that any such treatments are warranted, are effective, don't have side effects, et cetera.

I note that one of the problem areas historically has been along roads and that the Province is responsible for a lot of major highways. And, in terms of what happens here, I'm not sure how effective municipalities have been in taking the Province to task to decrease noxious weeds along highways, but that's something that the Province should be looking at and would be one of the things that perhaps we may have some more discussion of as we get to committee stage.

I think it's certainly a good subject of legislation that needs attention, and I look forward to some expert and knowledgeable opinion at the committee stage.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on this matter?

Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is second reading of Bill 32, The Noxious Weeds Amendment Act.

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

Bill 19—The Legal Profession Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call Bill 19, The Legal Profession Amendment Act.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), that Bill 19 be the—pardon me—Bill 19, The Legal Profession Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la profession d'avocat, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ashton: I'm very pleased to bring this bill forward. It amends The Legal Profession Act which governs all lawyers who practise law in Manitoba. The amendments provide greater transparency as they enable the Law Society of Manitoba to make public the names of lawyers who are the subject of a complaint, investigation or a charge prior to disciplinary action being concluded.

These amendments are also beneficial to the public as they will allow the governing body of the Law Society of Manitoba, the benchers, to regulate the conduct not only of lawyers, but also of the law firms. These amendments allow for the extension of public protection provisions such as rules governing complaints and discipline, financial accountability and the use of a code of conduct to apply to law firms.

Finally, these amendments will allow for more public representation on the governing body of the Law Society by increasing the number of lay benches from four to six. The goal is greater transparency, increased protection for the public and increased public representation on the governing body of the Law Society.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Just a few words on this bill, and, certainly, we appreciate the role of the Law Society in governing their profession, Mr. Speaker, and we appreciate the role of lawyers in our community. They have an important role to do to ensure that things function properly and that they work well. Often, perhaps, not unlike politicians they sometimes get a bit of a bad reputation sometimes. But good lawyers when they are functioning for you, it's very helpful. Certainly in the commercial sense and obviously in other senses, too, whether its civic— or civil litigation or in those cases where it's criminal litigation, you want to have good and qualified people.

But we also know as a self-governing profession, Mr. Speaker, that there also needs to be a good system in place when individuals who don't operate in the way that expectations would be and high standards for the legal profession, that there is an ability to take action on that. And we know that that's a rare—the rarer a case that that's evolved with lawyers that are practising in Manitoba. A very, very small number of them would ever become involved in a disciplinary action with the Law Society. But, when that happens, the public has a right to bring those complaints forward and have them heard properly and appropriately.

And so we look forward to this bill going to committee in the fall, and hearing from those who are impacted by it.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few comments on this legislation.

I think, first and foremost, that lawyers make a very significant contribution to our society, and let us compliment lawyers who work in various aspects of the justice field and in other areas. Certainly, this piece of legislation would appear to take us a step forward in terms of providing the way to deal with issues that arise.

I look forward to hearing from presenters at the committee stage and hearing the discussion at that point. And so I welcome the opportunity for it to go today, pass second reading and then move on to committee.

Thank you.

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

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question's been called. Seeing no further debate, the question for the House is second reading of Bill 19, The Legal Profession Amendment Act.

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

I believe that concludes the business of the House for this afternoon.

The hour being past 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 29, 2015

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