

Third Session – Forty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

Vol. LXXV No. 80A - 10 a.m., Tuesday, October 12, 2021

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

| Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| ADAMS, Danielle | Thompson | NDP |
| ALTOMARE, Nello | Transcona | NDP |
| ASAGWARA, Uzoma | Union Station | NDP |
| BRAR, Diljeet | Burrows | NDP |
| BUSHIE, Ian | Keewatinook | NDP |
| CLARKE, Eileen | Agassiz | PC |
| COX, Cathy, Hon. | Kildonan-River East | PC |
| CULLEN, Cliff, Hon. | Spruce Woods | PC |
| DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon. | Roblin | PC |
| EICHLER, Ralph, Hon. | Lakeside | PC |
| EWASKO, Wayne, Hon. | Lac du Bonnet | PC |
| FIELDING, Scott, Hon. | Kirkfield Park | PC |
| FONTAINE, Nahanni | St. Johns | NDP |
| FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon. | Morden-Winkler | PC |
| GERRARD, Jon, Hon. | River Heights | Lib. |
| GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon. | Steinbach | PC |
| GORDON, Audrey, Hon. | Southdale | PC |
| GUENTER, Josh | Borderland | PC |
| GUILLEMARD, Sarah, Hon. | Fort Richmond | PC |
| HELWER, Reg, Hon. | Brandon West | PC |
| ISLEIFSON, Len | Brandon East | PC |
| JOHNSON, Derek, Hon. | Interlake-Gimli | PC |
| JOHNSTON, Scott | Assiniboia | PC |
| KINEW, Wab | Fort Rouge | NDP |
| LAGASSÉ, Bob | Dawson Trail | PC |
| LAGIMODIERE, Alan, Hon. | Selkirk | PC |
| LAMONT, Dougald | St. Boniface | Lib. |
| LAMOUREUX, Cindy | Tyndall Park | Lib. |
| LATHLIN, Amanda | The Pas-Kameesak | NDP |
| LINDSEY, Tom | Flin Flon | NDP |
| MALOWAY, Jim | Elmwood | NDP |
| MARCELINO, Malaya | Notre Dame | NDP |
| MARTIN, Shannon | McPhillips | PC |
| MICHALESKI, Brad | Dauphin | PC |
| MICKLEFIELD, Andrew | Rossmere | PC |
| MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice | Seine River | PC |
| MOSES, Jamie | St. Vital | NDP |
| NAYLOR, Lisa | Wolseley | NDP |
| NESBITT, Greg | Riding Mountain | PC |
| PEDERSEN, Blaine | Midland | PC |
| PIWNIUK, Doyle | Turtle Mountain | PC |
| REYES, Jon, Hon. | Waverley | PC |
| SALA, Adrien | St. James | NDP |
| SANDHU, Mintu | The Maples | NDP |
| SCHULER, Ron, Hon. | Springfield-Ritchot | PC |
| SMITH, Andrew | Lagimodière | PC |
| SMITH, Bernadette | Point Douglas | NDP |
| SMOOK, Dennis | La Vérendrye | PC |
| SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon. | Riel | PC |
| STEFANSON, Heather | Tuxedo | PC |
| TEITSMA, James | Radisson | PC |
| WASYLIW, Mark | Fort Garry | NDP |
| WHARTON, Jeff, Hon. | Red River North | PC |
| WIEBE, Matt | Concordia | NDP |
| WISHART, Ian | Portage la Prairie | PC |
| WOWCHUK, Rick | Swan River | PC |
| <i>Vacant</i> | Fort Whyte | |

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Please be seated. Good morning, everybody.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Deputy Government House Leader): Good morning, Madam Speaker. Could you please call the following bills for debate this morning: second reading of Bill 215, The Provincial Court Amendment Act (Gender-Based Violence Education Requirements), from 10 to 10:30; and then concurrence and third reading of Bill 217, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act, from 10:30 to 11 a.m.?

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will consider Bill 215 until 10:30 and then Bill 217 from 10:30 to 11.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

**Bill 215—The Provincial Court Amendment Act
(Gender-Based Violence Education
Requirements)**

Madam Speaker: So therefore, I will now call second reading of Bill 215, The Provincial Court Amendment Act (Gender-Based Violence Education Requirements).

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): It's nice to be back in the Chamber here today. I need a quick refresher, do I need to move the bill? *[interjection]*

I move, seconded by the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont), that Bill 215, The Provincial Court Amendment Act (Gender-Based Violence Education Requirements), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Ms. Lamoureux: I'm glad to have the opportunity to rise today to speak a bit about Bill 215 here in the Chamber, and with that, I do intend to keep my remarks short, as I know we're limited on time, and I want to ensure everyone who wishes to have the opportunity to speak to the bill has the chance to do so.

So Bill 215, The Provincial Court Amendment Act, would do a couple of things. Firstly, it would mandate provincial appointed judges to take a formal course dealing with sexual assault.

Madam Speaker, we're learning every day how important it is for people in leadership roles and those making decisions to have proper education and training in fields where decisions are being made. An example of this, is look at our ministers, look at our critic representatives, of critic role advocates. We trust that people who are in these positions have background knowledge and training and experience to speak to the roles in which they are.

And that's what this bill is all about: it's the same idea for judges. Judges should have the best education made available to them about sexual assault if they are going to be having life-changing input on sexual assault cases.

In addition to this training, Madam Speaker, Bill 215 creates accountability by calling for annual reporting to the Legislature of the training taken place throughout the year.

And I want to be very, very clear that this bill does not require judges to explain their reasoning. We trust in our justice system. It's not a matter of having to justify these decisions to us politicians, it's strictly about having the best understanding and education available to us to make these decisions.

And before wrapping up, I want to reiterate, as I have in previous members' statements, that this bill derives from former MP Rona Ambrose, who introduced it at a national level.

I do want to thank the Minister of Justice as well for taking the time to continue to work with me. I know over this last six, eight months he has met with me in his office, and we have met safely, following precautions, Madam Speaker. We've also had a couple of phone conversations and ongoing dialogue about the legislation.

And my hope is that the NDP will also be able to support the bill moving forward, or something to its nature.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Questions

Madam Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from another party, this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties, each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): I was just wondering if the member for Tyndall Park had consulted with any groups, particularly survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence or even the Manitoba Provincial Court education committee?

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I'd like to thank the member for Seine River for posing the question.

No, I think it's very, very important when introducing any form of legislation that a lot of consultation takes place. And that's why—what really makes this bill so worthwhile, is not only has it been passed at a national level—so if our federal government, our national government can do it, don't see why Manitoba shouldn't be able to do it—but that was actually introduced by a Conservative MP.

Similarly, Madam Speaker, here, provincially, I know myself, a member of a Liberal caucus and a member from the NDP caucus has also introduced similar legislation. So it seems to be a clear boundary that all parties here in Manitoba, here in Canada, actually feel this legislation is worthwhile, and hence—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MLA Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): Could the member explain who would be approving the new training for judges?

Ms. Lamoureux: I'd like to thank the member for Notre Dame for her question. I believe, if I heard her correctly, it's who would be approving—I'm just sort of looking her way—who would be approving the training?

This is why it's being brought through provincial legislation. And as mentioned in the earlier—my earlier remarks, Madam Speaker, it's not about deciding what judges can and cannot make rulings on. It's strictly

about holding them accountable, making sure that they have the training ahead of time before making these decisions.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I would like to ask the MLA for Tyndall Park, there have been a number of examples where judges have made decisions which appear to go against what we understand is the best approach for sexual violence, and I wonder if—is this part of the reason why this bill is so important?

Ms. Lamoureux: I want to thank the member for River Heights for the very, very good question. And we're seeing it more and more as time continues on, decisions being made that as a society we may be on different sides of, and that's why I think this education is so incredibly important.

* (10:10)

We need to make sure that those who are making decisions on sexual harassment—real experiences, in this case, of people's lives, here in Manitoba—have the background knowledge, whether it's to the use of sensitivity, whether it's the use of discretion, we need to make sure that people are properly trained and equipped to answer questions and hear to rulings.

Ms. Eileen Clarke (Agassiz): What would be the outcome of this legislative change if, since this bill offloads the responsibility on the Chief Justice, these changes they make are not satisfactory?

Ms. Lamoureux: I appreciate the question.

Again, these changes are not being offset upon the judges. These changes are only creating opportunities for judges to be able to receive further education and training that people should want to be able to participate in, want to be eager to participate in, for the fairness and justice here in our province of Manitoba and for better understanding. They would have the opportunity to take this ongoing training for sexual assault and in addition to this be able to report annually, once a year, to the Manitoba Legislature with what they have been learning.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for McPhillips (Mr. Martin)—oh, the honourable member for Notre Dame.

MLA Marcelino: Could the member explain who would approve the continuing education program for judges that have already received their certification?

Ms. Lamoureux: It is my understanding that by bringing this forward as a justice form of—piece of

legislation, that it's actually the Justice Department here at the Manitoba Legislature at a provincial level that would be requiring an annual updated report. But it's not a matter of the Department of Justice determining how judges are to rule on any of these cases.

Mr. Shannon Martin (McPhillips): I appreciate the member's bill this morning.

We know that BIPOC, transgender, non-binary and two-spirited Manitobans face a disproportionate amount of violence in our system. And while the member's bill specifically talks about domestic violence and sexual assault, or violence in terms of sexual assault, I'm wondering if violence towards those other marginalized groups would be—fall under a continuing education program, or is it something that would need to be added to her legislation?

Ms. Lamoureux: I'd like to thank the member for McPhillips for his question. I actually think that's a great question as well: Where do we go further past this legislation? And I sort of see this as a positive step in the right direction.

And we saw this first at a national level when Rona Ambrose first introduced it and it passed at this national level. So it sort of goes back to that. At the end of the day, if nationally—if Ottawa can do this, I don't see why Manitoba can't. Especially when it's Manitoba's jurisdiction to be dealing with so many sexual assault cases, we should be taking the lead on it.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): I just wanted to ask the member for Tyndall Park how this legislation differs from federal legislation.

Ms. Lamoureux: I'm going to say that's the best question so far asked here in the Chamber, and this bill differs from federal legislation because it does not require judges to explain their reasoning. We trust in our justice system, and as to reiterate this over and over again, we do not want judges to have to justify why they're making these decisions to us politicians. By no means do we know better than judges how to make these decisions. We just want there to be a form of accountability and an annual regulated review. And we believe that there should be training made available to them.

And, you know, I can give another example if I were to think about this. We see other people who are specializing in different fields, whether it's a minister in a ministerial—

Madam Speaker: The honourable member's time has expired.

MLA Marcelino: Would the member please explain, why might women and girls choose not to report their sexual assault?

Ms. Lamoureux: I really, really appreciate that question from the member from Notre Dame.

I believe that there are a ton of reasons women and girls, people, all individuals may choose not to report sexual violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault. It is something that is incredibly personal for a person, and at the end of the day it's about personal healing. If a person feels that they may heal in a different, a better, maybe a not-so-good way by bringing it forward, that is completely on them. It is their decision. They deserve to have that power.

Madam Speaker: Are there any further questions?

Ms. Clarke: Madam Speaker, how do you think this bill will impact the survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence?

Ms. Lamoureux: I think that that's what this bill is all about. It's impacting the survivors, those who have come forward with sexual assault cases who are having to face a judge.

I know if I were to come forward with this experience, and I was looking at a judge, my hope would be that that judge has the experience, has the education and has the proper training to address what is going for me internally, mentally, emotionally, spiritually to address that in a sensitive manner.

Madam Speaker: Are there any further questions?

MLA Marcelino: Would the member please explain what happens if a judge does not participate in continuing education programs?

Ms. Lamoureux: I think that that would make for great future debate. That's not actually what this legislation is about at this point. We're not here to bring about consequences or disciplinary measures whatsoever. We're here strictly from the basis that we believe that we should be providing the best training and education for judges who are making rulings on sexual assault cases, and that's what we're about with this bill.

Madam Speaker: There any further questions?

MLA Marcelino: Would the member please update our House here if she knows what the current rates of protection orders for domestic violence dismissals are, either those that have been withdrawn or dismissed?

Ms. Lamoureux: I know throughout the pandemic that rates have continued to go up and up in abuse cases and domestic violence cases, and I know that, as a society, we're having a better understanding every single day of the different types of abuse that actually take place in people's homes and people's workplaces, at schools, for individuals. And I think the best thing we could be doing is by taking action now.

We have the statistics. They're on Stats Canada website. We have statistics here in Manitoba about the numbers of people who have been experiencing this. But, ultimately, we know that there are way more experiencing than just those numbers because a lot of people don't feel they're in the place to come forward or that they would like to come forward at—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

The time for question period has expired as well.

Debate

Madam Speaker: Debate is open.

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Good morning to all my colleagues. I hope everyone enjoyed their Thanksgiving weekend.

I thank the member for Tyndall Park (Ms. Lamoureux) for bringing forward this bill for debate in the Manitoba Legislature. As she has mentioned this morning, I've appreciated our interactions on the substance of her private member's bill, and I'm pleased to put remarks on the record.

I've thought long and hard about what I would say on this day as the Attorney General for Manitoba and the highest symbolic authority of the Manitoba court system. Certainly, we share concerns about sexual assault in communities and we share the desire to make sure that our judges in the province of Manitoba are well trained to hear arguably some of the most complex cases, the most complex issues in law.

I would want to say, first, that we acknowledge that sex assault and domestic violence law training impacts victims of sexual violence. We take this seriously. So programs like Victim Services and Family Resolution Service help us to respond. Also, our government created the Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet, the first of its kind in the country.

I also want to update all of my colleagues and say, when it comes to ways that legislators can help judicial training, they include but are not limited to the

action our government took with very little fanfare a number of months ago when I phoned the chief judge and increased the funding of our department for judicial training through the National Judicial Institute for judge training by almost 85 per cent, the first increase of its type in almost 15 years. This is a way that we can all help.

* (10:20)

I want to let my colleagues know, I have worked with the chief judge and the chief justices in Manitoba on this issue to better understand the issues underlying the desire for verification—if I can say so—of judicial preparation for these kind of cases. I have met with other Attorneys General in the—in Canada. I have met with the Minister of Justice federally, and spoken numerous times on the issue. I've also met personally with Rona Ambrose, who, of course, did sponsor the very first bill, private member's bill, in the House of Commons. That bill did not pass. A second bill did not pass, when it was brought by the government, but the third one introduced in the Senate did work its way through and saw passage just this spring.

I want to say that the issues we're facing today are complex. And I wouldn't want to dismiss that. What I want to say, and not in way of excuse, is that it's impressed upon me, and has been impressed upon me, that the fundamental—that our system of democracy fundamentally relies on the division between legislative and executive and judicial branches of government.

And we must all, as legislators, understand that that independence of the judiciary is the thing that we must all prize, because if we don't have that independence, we have interference of the judiciary, and we begin to see the actual pillars of our democracy start to crumble. So as the Attorney General, I believe it's incumbent on me to start there—that we will defend that independence of our court that has so well served Canada over the last 150-some years.

I would say next that the chief judge and chief justices have impressed upon me that they are concerned for the possible intrusions into areas of judicial independence. I know that the minister's—that the member's bill says, it calls on the chief judge to establish and implement a continuing education program for judges. I can tell the members of this House that such a framework for training does exist. The member's bill further says that the program must be made public. Indeed, it is. I'm happy to share the link to the annual report for the chief judge. The 2018-2019 report shows that training on page 31, and

all the areas broken down where they undertake to train. So we must first acknowledge that the training does take place.

Now, I said I don't say that in way of excuse because we know that too frequently in this country we have heard judges make statements that were terribly wrong, and terribly hurtful. And, obviously, there is a public sentiment out there that more must be done. And so while I say we must defend the principle of court independence, we must not fail to recognize what the public is saying. It would be to our peril that we would ignore the public sentiment that is saying it is not okay for judges to say these things on such sensitive and such complicated and such crucial areas of law.

And so then, I think, I would jump from there to the statement that we must protect that judicial independence. We must, though, as well, acknowledge that the federal government did do something. And I've spoken to the member for Tyndall Park (Ms. Lamoureux) about this, and I've spoken to the federal Minister of Justice and asked, what is that remedy that Parliament brought on the third time around and was able to get that support of Parliament to be able to pass? What is that fine line that they did weave in order to respect the judiciary while at the same time as calling for new judges to be trained?

I want to be careful to not say in this place that nothing more can be done. I believe something more should be done. And this is why I thank the member for Tyndall Park for bringing this bill because it creates the ability for us to have this discussion in this place. I would say that the discussion we're having today is not a political discussion. It's not a partisan discussion. We should all care very much about the issues that are being brought here today.

I know the time is short and that others want to speak. So I want to just reiterate a few things. Education takes place under the direction of the chief judge and the education committee. That education is robust. I've had the opportunity to speak to the chief judge about the content of this training, about the focus they bring. Perhaps, if there's a reflection I would make, it's that more Manitobans do not know about the content of their training, more Manitobans don't know how judges indicate that they've taken the training. And maybe there's a role for us there to be able to participate.

I would also say next that I would want to acknowledge that judges, I believe, are in the best position to be able to direct their own training. Even

today in the question-and-answer period I heard some comments that would probably make judges uncomfortable where we said, well, this is a first step, but there are other steps the Legislature could take in order to expand what we think judges should do for training.

And I would say to my colleagues this is a very slippery slope, that when we start to encroach on the independence of the courts, then why could we not make determinations in a month's time about what the proper training is for judges to undertake beforehand?

Madam Speaker, if I misbehave in the House this morning, you will reprove me. I know this because I know you. But this morning, if I misbehave in the House, it's not the chief judge of the Provincial Court who will reprove me because it's not their role. It is your role. And we respect these divisions. Judges don't tell us what legislation to pass, and so I want to be careful on this line that we're impacting on.

I do want to say in my conversations I've become aware that the National Judicial Institute is the institute that actually trains our federally appointed judges, but we have standing. Our provincial judges, through the leadership of the chief judge, are allowed to participate in that training. So we both have in-province training and we have federal-provided training. We've increased, as I said, the money to provide for that training.

I leave it here for today. I thank the member for bringing the bill. I would perhaps suggest that we could even use a resolution in this Legislature to further explore the issues that come up as a result. I would say to my colleagues, let us be careful to not encroach on that line of judicial independence. It is there for the protection and safety of our own democracy. We should be very, very careful to not pass a rule that says that a report must be provided to the Legislature. The Legislature does not oversee our independent courts.

At the same thing—same time, though, this bill gives us something to grapple with. This bill raises an important point. This bill, I think, should point us in the direction of the federal government's bill and say, what is that recipe that they sought and achieved? I can tell my colleagues that we are thinking exactly on this line. There are remedies under way that I believe could be provided back to this House for further debate shortly, even before the end of this year, and I'm working hard to be able to deliver on that time line.

So this is not easy, it is necessary and it is work worth doing. And I thank the member for her leadership. I thank her for her partnership, as we've been able to collaborate and grapple with some of these areas. And I welcome other speakers to make their comments at this time.

MLA Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): Bill 215 is on the topic of gender-based violence education requirements. This bill amends The Provincial Court Act to require judicial candidates to complete education in sexual assault law. Candidates for appointment as judicial justices of the peace must complete education in domestic violence law. And this bill also requires the Chief Justice to establish and implement a continuing education program for judges and judicial justices of the peace.

I sincerely thank the member for Tyndall Park (Ms. Lamoureux) for raising this important issue again in the House. I would also like to acknowledge the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) first brought this legislation forward in 2017, again in 2019 and then in 2020, our current legislative session. This legislation was brought to a vote in 2017 and voted against by the PC government.

Women politicians across the political spectrum of parties, including the federal PCs, have continued to initiate this type of legislation and will keep raising this issue because we recognize that many women who experience sexual assault and sexual violence are afraid to report their experiences or testify in court.

Then-federal PC Rona Ambrose's private member's bill, C-337, in 2017 proposed that judicial candidates undergo comprehensive training in sexual assault law. She described it at the time—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have eight minutes remaining.

* (10:30)

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 217—The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act

Madam Speaker: As previously announced, we will now consider concurrence and third reading of Bill 217, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act.

The honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont)—oh, sorry, the honourable member for River Heights.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I move, seconded by the MLA for Tyndall Park, that Bill 217, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act; la Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative et la Loi sur la Commission de régie de l'Assemblée législative, reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time, and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, this is third reading on Bill 217, which will change the criteria for a party to achieve official party status. The change will enable a party to have official party status where the party has at least two sitting MLAs and where the party receives more than 10 per cent of the vote in the most recent provincial election.

It is to be noted that the bill will not provide any financial benefit to a political party meeting the new criteria. The bill has been debated previously, so I will keep my comments short.

I want to thank those who presented at the committee stage and just briefly summarize some of their comments.

Professor Paul Thomas, with his broad knowledge of politics in Manitoba for many decades, said as follows, and I quote: I am supporting Dr. Gerrard's bill because it is time to find a more principled basis for providing recognition, procedural privileges and resources in parties in the legislative process. As someone who believes in the secret ballot, and as a non-partisan commentator for over 50 years, I am not endorsing the Manitoba Liberal Party.

He is an independent spokesperson. He supports the bill. He says, and I quote: In the interest of encouraging more diverse voices and legislative debates, 'limitating' the advantages of incumbency for established parties and elected MLAs to reflect the principle of political fairness. He adds: The rules regarding participation in the legislative process should not unduly handicap smaller parties seeking to gain this ability and support in the political marketplace.

Lloyd Axworthy, former MLA in Manitoba, as well as former Member of Parliament, with many years of political experience commented, and I quote:

I think if there's any problem—federal, provincial, nationally, internationally—is there's too much concentrations of power and too little attention given to the responsibilities and the talents of individual members. That's the core of our representative democracy. He says: I think this particular bill would go a long way to demonstrating to Manitobans that this Legislature has an interest in ensuring that the democratic process not all the electing people—that giving elected people equal rights and equal standing would be an important step forward.

Patrick Falconer, an independent individual involved in speaking out on various issues in Manitoba says—said as follows: I'm speaking tonight in strong favour of Bill 217 to address some of the distortions of our first-past-the-post system. He points out that virtually all Manitobans believe that improving democracy is important and virtually all Manitobans want the parties to work more closely together for the public interest. He summarizes: In short, the passage of Bill 217 will mean that many more of our fellow Manitobans will have a stronger voice in the Legislative Assembly, that the votes of many more Manitobans will really matter.

Lloyd Talbot, private citizen, says: I support Bill 217 as it will enable more members of the Legislative Assembly to contribute to the democratic process, for the public good and for a better Manitoba. Bill 217 can only be of benefit to Manitobans at large and the work of the provincial Legislature. Those are quotes.

Clearly, this bill is about improving democracy. As we are all aware, one of the goals of a well-functioning democratic process is to enable the views of minority groups to be—participate and be heard. For more than 50 years, with the exception of 1988 to 1990, the Manitoba Liberal Party has been in a minority position in the Manitoba Legislature. This bill will bring the definition of official party status into closer alignment with other provinces. It will also recognize that when a party receives more than 10 per cent of the vote it represents a sizeable proportion of Manitobans. And those Manitobans for the party deserve, where there are also two or more MLAs elected, to have their party receive official party status.

In a proportional vote system, 10 per cent of the vote would receive six seats in the Chamber, well above the current minimum of four for official party status. We do not have a proportional vote system, but we can support this bill which would give a party the

possibility of having official party status where they have more than 10 per cent of the provincial vote in the previous provincial election and where at least two MLAs are elected.

This measure, I know, is not just for the Manitoba Liberal Party, it is for any party in the Legislature. We know from federal experience that a large party, a Conservative Party, can have—this happened in 1993—a drastic reduction in the number of its members who are elected. This change in the future could benefit the NDP or the Conservative Party in Manitoba. I hope all MLAs will support this bill and allow it to come to a vote this morning so it can be voted on by all MLAs and, I hope, pass third reading.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

Madam Speaker: I would ask members that are participating virtually if you can remember to put on your microphone, your headset with a mic. It—as you can hear, the voice fades in and out, and it is difficult, I think, for our translation—or our translation and moderators to hear what is actually being said. So I would encourage everybody to please try to find their headsets and wear them.

The next speaker on this debate is the honourable member for Assiniboia. And does the member have a headset that he could put on?

Mr. Scott Johnston (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, I was going to apologize to you. I'm having trouble with my headset, so I will try to be very clear in my commentary, and I will address, certainly, that usage of the headset. So, my apologies.

First, as this is my first opportunity to address the Legislature in this short sitting, I would like to indicate it is a pleasure to be back in the Legislature, and I wish you, Madam Speaker, and all members—clerks and staff in the Legislature—a safe and productive sitting.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to put forward some thoughts on the bill presented by the member from River Heights. I commend the member for addressing what he believes is a flaw in the legislative process. Unfortunately, I am somewhat apprehensive of this bill's initiative. I understand the desire of the member to seek further legislative rights for his party. Certainly, the member from River Heights has never been shy about expressing his thoughts, and, certainly, I believe that that is complementary of his experience as a legislator in this Assembly.

My concern is really an accommodation of a political party that has not met the criteria to be recognized as a formal opposition party by our legislative standard. I recall quite vividly after the 2016 provincial election the provincial Liberal Party did meet the criteria of an opposition party and was awarded the legislative considerations. The people of Manitoba made the decision that they would give that honour to the provincial Liberals. The wise people of Manitoba elected a Progressive Conservative government with the largest majority in decades with 40 members. The NDP were reduced to 13 members while the Liberal Party was able to elect four and gain official party status.

* (10:40)

Madam Speaker, the people of Manitoba did not restore the provincial Liberals with the number of seats to be recognized as an official party in the 2019 provincial election. The Progressive Conservatives retained government with a very significant majority, and the NDP opposition retained the official opposition with half those seats at 18. And the Liberals, unfortunately for them, were reduced to three seats and lost their official status as a party, but the Legislature does recognize them as the third party.

So my point: Are we as legislators supposed to rewrite legislation to accommodate a change in seats by one political party? This—these changes, actually, should be based on an election—a provincial election—which is done through the democracy. Are we supposed to ignore a structure that has served the people of Manitoba and the Legislature well? The electoral change for the provincial Liberals is really somewhat minimal at this particular time. The provincial Liberals really need to add one seat to become recognized, which you would think isn't insurmountable based on the fact that our province does have 57 seats. So, therefore, really, does this warrant a change in legislation at this time?

Madam Speaker, if you believe in polls, with trends changing so significantly, I believe that the Liberal Party may be able to pick up seats in the next election from the NDP. Then, of course, this bill becomes mute. Then I am sure that the first premier of—female premier of Manitoba will be happy to work with the provincial Liberals, and should they be recognized as an official party and if they remain as the third party, then, of course, the new provincial premier will be happy to work with them, too, under that capacity.

As I 'delibered'—deliberated over this initiative, I had to ask myself a fundamental question: Are the rights of the members of the third parties being violated? I came to the conclusion that although the people of Manitoba did not give the provincial Liberals official party status, the Legislature does accommodate them as members of the third party.

Madam Speaker, I believe your objectivity in the Chair has ensured that all members, including the third party, have the rights to express their views in this democratic House.

I note that the House leaders meet regularly to address the legislative agendas. As part of those deliberations, the third party House leader is invited to contribute. This, of course, is a significant contribution to the progression of the Legislature. Agreements within these discussions allow the process of the—of legislation to proceed. The Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) and the Opposition House Leader include the third party House leader on regular—on a regular basis.

Madam Speaker, we find ourselves dealing with the challenge of COVID. My observation is that the third party has been given every consideration to input into the legislative process to come to terms with the progress and government initiatives and have input into this very, very seriously situation that our province finds itself in. These are circumstances that dictate all members be able to voice their thoughts and concerns. The third party, under the agreements, are determined—are able—aren't determined that—or they are able to contribute their positions to government as a whole.

I note that the leader of the third party is awarded a question each question period, allowing him to address any member of the government. The leader can also choose to share his question with other members of his caucus.

The third party, on many occasions, are given leave to address ministerial statements as well as present petitions on behalf of their constituents. Independent members have the ability to block unanimous consent. This is an authority that has been utilized by the third party members on several occasions in order to advance their positions on matters of their—of legislation and express their concerns.

I have been at several legislative committee meetings, and the third party have been active participants. And, Madam Speaker, I, of course, am always

very thrilled to hear my friend from Tyndall Park's words of wisdom throughout this process.

In view of the fact that the third party is granted a significant presence without being recognized as an official party, I am concerned we are premature in adjusting or changing legislation that has served this Legislature well. Our government is not opposed to review something that was drafted many years ago. I would suggest further dialogue with the new premier of Manitoba would and could be in order. The government is always open to conversation with the people of Manitoba to improve our democracy.

I note that other governments have similar legislation in place to address the legislative criteria of opposition parties. I note there's a variety of models in other provinces. BC has adopted four seats as official status; Alberta has adopted four seats as official status; Saskatchewan has adopted two seats as official status; and Ontario has 12 seats or 10 per cent of their total Assembly. So there is a criteria that's been laid down by all provincial governments, and, Madam Speaker, this is similar to what Manitoba does, and I believe that it does satisfy the democracy of Manitoba.

The Liberal federal government has promised election reform. The Prime Minister determined, without proper public consultations, he would back off on reform and not proceed. So, certainly, public consultation and discussion is needed in order to pursue this type of change.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I'm pleased to get up this morning and put a couple of words on the record in respect of Bill 217.

I do just want to acknowledge the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) for bringing forward this bill. If there's anything that can be said about the member for River Heights, it is certainly his dedication to his party. And I have the opportunity—like the member previous that just spoke before me, I have the opportunity to sit with the member for River Heights in House leader meetings and in other committees, and he certainly is committed and dedicated to his party and to his members. And, you know, when his members get up in the Chamber and ask a question or get up to debate a bill, he will routinely, steadfastly clap for them and show that support.

So I do want to acknowledge that because I don't think that the other members necessarily get that from their leader. There's quite often in question period and

in debate when the leader for the Liberal Party doesn't even clap for his members. So I do want to just acknowledge the member for River Heights. I think that he is a good legislator and, again, is committed to his colleagues.

Having said that, I do want to say that, you know, Bill 217—and I'm not sure if the member for River Heights had directed legal counsel to come up with Bill 217 or rather that it was the Leader of the Liberal–Manitoba Liberal Party, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont) who, you know, approached legal counsel and said, hey, I want to change the rules of the House, I want to change the rules of the game because, you know, I had a taste of what it's like to have that extra \$50,000 for my salary. I mean, again, it was a brief taste of having an extra \$50,000 as part of his salary. And then he lost it because, as we know, in the 2019 election, the Liberal Party of Manitoba lost the seat for Keewatinook.

* (10:50)

And I do want to just take this opportunity to acknowledge our member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie). And again, I will—I'm proud to work with the member for Keewatinook. He is a good man. He listens to his constituents. He's in the communities. I actually just want to take a moment just to acknowledge the work that he did during the summer. He travelled to a bunch of our communities, our First Nation communities that were struggling with fires, unprecedented fires that we saw, and he has stepped up and given voice to Keewatinook. I do also just want to take an opportunity to acknowledge our sister colleague here, Judy Klassen, who was the member for Kewatinook who lost her seat to our colleague here.

You know, again, you can't change the rules of the game just because you want to—just because you didn't do well and just because the leader of the Manitoba Liberals lost the seat—lost the seat—for Keewatinook. And again, I suspect that the Leader for the Manitoba Liberal Party will—you know, has to be held accountable to his membership on how he lost that. But you can't lose a seat in an election and then come back, you know, a little while later, and say, hey, let's change this, because I know we lost it, but I want to change it because I still want my \$50,000 extra. You can't do that.

And, you know, it has been said publicly, and I know it's been said by folks—several folks, actually: If you want that extra \$50,000 in your salary, if you

want the benefits that come to being officially recognized as—within the Manitoba Legislative Assembly as an official party, you have to do the work, you have to listen to Manitobans, you have to engage with Manitobans, you have to have, you know, that confidence of Manitobans, for Manitobans, for the electorate to vote for your party. And, clearly, in 2019, we didn't see that for the Liberals.

And so here we are on an afternoon, or a morning, when we could be discussing so many things. We could be discussing—and you know, for the purposes of those folks who watch morning private members' business, again, once again, riveting, riveting TV—you know, there could be a whole bunch of things that the Liberals brought forward this morning. In fact, they could have allowed their colleague, the member for Tyndall Park (Ms. Lamoureux) to have the whole hour for private members' bills to bring forward her legislation and have us debate, you know, an important bill.

But the Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party thought it was important to try one last time—let's just get there a couple more times, so I can get my \$50,000 raise, so that we can become an official party status. Even though I didn't do the work and even though the electorate didn't want to vote for us, I still want that \$50,000.

So, instead of even giving his colleague the whole hour, he chose not. Or, they could have brought other bills forward, where we could've discussed—and I'm sure, you know, a lot of people talk about us all working together in the House, and certainly that is a goal. Certainly, that would be a good dream in this House, but you know, I'm sure that if the Liberals had brought forward different legislation, I'm sure that the members opposite, the Conservatives and the NDP, I'm sure we probably could've worked together this morning and supported a bill. But alas, no, we were not given that opportunity. We were, in fact, given the opportunity to discuss a bill that would secure \$50,000 for the Leader of the Liberal Party.

So, Madam Speaker, I'm going to keep my comments short. And I do, again, want to say, as has been said before, that if you want to be officially recognized within the Manitoba Legislative Assembly as an official party, you have to do the work. You have to have Manitobans' confidence. You have to say sorry. You have to say sorry to women in this Chamber when you do something so egregious and disrespectful.

And so I would take this opportunity to tell the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont) that he should get up in his place and he should apologize to the women in this Chamber that he knows he disrespected, that we know he disrespected and that he has still refused to get up in this Chamber and apologize to.

Miigwech.

Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere): It's an unusual occasion in this Chamber where the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) and I will agree on much of what we both share. Such is the morning today, and I'm happy to put a few words on the record, as I'm quite bemused by this legislation, first introduced as bill 200, now Bill 217. We've seen it before, we've heard it before and, Madam Speaker, many Manitobans are concerned by this.

Now, I would point out, although I'm sure most of us in this Chamber know, the federal Liberals also sought to amend the rules for the House; and then they sharpened their pencils, did their sums, and realized that, actually, they would have handed seats probably to the Conservatives in the federal House if their rule changes would have gone forward. Now, this is not quite the same, these are different proposals, but we do see the Liberals attempting to tinker with the rules of this House again, not surprisingly, to their own advantage.

Now, I would argue that we need to discuss this a little more before we run ahead with it. I would argue that one committee with, I think, three presenters is not quite a suitable number of people to talk with and hear from before we would proceed in this direction.

Madam Speaker, I think it is of concern that we would be hearing from the Liberals again—again—to request party status. And I would suggest this: that their job would be to convince more than the members of this House to give them party status. I think it's up to the people of Manitoba to give them party status. I think it's up to the constituents in any of the constituencies the Liberals would choose to get the right number of seats in this place to grant them that party status.

Madam Speaker, I just want to sort of think about this for a moment because what we do in 2021, of course, echoes for years to come. And I would surmise: Do we want to say to all other parties that there would be a new number of members to get official party status? What might that mean for other

fringe groups in the future? Does that have implications for other groups who are floating ideas out that we may all disagree with? Do we want to give them party status?

I'm not talking about electing members. I sincerely do believe that we should have members in this House with a wide range of views. My question is, should we have parties in this House so easily and so quickly, Madam Speaker? And that's the question that I think we need to give some more consideration to. The federal Liberals did examine this. They looked at it; not the same amendments, I grant, but some adjustments. And it turned out that they walked that back.

Now, as I've stated a moment ago, Madam Speaker, I think that this member and this party need to convince not just this Chamber but many, many thousands more people in this province that they are worthy to be a party. There's a long history of reasons and ways that that can proceed forward, and I think they know the path to their party status in this House is with the electorate of this province.

* (11:00)

Madam Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m. and the time for members' resolution—I would just indicate that the member still has six minutes remaining in his debate comments on that private member's bill.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 29—Recognizing Folklorama for its Significant Contributions to Honouring Culture and Diversity in Manitoba

Madam Speaker: The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on Recognizing Folklorama for its Significant Contributions to Honouring Culture and Diversity in Manitoba, brought forward by the honourable member for Tyndall Park.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I move, seconded by the member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield), that,

WHEREAS Manitobans acknowledge and express deep gratitude for the treaties concerning the land and waters of the province that have provided a home to so many; and

WHEREAS Manitoba has always been home to many peoples: Ojibwe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dene, Dakota, as well as being the birthplace of the Métis Nation; and

WHEREAS today Manitoba is home to people from all over the world, who come together in the summer at

Folklorama to celebrate and share what defines and brings Manitobans together with food, dance, art and so much more; and

WHEREAS what started off as a one-time event evolved into a huge annual attraction recognized around the world; and

WHEREAS over the years Folklorama performers have visited local schools and travelled the world showcasing the talents and skills of thousands of Manitobans and others; and

WHEREAS Folklorama fosters a sense of community and belonging by bringing together thousands of performers, artists, and neighbours from across Manitoba and adds value to the economy.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize the historical, social and economic significance and contributions that Folklorama has made to the province and commend all past and current volunteers for their promotion of Manitoba's rich cultural heritage and diversity.

Motion presented.

Ms. Lamoureux: I want to start off, as the resolution states, by acknowledging that Manitoba is located on treaties 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, the original lands of Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.

Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure to bring forward a resolution about Folklorama being commended for their contributions and promotion of Manitoba's rich cultural heritage and diversity. Every summer since 1970, Folklorama has showcased Canada's diversity through dance, entertainment, food, heritage, clothing, games—displays of all sorts. And I'm sure all MLAs in this House can attest to Folklorama's pavilions.

Furthermore, Folklorama has been recognized as the largest and longest running festival of its kind in the world, which was determined by the international council of organizations for folklore festivals and folk arts.

Mr. Dennis Smook, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

And I think the reason for this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is because of its ability to foster a sense of community and belonging by bringing together hundreds and thousands of volunteers, performers, artists and neighbours from across Manitoba and even

beyond our borders, throughout Canada and all over the world.

Folklorama allows Manitobans to give back to their community in a fun and vibrant way. There's pavilions where incredible volunteers work so diligently to create a world-class event through partnerships with businesses and groups, all supporting Manitoba's diversity. It's abundantly clear that Folklorama has gone above and beyond. And that's why I personally felt we needed to do something about it, hence this resolution to better recognize the efforts of the organization.

If we were to reflect back just over the last few years, Folklorama has been a leader in so many ways. On June 20th in 2017, Folklorama proudly became signatories with Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord, committing to reconciliation by taking steps to implement calls to action outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada through the promotion of education related to the history and culture of Indigenous people.

In addition to this, over the last couple of years—with the pandemic to boot—Folklorama volunteers have gone above and beyond, especially this past year, with their One Unified Virtual Experience. One Multi-Cultural Fusion Event.

You may ask, what is a unified virtual experience? Well, Folklorama has really extended themselves. If a person or a family is having a special milestone, anniversary or birthday celebration and looking for some extra excitement, Folklorama have made themselves available to actually visit homes, perform in driveways and in back yards, always following public health regulations, of course.

In addition to this, Folklorama have made themselves available to do shows in workplaces. With all the transitions back into our offices, Folklorama can help create an environment of fun and excitement for all employees and staff members to experience.

You know, I think it would be very good if we did one of those here at the Manitoba Legislature. I think it would actually rise a lot of spirits and bring us all together.

Lastly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Folklorama has become accessible to our schools, daycares and day camps. They have created workshops and performances that will work with students and groups of any grade and age to create an adventure of culture with the goal of helping students respect and appreciate

cultural differences all while meeting the school curriculum.

Now, it's evident how Folklorama is an incredible part of our social fabric and pride here in Manitoba, and that's what this resolution is all about. So just before I close, I want to extend the biggest of thank yous to our past and our current Folklorama volunteers who have made our province so, so proud. Thank you for all the work you have done, all the dedication over the years, and we look forward to more Folklorama shows moving forward.

I also want to thank the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Cox). Her and I have had a few conversations in the lead up to today's resolution, and it's my understanding that the government is in support of this resolution, and she was intending to second the resolution itself. And so I want to thank the government for showing their agreement to support the resolution. It means a lot—for parties to be able to come together and fully recognize—unanimously, without hesitation—what Folklorama has really done for our province here in Manitoba.

And my hope is that the government—or that the NDP will do the same. This should be non-partisan. We should be here strictly to thank our volunteers who have participated in Folklorama. And it's in the NDP's court if they want to allow this resolution to pass today or not.

Thank you.

Questions

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held, and questions may be answered in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party, any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties, each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Andrew Smith (Lagimodière): Well, I want to thank the member for introducing this resolution, and I'd just like to ask what maybe some of her favourite experiences from Folklorama over the many years, as she's attended not only as an MLA but with her father in politics as well.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I'd like to thank the member for his awesome question.

I really think that that's what this resolution is all about, just the attestments to what Folklorama have—has done for our province, for us as community

members. I know I've been attending Folklorama and the various pavilions for as long as I can actually recall, as long as I can remember, being four or five years old, going to some of these pavilions.

And automatically, when I reflect on what stands out to me is I think about the Philippine pavilion specifically because they always have gotten me to come up on stage with them and do—it's like a line dance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where—and I'm going to use the incorrect terminology here, but we use, like, these long wooden stakes almost, and—

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The member's time has expired.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): I thank the member from Tyndall Park for bringing this resolution today.

May I ask the member who was consulted when writing this resolution?

Ms. Lamoureux: I'd like to thank the member for Burrows for this question.

When it comes down to thanking any sort of organization, of course we want to still add in that component of consultation, and I would argue that all of us MLAs have consulted with the various pavilions to some extent because we've all attended them over the years. We've seen the efforts that the community members, that the volunteers past and present have put into these pavilions, and it's through this experience, through this evidence, that we're here to thank them today.

* (11:10)

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): One of the things that I think is tremendously important about Folklorama is that builds community spirit; that groups, whether it's from the Philippine community or the Sri Lankan community or just many, many others, get together communally and get involved together and build community organizations, which are making a major contribution, not just during Folklorama, but in the rest of the year too.

Ms. Lamoureux: I agree strongly with what the member from River Heights is saying. I think that Folklorama is about so much more. It's about our community coming together. It's about amplifying how proud we are of our diversity and of our cultural heritage, and it's about teaching and education.

And that's why I think Folklorama has gone above and beyond in the last couple of years. They've made it so that if people want to have pavilions in their

backyard, safely, we can do so. They've made it where they can actually go into the schools, into the classrooms, into daycares and day camps, and they've fit it to our school curriculums, so not only is it a fun experience, it's also a learning experience for so many as well. And it pays off. It has done so much for our province, here in Manitoba—

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The member's time has expired.

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): I just—I want to start by thanking the member from Tyndall Park and the minister for working together on this resolution.

We look at culture, diversity as so important to the entire province, and I know the member briefly started talking about her experiences with the Philippine pavilion. But I'm just wondering if she has any other particular pavilions or groups that she would like to take more time to recognize here in the House?

Ms. Lamoureux: Thank you, again, for that question. It is always a nice opportunity to be able to expand a little bit more about our own personal experiences with Folklorama and what it is that makes them hold so close to our own hearts. I want to be weary and not start listing pavilion after pavilion after pavilion, but I know a few that I have been attending since I was, honestly, probably like three or four years old, are the Ukrainian pavilion, which I'm sure all of the members here in this House have attended.

And, like, you want to talk about amazing food and fast, fast dances, what is the last song where everyone comes on stage for, like, eight minutes? Does someone want to share? *[interjection]* Kolomeyka, I believe that's what it's called. And thank you, colleagues, for sharing that with me. That's what comes to mind. It is so—

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The member's time has expired.

Mr. Brar: We've reviewed the Estimate books for Sports, Culture and Heritage. The Estimates propose a reduction to culture and sport programs of \$2.6 million. That doesn't seem like good news for important cultural programming.

What does the member think about this reduction?

Ms. Lamoureux: Again, I'd like to thank the member for Burrows for the really good question. I'm very aware that the funding has been cut, and I do believe that it was a wrong cut. I think that we should be investing in our diversity, in our sport and culture.

With that said, what this resolution is about, it's not about party politics, it's not about partisanship. What it is about is thanking those who have volunteered in the past and who are currently volunteering in Folklorama, making our province so proud.

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): Folklorama fosters a sense of community and belonging that is not limited to the participants, but is seen and felt in our communities.

Can the member opposite speak to how they see this in their community?

Ms. Lamoureux: Absolutely. Again, these are more my own personal experiences with how I've seen Folklorama come to life in my own constituency, but whether it's the pavilions themselves taking place in my constituency, or friends, family members, people who I went through high school with who are performing in these pavilions, who are serving food at these pavilions, who have set up exhibits, and take the time with the thousands of people who walk through the pavilions every single year to explain what the exhibit means.

I know I've learned games set up in the exhibit halls, where they—the volunteers actually sit down with us and take the time to repeatedly teach all of us how to play these games, why this cultural attire is so important, why this food is—

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The member's time has expired.

Mr. Brar: So, I was talking about the Estimates book. In the same Estimates book, grant assistance to external agencies are reduced by \$527,000.

What does the member think about these reductions, again?

Ms. Lamoureux: I hope to one day be in the position to be in government to answer questions about Estimates, but right now, what this morning is about, it's about thanking our volunteers. And I really—I would have thought that the member from Burrows were—was—were—would be in support of this resolution. I thought that he would have supported the idea of Folklorama being thanked because it is such a wonderful organization. And I want to encourage the member from Burrows to support the resolution.

Mr. Smith: Again, thank the member for introducing the resolution.

I know that Folklorama has a long and deep history in this province, and just wondering if you

could perhaps—or the member could perhaps speak to why it's flourished so successfully over the many years in this province.

Ms. Lamoureux: Again, I'd like to thank the member for his question. I think that all of us will have different opinions and experiences as to why Folklorama has flourished the way that it has and how it's gotten so big, how it's grown so much.

And I just want to refer to some of my notes that I made earlier today. Folklorama is the largest and longest running festival of its kind in the entire world. And it—this was determined by the international council of organizations for folklore festivals and folk arts.

I also think about the movements that have been made over the last few years. In 2017, in particular, Folklorama proudly became signatories with Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord—

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The member's time has expired.

Mr. Brar: I appreciate my respected colleague from Tyndall Park for this little effort in this direction, no doubt about it. But we need to think that in 2017, the Province of Manitoba and the Manitoba Arts Council together provided \$394,750 to Folklorama. In 2020, that number was less, at \$387,700.

What does the member think of this in light of the resolution they have put forward today?

Ms. Lamoureux: Again, I'd like to thank the member for Burrows for his question, which I believe I've answered a couple of times now.

So this being the last opportunity to speak to the resolution this morning, I just want to extend a huge, huge thank you once again to all of the Folklorama volunteers past and present, and we're so excited to be able to support you in any way that we can moving forward.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): Time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): We will now move on to debate.

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): Good morning, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I am honoured to be here today and thrilled to support this not—this resolution. Ironically, I actually had the opportunity to discuss this resolution at an ethnic

event, at a Polish event that the member from Tyndall Park was at. The two of I—two of us discussed it. I had the opportunity to look at it, and, you know, totally in support of this.

Folklorama has put Manitoba and Winnipeg on the map. It originated back in 1970, and back then, there were only a few pavilions. There were 21. And so the original pavilions were the German, the Ukraine-Kyiv, the Greek and the Scandinavian. And it drew over 75,000 individuals to that very first Folklorama. Today we have 42 pavilions all across the city of Winnipeg, all that represent our very diverse ethnic community, and I am so proud of that ethnic community.

* (11:20)

Back in 2017, I actually challenged our mayor, Brian Bowman, to visit every pavilion. And so quite often our paths criss-crossed, and we were together at the same pavilion, and both of us were able to visit every pavilion. And just having the opportunity to do that, it provided me with so much insight on the flavour and the food and the music and the dance, and the wonderful traditions of every one of those ethnic communities that are represented in Folklorama.

And to the member from Burrows, I'd just like to indicate to him that maybe he forgot about the \$6 million that we provided to our 'alts'-arts and culture sector through our Arts and Culture Sustainability Funds: \$6 million—or six—five point seven five zero million that went to the Manitoba Arts Council for them to provide to many, many of our cultural agencies that were suffering; \$300,000 directly to the Manitoba arts—sorry, to the Winnipeg Art Gallery; \$300,000 to the Manitoba theatre centre, the royal Canadian theatre centre, and it goes on and on and on. As well, the \$5 million that we provided through our Safe at Home program, which provided grants to Manitoba arts groups and individuals right across the province, from Churchill, Manitoba, to Elma, Manitoba, to Falcon Lake or West Hawk Lake. You know, many, many, many organizations benefitted from these funds.

But back to Folklorama, again, I just really want to thank the member from Tyndall Park for collaborating with me. And I think we need to do more of that in this Chamber, is to collaborate, talk, listen and learn from each other. And I know that it's a been a learning experience for you today, so I appreciate the opportunity to educate you a little bit about what we have done here in Manitoba and to ensure that our culture and arts sector is sustainable.

And we also provided \$300,000 to the centre Franco-Manitoban—the Centre culturel franco-manitobain centre because we heard from them that, you know, they were experiencing some difficulty as well. So that \$300,000 really benefited them; as well as nearly \$1 million to the Centennial Concert Hall, who, of course, had to shut down basically all of their events.

And we recognize that—how important it is to ensure that as we emerge from COVID that these organizations have the opportunity to, again, host events in their beautiful settings. So we will not, you know, take any lessons from the members opposite on the discouraging and actually misinformed information that they wanted to provide to this Chamber.

But I, like the member from Tyndall Park, want to thank all of those volunteers, because I understand that it's nearly 20,000 volunteers from Folklorama who go out and help at every one of these pavilions year after year. You know, they serve the pierogis, holopchi; they serve the butter chicken, they serve all of these wonderful delicacies that we love here in Manitoba and in Winnipeg, and that we are so proud to be able to share with visitors, really, from around the globe. We know that people come to visit Folklorama, whether it's from the United States, people from the United Kingdom, people from Africa, people from all parts of the globe. And we are so proud to be able to host them.

And so I am so proud to be able to speak to Folklorama today, talk about how it represents us as a wonderful, beautiful, diverse province. And I would say the very most diverse province of any, any province across our beautiful country.

So again, thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to speak about Folklorama. I could speak about Folklorama for hours and hours, and visiting each and every one of those pavilions back in 2017, you know, it just touched my heart to see how proud all of these organizations are, all of those boards, all of those people who put so much time and effort into ensuring that we are a multicultural province, and the very most multicultural province across the country. So thank you again, and I look forward to passing this bill later today.

Thank you.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this resolution

Let's start by appreciating and 'plausing' the diversity of our province, Manitoba. I appreciate the

diversity we see in this Chamber, maybe a bit more on one side and a bit less on the other. I'm so happy to see a new team of young people who was introduced to us last week, our team of pages. Look at the diversity we are having in this team as well. And as I am proud of my turban, I am proud to see another turbaned boy in this Chamber as a page. That's something to be proud of. This is the diversity that we are happy about, we can be proud of, and this is the great strength. This is Manitoba. This is Canada. This is us.

When we talk about Folklorama, we automatically think about the diversity. We think about diverse cultures, diverse music, diverse dances, diverse food; and we as elected representatives often attend these events. We proudly be part of such events. I had an opportunity to dance with our honourable Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Cox). That was a proud moment. That's how we contribute. We play our part to celebrate that diversity. But when we want to promote such programs that help us celebrate that diversity, we need money, and the minister today is refusing to take lessons from somebody who is really worried about the cuts to funding to Folklorama.

But at the same time, she's offering lessons to myself. I welcome any advice, any education to anyone who is senior to me, senior in their experience. It's in my culture that you respect your elders. Anybody who is especially older than me, I respect everybody, and I don't mind taking lessons if they are fact based and correct.

If you refuse to take lessons from somebody who is talking based upon the facts, the numbers from a document that she signed on—that's the document I am referring to. If you're saying that this program is great, we celebrate Folklorama, this is something that we can brag about, this is something that is of our strength, then why cut funding to that program? I fail to understand.

And putting in funding to some X, Y, Z programs does not justify cutting programs to Folklorama. I have been involved in cultural activities in Manitoba right from the day I entered Manitoba in 2013, on a continuous basis. I've been involved in cultural activities, thinking about it, developing programs, supporting programs, using cultural activities to fundraise for the programs at University of Manitoba, for the programs for our kids and families in Seven Oaks School Division.

* (11:30)

And I know everything needs money for support. Our Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Cox) wouldn't have tasted the great butter chicken if there was no dollars put into that program; it's just because of the funding. And, well, just talking about Folklorama is not enough. I, once again, appreciate my colleague from Tyndall Park for bringing this resolution forward. I appreciate it a lot, not a little bit, but a lot. But there are so many things that we need to talk about at the same time.

I cannot assume that the member from Tyndall Park is not aware about the funding cuts, but sometimes I hate friendly matches: you don't ask us about funding, we'll support your resolution. This is like betraying Manitobans. Every single day we are getting more and more immigrants from all parts of the world. We need to at least double the funding for such programs. So why not to ask those questions? I'm proud to ask those questions.

So if the government is seriously considering promoting our diversity, then please, please act. Actions speak louder than the word. But I don't know why my questions were not taken pleasantly. My questions were not welcomed because maybe they were sharp, maybe that's the truth. Just lip service does not actually serve the needs of Manitobans, the needs of our ethnic groups. At this point of time, we should be thinking about registering 100 more new organizations to involve our kids in sports, in dances, in promotion of languages.

How many languages we have? I often get a chance to talk to our brothers and sisters from Indigenous communities. What our minister is doing to promote the Indigenous languages? Is there any funding? Is there a single dollar spared to promote the languages? Do we all not know what happened to our Indigenous brothers and sisters during this colonial history? Are we sincere to take steps to undo that damage, to support them? Are we thinking of starting any language programs on Indigenous languages in the universities that we have right here in this city? What are we doing to promote learning of languages for the next generation in our schools in Manitoba? Nothing, absolutely nothing.

So I would appreciate the minister and members on the other side of the House to please consider taking lessons from somebody who is suggesting the right thing. No one is cooking stories and telling you to listen to them. These are the numbers that I quoted

from the document produced by the current government. How can you betray Manitobans or keep them in dark by not telling what the real picture is?

While I appreciate my colleague bringing this resolution forward, I would expect the member and all the members in this Chamber to talk about how we can strengthen our cultural programs, how we can strengthen our sport programs, how we can strengthen our language programs in this province. And with every day passing, the need is more and more.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The member's time has expired.

Mr. Andrew Smith (Lagimodière): I appreciate the opportunity to put some words on the record with respect to this resolution. I will thank the member, again, opposite for introducing this resolution. I think it's a perfect opportunity to, as a House, in a non-partisan way, recognize and certainly thank the hard-working board and volunteers of Folklorama.

It's deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of our province. It goes back many, many years, and I think, as it's been alluded to already, it's the largest of its kind in the world, which is amazing, right? I mean, we certainly aren't the only multi-ethnic, multicultural province or multicultural jurisdiction in the world, yet we do have a very successful celebration, annual celebration of that very diversity. So I think that's a testament to our province and to the many groups and cultural communities who call this place home.

Now, I know Folklorama, like I said, has deep roots in our province. And I think some of my fond memories go back to when I was a young child going with my parents. And a little more recent—well, I shouldn't say more recently, but when I was in high school, my good friend was an ambassador to the India pavilion, and, of course, we got to travel around from pavilion to pavilion with him, and it was an interesting experience to not only see, of course, his culture at the time, but, I mean, all the other breadth of cultures that perhaps were not necessarily highlighted the same way, you know, 20-some-odd years ago as they are now.

So it is quite the educational opportunity for everybody and in an entertaining way, so I do thank the member opposite for bringing this forward. And I know our minister had spoken to some of the wonderful things that our government has done in respect to the cultural communities in this province and some of the initiatives that we've undertaken, so I won't reiterate that, necessarily, but I will say that,

you know, it's such a privilege to be in a province where you have this ability to celebrate your culture, celebrate your faith. There's parts of the world where that is not only discouraged; it's, in fact, condemned. So to be able to do that here and speak in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, the—essentially, the elected body of the people—I think that's something that we should all be grateful for.

And just coming off of the heels of the Thanksgiving weekend, of the many things that we could be thankful for is the freedom to do just that and celebrate our cultural ancestry. And I think that's become more important as—over the last few years, and it's become—certainly most Manitobans and most Canadians have become more educated on the number of groups including our Indigenous and First Nations.

And I know that there is a pavilion that was set up for the First Nations pavilion, and I got a chance to see it. I know that COVID certainly interrupted our festivities for Folklorama, but it was a wonderful pavilion, and it was an amazing opportunity to see the, you know, the breadth of the Indigenous cultures. I know it's—represents more than one. But it was very fascinating to see that and to bring friends with me and my family members who otherwise would have never seen that. This is an opportunity for us to engage with each other and see our cultural backgrounds on a more human level, and I think that's very important.

So I know that I'm not the only member of this Chamber who's attended Folklorama, and I'm not the only member, apparently, that has attended every Folklorama pavilion. And I know that during the August month, I just tell my family we're not going to see you in the evening and don't bother waiting up for me because I do the three events per night, and then on the weekend maybe five on the Saturday and five on the Sunday. And, yes, it's great opportunity to just—to meet constituents and to meet some of the people that perhaps would not necessarily be as active in community otherwise. So this is such a privilege to speak to this resolution today.

And I won't give too much more time to this because I think it's important to know that I will be supporting this, and, of course, I know this side of the House supports this resolution. And we appreciate this opportunity for a non-partisan discussion—or at least I was hoping for a non-partisan discussion on this. But thank the member opposite for introducing this, and I certainly look forward to this resolution passing.

Thank you.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Well, thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the opportunity to rise and to recognize the amazing work that Folklorama does and to appreciate the volunteers and the so many folks that put on Folklorama, make it a part of who we are as Manitobans.

We know that every year, Folklorama gives us a reason to come together, to learn, to appreciate and to celebrate not only our own diverse cultural backgrounds, but also those of our neighbours. Here in Manitoba, of course, there are over 250 ethnocultural groups representing 150 countries from 14 different languages, and it really does speak to who we are as—who we see ourselves as, as Manitobans.

* (11:40)

And, you know, I want to show respect to those folks who put on—as I said, put on Folklorama because I know it's a ton of work, it's a ton of volunteer time. You know, tens of thousands of volunteers come together every year to ensure that Folklorama is a success.

And I think it's important to understand just how, you know, grassroots or community-driven Folklorama is. It almost—I might want to—might say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is almost quaint when you look at how big festivals and different gatherings that we see as important as Manitobans, in terms of how Folklorama is run, again, it's almost a throwback to a time when you focused purely on the grassroots, you allowed the community to drive the agenda and to drive the pavilions.

I think it's a great testament, again, to not only who we are in terms of our ethnocultural makeup in this province but also how we are community-driven and community-led in this province. And it helps those communities and those different groups come together and find some common purpose.

So I think the benefits are clear and I think every single member in this Chamber would stand up and thank the folks who run Folklorama, show their appreciation for the festival and recognize those volunteers. I don't think you're going to find a single dissenting voice.

However—however—you know, I am quite surprised that, given the opportunity we have here in the Chamber to, you know, to really speak to what's going on out there in terms of different Sport, Culture and Heritage organizations, this has been, quite frankly, a tough year for them, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This has been a tough year and a half. I don't think that, you

know, that comes as much of a surprise for many folks. Most people would recognize that, you know, we missed Folklorama now two years running, that there were virtual options but, you know, it just wasn't the same. It wasn't the same atmosphere and it wasn't the same ability for all of us to come together.

And that puts a serious dent, I know, on the bottom line, so to speak, of an organization like Folklorama. It certainly strains the ability of organizations to foster their volunteers and the next generation of folks who are coming up to take over, take the mantle so to speak, and continue the traditions that we've built around Folklorama. And Folklorama's not alone. There are many organizations who are facing similar challenges across this province.

And so, when the member for Burrows (Mr. Brar) comes forward in the Chamber and asks very straightforward questions and allows the minister in this case an opportunity to stand up and say, you know, what are her thoughts, she had 10 minutes, she says she could've spoke for a long time, she couldn't even get through 10 minutes here in the Chamber. But she did have the opportunity to defend her government's record.

And it's—her record, the record of the government is quite clear. In this case, her department—and I think they'll have some time in Estimates so, you know, I take that point. You know, the member for Burrows is going to make sure that he asks these same questions, I'm sure, again and again and again.

But when given the opportunity to stand up for culture and sport programs of this province, what did this government do? In fact, they cut \$2.6 million from that budget, right? So does that sound like a recognition of the work of the folks at Folklorama and so many other organizations throughout Manitoba? Does that sound like a government that's in support of that? I think not, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We know that external agencies were reduced by \$527,000 in this year's Estimates book and we know that the budget in 2017 for the Province of Manitoba and the Manitoba Art Council, together, they provided \$394,750 to Folklorama, but in 2020, that number was less. It had been actually reduced over those three years to only \$387,700.

So, you know, sometimes, I—and the member for Burrows put this exactly right. He says, you know, this is lip service, Mr. Deputy Speaker, right? And actions matter more than words in this case.

So I can appreciate that, you know, the member for Tyndall Park (Ms. Lamoureux) wants to bring forward a PMR. You know, I can't—I—you know, I'm not going to purport to be able to get into the mind of the member for Tyndall Park and understand exactly why she thought it was a good idea to go over to a minister who's cut funding to cultural organizations and say, will you second this bill—or this PMR—will you second my resolution instead of using her time to show the criticism that so many in Manitoba have of this government's job when it comes to cultural and ethnic organizations in Manitoba.

She could have used her time to do that. You know, that's—I would say that's our obligation as legislators, to bring forward those concerns of our constituents. And, certainly, we're hearing those concerns, so she could have taken her time to do that.

But I guess I shouldn't be surprised, coming from a party that stood lockstep with a government that was pushing through bad legislation, you know, bills that came forward. She said, why are you blocking their legislation? Sit down. Sit down and let their legislation go through. Let them fast-track and push through their bad agenda for Manitobans.

Well, did we do that? No, we did not. We stood up—we stood up; we pushed back. That's what we did as an NDP caucus. We pushed back. And, in fact, we actually stopped five bad bills from going through. Now, it could have been—we were hoping it would be a lot more. And if we had convinced Brian Pallister to leave just a little bit earlier—if any one of those members opposite would have found a—just an ounce of courage, maybe we could have gotten him out earlier and we could have stopped a whole bunch of other bad legislation.

But we did our best, and the member for Tyndall Park instead stood lockstep with Brian Pallister and said no, you know what, get out of the way; why are you trying to block his legislation? You should be—you should be supporting Brian Pallister. That's what the member for Tyndall Park wanted us to do.

Well, we didn't do it, and we're not going to do it today here, either, in the sense that we're not going to just sit back and say, you know, good on the volunteers, good on the organization of Folklorama, you know, and just sit back and say that's the end of the story, because it's not the end of the story.

We will stand with those volunteers. We will stand to recognize the importance of Folklorama in our province, but we're not going to stand back and let

the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Cox) stand up and not defend her record for cutting organizations just like Folklorama.

And so, you know, we're—you know, maybe next time a PMR like this comes forward, instead of going to the government and playing nice with them as the members of the Liberal Party seem to want to do, maybe they should stand with Manitobans, stand with us and the rest of Manitoba, to show the criticism that we're hearing, to stand up and say it is important for all of us to stand together to say, especially in these times when organizations like Folklorama and so many others are struggling to make sure that they stay viable into the future. You know, it's their opportunity to do that, but we so far haven't seen that at all.

Now, I do have very little time left. I did want to talk about some of my experiences at different pavilions. I think we could probably fill an entire day just talking about that. But I think I've made my point that it is ultimately the community that drives this organization, and it's our jobs as legislators to simply stand behind them and stand with them as they do that work.

And I know there's a day coming very soon when we'll be able to gather again in community halls and in organized—cultural organizations and in a whole bunch of different places across Manitoba and to celebrate our diversity and our strength in that. When that day comes, I hope that it—we have a government that stands with these organizations, that stands behind them, supports them in a real way and, you know, and—unlike the Liberals, doesn't just stand back and say, you're on your own. We're with them, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We will be every step of the way. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I rise following the MLA for Concordia and to recognize his flights of fancy. I know, for example, that the MLA for Tyndall Park fought as hard as anyone to oppose Bill 64 and to build the broad public support which was essential for making sure that this bill didn't proceed.

* (11:50)

But in the few minutes I have, I want to focus on the subject before us now, which is Folklorama. But let's not be distracted. Over the years I have visited many, many Folklorama pavilions. It is in the hundreds. By rough count, I think it's about 600. Folklorama over its five decades has done much to enable individuals from First Nations communities, from Métis communities and from communities who have

come to Manitoba from countries around the world to get together and organize and show off the dancing, the food, the history, the arts and the contributions of their culture.

It is an incredible opportunity for all Manitobans and for many who come from outside Manitoba to learn more of the many and varied cultures of people from around the world. The greater global understanding which has resulted, is an important contribution to building a more understanding, more tolerant and more respectful world. It is an opportunity to build pride in who are, in our origins, and in our present circumstances.

Together with the outstanding Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the new Inuit art gallery, Qaumajuq, the polar bears in Churchill, Folklorama is one of the major draws for people to come and visit Manitoba. It is the largest and longest running such multicultural event anywhere in the world. We need, as this resolution does, to acknowledge the importance of Folklorama.

I thank the MLA for Tyndall Park for bringing forward this resolution. I hope we can all support the resolution and that it can be passed unanimously this morning.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): Again, as I started off with my questioning this morning, I do want to sincerely thank the member for Tyndall Park (Ms. Lamoureux) for bringing this resolution forward. I think it's a great opportunity for us to look throughout the province.

And with that I just look at the resolution itself. When we look in it it says it is to recognize the historical, social and economical significance and contribution that Folklorama has made to the province.

And when I look, and I know the member from Concordia stood up and said they support Manitobans; however, from what I'm hearing and seeing, it does not look like they're going to be supporting this resolution, and that's over 400,000 visits every year that they're saying are not worthy.

But I want to say to the member from Tyndall Park, thank you again. This is such an important move, not just for each of us individually to recognize the contribution, but for the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to unify together and say thank you to the volunteers, to the performers, to the people that attend

and push forward and hold up the contributions that are made to the significant different areas of diversity, just the different cultures that we have that make up Manitoba.

I know my first pavilion that I went to, and I don't think this will be any surprise to anybody, was on Erin Street, and that was the Scandinavian Cultural Centre, where the pavilion there was just, to me, with my heritage and background and my involvement in the Icelandic community here in Manitoba and in Westman, to tour their building and look at the exhibits that they had in there that, you know, come from the homeland, and look at the history of involvement, not just in Iceland, but here in Canada, of how things performed and come over here. The amazing cultural, the dances, the performances and the food—the food at these pavilions. And I will say with the Icelandic brown bread with some lamb on it and some plokkið fiskur, just incredible on how you can experience that and put that out to everybody.

And again, I, unfortunately living outside of Winnipeg, do not have the time or ability to attend every single pavilion each year, but I do keep a list of what pavilions I've went to this year so that next year I can experience new cultures and new pavilions. I know it started off with 22 pavilions back in, I believe it was 1970, and now over 42 pavilions over a two-week period.

I mean, that is something to be very proud of and something we should all set aside our political differences for at least the next five minutes and be able to say, yes, this is something that we can support.

I know and I recognized and I mentioned the significance before of what it has made to our province, because 19 years ago, the Westman Multicultural Festival came to light in Brandon, and we celebrate that in January of every year.

And, unfortunately, the last couple years it has not been there because of COVID, but we will get back to it. And believe me, it's not a summer event. It's—like I say, it's in January. And you have lineups out the doors, and it's -40°. And people are anxious to get in and experience the culture, experience the amazing friendship that comes in our communities.

So I do hope we can go to a vote on this. So I have lots to say, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, but I do want to get to that vote, and I see there are only roughly a few minutes left in the session this morning.

So, with that, again, thank you to everybody for supporting this resolution. The culture, diversity in Manitoba is incredible. So, thank you, again.

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): With little time remaining, all I would like to say is congratulations to the member from Tyndall Park for bringing forward this amazing resolution.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): Is there anybody else who wishes to speak on this resolution?

Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this resolution? *[Agreed]*

I declare the resolution carried.

Member for Carman–Midland.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the spirit of all this co-operation, is it the will of the House to see it as 12 o'clock–call it 12 o'clock?

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): Is it the will of the House to call it 12 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 12 o'clock, the House is–sits recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

CONTENTS

| ORDERS OF THE DAY | | Resolutions | |
|--|------|---|------|
| PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS | | Res. 29—Recognizing Folklorama for its Significant Contributions to Honouring Culture and Diversity in Manitoba | |
| Second Readings—Public Bills | | Lamoureux | 4015 |
| Bill 215—The Provincial Court Amendment Act (Gender-Based Violence Education Requirements) | | Questions | |
| Lamoureux | 4005 | A. Smith | 4016 |
| Questions | | Lamoureux | 4016 |
| Morley-Lecomte | 4006 | Brar | 4017 |
| Lamoureux | 4006 | Gerrard | 4017 |
| Marcelino | 4006 | Isleifson | 4017 |
| Gerrard | 4006 | Morley-Lecomte | 4018 |
| Clarke | 4006 | Debate | |
| Martin | 4007 | Cox | 4018 |
| Lamont | 4007 | Brar | 4019 |
| Debate | | A. Smith | 4021 |
| Friesen | 4008 | Wiebe | 4022 |
| Marcelino | 4010 | Gerrard | 4023 |
| Concurrence and Third Readings—Public Bills | | Isleifson | 4024 |
| Bill 217—The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act | | Morley-Lecomte | 4025 |
| Gerrard | 4010 | | |
| Johnston | 4011 | | |
| Fontaine | 4013 | | |
| Micklefield | 4014 | | |

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

<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>