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**of the**

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-Third Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CORBETT, Shannon	Transcona	NDP
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	Ind.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike, Hon.	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
ROBBINS, Colleen	Spruce Woods	PC
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	Ind.
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	The Pas-Kameesak	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**The 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, 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.

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated.

Orders of the day, the honourable Government House Leader—private members' business, the honourable Government House Leader.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY****PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** Good morning. Can you please call bill—for the continuation of second reading of Bill 231 and, should there be time, Bill 218.

**The Speaker:** So it has been announced that we will now resume debate on second reading of Bill 231, The Indigenous Heritage Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

And, following that, if there's time, we'll commence debate on Bill 218.

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—  
PUBLIC BILLS****Bill 231—The Indigenous Heritage Month Act  
(Commemoration of Days, Weeks  
and Months Act Amended)**

**The Speaker:** So, debate on second reading of Bill 231, standing in the name of the honourable member for Agassiz, who has one minute remaining.

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** Gives me great pleasure today to stand and put my last minute on the record, closing out my previous words. And, again, just to say thank you for the member from Seine River bringing on—bringing forward this important legislation, Bill 231, The Indigenous Heritage Month Act.

And I would just like to say that establishing Indigenous heritage month would provide an opportunity for all Manitobans to learn more about Indigenous history and culture, and it would also help to build a fuller, more truthful understanding of Canada's past here in our province and, of course, across the nation.

So, again, I just want to say thank you to the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) for bringing such legislation forward. Thank you.

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families):** I just want to put a couple of words on the record in respect of Bill 231. I want to say miigwech to the member for Seine River for bringing forward this really important bill.

I want to just—I'm not going to take up too much time, but I want to just share a couple of stories. During Oka, 1991–1990, 1991, there was a march here. I wasn't here.

At the time, I was living in Montreal and I was a waitress at a restaurant called Mikes. It was a franchise. It had very, very good subs, which I miss some days. And I think I was like 19–18, 19, and I was server at this restaurant. And this was a really big restaurant, and, you know, I'd be running around, getting all my tables. And what I would hear—in French, because obviously it was in Montreal—I would hear tables talking about what was going on in Oka. And everything that I heard was so incredibly racist and disrespectful and really disheartening. And so I'd hear these folks saying just really—of course, I'm not

going to swear in the Chamber—really quite disgusting things about my people. And I'd have to go up to that table and I'd have to continue serving them. And that bothered me so much that, all these years later, I still remember that.

At that same time, here on Treaty 1, my relative—so Phil Fontaine, and I think he may have been the grand chief at the time, I'm not sure—but there was, like, a march in solidarity here. And I don't know where it started, but it came down, like, Memorial and ended up at the Leg. And so there were thousands of people marching in solidarity with Oka.

And my grandmother, a residential school survivor and a survivor of just incredible amounts of trauma as an Indigenous woman, was walking with my uncle Vince—Vince Fontaine with Eagle & Hawk and Indian City and our family. And, like, everybody was there, from what I understand. Like, you know, the former Honourable Murray Sinclair, all of the leadership at the time, youth, Indigenous youth at the time.

It was such a pivotal moment in our history because, as Indigenous people, it was a moment of pride where our people were standing up to a colonial state and demanding that recognition and demanding that, you know, our space, our lands are respected and revered as sacred, as we do. So it was a very empowering time.

And my grandmother was walking with my uncle and, you know, a bunch of folks. And there was a non-Indigenous woman that was just kind of, like, on the sidewalk somewhere. And that woman yelled at my grandmother and called her an effin' squaw. And my grandmother, who, if you knew her, probably would have gotten really upset. But I think because it was such a beautiful and empowering moment, my grandmother just laughed at this woman and just kept walking.

The night that we won the 2023 election, I did a lot of media, and I did media with CPAC. And the interviewer asked me, he said: You know, what does this moment mean? And I recalled that moment with my grandmother and I explained that, you know, how interesting it is that, years prior, there was such division in Canada, all across Canada, for this moment that Indigenous people were asserting our rights and our pride and our culture and our traditions and our lands and all of these things, you know, hate and racism and anti-Indigenous racism, all of this things.

\* (10:10)

And, years later, on, you know, in October of 2023, Manitoba elected an Indigenous-led government, an Indigenous-led government for all Manitobans. Manitobans elected and rejected that same division and hate that was being presented and brought forward by the Manitoba PCs.

And so, when we're looking at bill 218 today, establishing an Indigenous heritage month, this is what we're talking about. All of these moments in our history—in our collective history—not only here in Manitoba, but across our territories, across Canada, and why bill 218—or no, sorry—why Bill 231 is so important to recognize that history and to look at the trajectory of where we were and where we are now.

You know, this bill and an Indigenous heritage month isn't only about just recognizing that colonial history and all of the harms that have been done. But it's really about presenting to Manitobans and Canadians—but, more importantly, presenting to the next generation of Manitobans, to our youth—that here's our history, here's what we've overcome and here's where we are now.

I always say that, in Manitoba, we are in a very historic moment right now. What we have, the government that we have, the folks that are elected in our caucus is a historic moment. Whether or not people realize it, 20, 30 years from now, people will be studying in university and in high schools what is going on in Manitoba right now. I'm so incredibly honoured to be a part of this moment, this historic moment.

And, you know, Bill 231 is about coalescing all of that and making sure that folks understand that history—again, where we are and where we're going—and the role that everybody plays in that, on that path of reconciliation, on that path of self-determination, on that path of representation.

Indigenous peoples, while we still have our struggles and our traumas and the issues that we're dealing with, we're doing good. We're great. We're thriving. We're loving. We're happy, humorous people. We're generous people. We're forgiving people. We're incredibly intelligent people. We're incredibly courageous people. We're really good-looking. Like, we're doing so good.

And so I hope that everybody in the Chamber can stand in solidarity with one another this morning and pass Bill 231 to committee. Miigwech.

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** It's my pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill 231, The Indigenous Heritage Month Act.

Bill 231 proposes to amend The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act to designate the month of September as Indigenous heritage month in this province. The purpose of this designation is to create an annual opportunity to recognize and reflect on the histories, cultures and contributions of Indigenous peoples, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

At the outset, Honourable Speaker, it is important to acknowledge that the objective of recognizing Indigenous heritage is a significant and worthwhile one. Indigenous peoples are foundational in shaping this province and continue to contribute in meaningful ways across social, cultural and economic life. Efforts that promote understanding and awareness of these contributions are consistent with broader conversations taking place across the country regarding reconciliation and education.

As the member representing the constituency of Riding Mountain, I would also note that this discussion is not abstract for many of us in this House. My constituency is closely connected with several Indigenous communities, including Rolling River First Nation, Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation, Birdtail Sioux Dakota Nation and Sioux Valley Dakota Nation and Canupwa [*phonetic*] Dakota Nation.

These five communities represent a diversity of Indigenous nations, including Anishinaabe and Dakota's peoples, each with distinct histories, cultures and relationships to the land, and underscores the importance of ensuring that any effort at recognition is thoughtful, inclusive and informed by the voices of those it seeks to honour.

A designated month, as proposed in this bill, could provide a focal point for such efforts. Schools, community organizations and cultural institutions may choose to organize programming that highlights Indigenous perspectives, traditions and histories. This could include educational initiatives, public events and opportunities for dialogue that encourage greater understanding among Manitobans. In this sense, formal recognition within legislation may serve as a signal of the importance placed on Indigenous heritage.

Even when such recognition is primarily symbolic, it can still contribute to a broader culture of

awareness and respect, particularly when it encourages participation from a wide range of institutions and communities.

However, Honourable Speaker, while the intent of the bill is clear, there are several considerations that warrant careful attention as we evaluate this proposal. One of the primary considerations is how this proposed designation aligns with existing national recognitions.

June is already recognized across Canada as National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day is observed on June 21. These observances are established and have gained a level of public awareness over time. The introduction of a second recognition period in September may raise questions about duplication or fragmentation of messaging. Members may wish to consider whether an additional month would enhance awareness or whether it might divide attention and reduce the overall impact of existing recognitions.

Related to this is the question of why September has been selected. The bill does not provide a detailed rationale for this choice. While it is possible that the timing at the beginning of the school year could support educational initiatives, it is not clear whether this month holds particular cultural or historical significance for Indigenous communities.

This lack of clarity may lead the public to ask whether the selection of September reflects meaningful input from Indigenous peoples. Understanding the reasoning behind this choice could help strengthen the case for the bill and ensure that it aligns with the perspectives of those it seeks to recognize.

This is—brings us to another important consideration: consultation. Effective recognition of Indigenous heritage is strengthened when it is informed by engagement with Indigenous communities themselves. It is not entirely evident what level of consultation has taken place with First Nations, Inuit or Métis leadership and organizations in the development of this legislation. Without clear information on this point, there may be concerns about whether the proposed designation reflects the priorities and preferences of Indigenous communities. Ensuring that Indigenous voices are central to such initiatives is an important aspect of respectful and meaningful policy development.

Honourable Speaker, another area that may require a reflecting upon is the distinction between symbolic and substantive action.

Designating a commemorative month is, by its nature, a symbolic measure. While symbolism can play a valuable role in recognition and awareness, it can also raise expectations regarding tangible outcomes.

The bill does not mandate specific programming or provide for dedicated funding. Instead, it encourages voluntary participation from government departments, schools and community organizations. While this approach allows flexibility, it may also result in uneven levels of engagement across the province. Some communities and institutions may have the resources and capacity to organize meaningful activities while others may not. This raises the question of whether additional support or guidance may be necessary to ensure that the objectives of the bill are realized in a consistent and effective manner.

Closely related to this is the issue of educational capacity. Schools may look for direction on how to incorporate Indigenous content in a way that is accurate, respectful and informed by Indigenous perspectives. This may require access to appropriate curriculum materials, partnerships with Indigenous educators and professional development opportunities for teachers. Without such supports, there is a risk that recognition efforts could vary significantly in quality. Members may wish to consider whether further measures are needed to assist educators and institutions in delivering meaningful programming during the proposed month.

Another consideration is the broader context of the provincial commemorative calendar. The existing act already includes a number of designated days, weeks and months. While each serves a purpose, there is a practical limit to the attention that can be given to any one designation. As additional commemorations are introduced, there is a possibility that individual observances may receive less visibility. This could affect the overall impact of the recognition and the level of public engagement it generates. It is worth considering how this proposed designation would fit within the existing framework.

\* (10:20)

Honourable Speaker, members may also wish to reflect on the role of government in relation to community-led initiatives. There may be differing perspectives on whether Indigenous heritage month should be primarily 'diverted' by government or led by Indigenous communities themselves, with government playing a supportive role.

Clarifying this balance could help ensure that the recognition is both respectful and effective. Initiatives that are guided by Indigenous leadership may be better positioned to reflect the diversity and richness of Indigenous cultures and experiences.

It is also important to recognize that legislation concerning Indigenous issues can carry broader implications. Measures that are perceived as primary symbolic may be viewed differently than those that are accompanied by concrete actions or commitments. As such, it may warrant consideration on how this bill fits within the Province's broader approach to reconciliation.

In summary, Honourable Speaker, Bill 231 proposes to designate September as Indigenous heritage month through an amendment to The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act. The bill aims to promote awareness, recognition and engagement with Indigenous histories, cultures and contributions across the province.

There are potential benefits associated with creating a dedicated period for these purposes, including opportunities for education, reflection and community engagement. At the same time, there are important considerations related to alignment with existing national recognitions, the rationale for the selected month, consultation with Indigenous communities and the balance between symbolic recognition and practical implementation.

On this side of the House, we recognize the intent behind the legislation while also acknowledging the questions that have been raised. We look forward to further discussion, including committee review and stakeholder input, to better understand how this proposal can be strengthened and whether it effectively meets its stated objectives.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** I'm honoured to stand up today to talk about this important bill, Indigenous heritage month, Bill 231.

But I also want to talk about where we need to make this bill strengthen and better for the whole province of Manitoba.

There's currently no designated month in provincial legislation specifically dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the history, cultures and contributions of Indigenous people. Bill 231 proposes to amend the commemoration days and months act to establish September as Indigenous heritage month.

I think it's very important as we move forward, too, to make sure that we were—are working in collaboration and we are checking with partners and inviting partners to be part of this process. And I look forward to the upcoming committee on this as well, too.

Again, another thing to strengthen this would be to make sure that we do have dedicated funding for all out there that want to be involved in this, especially in the education side of things as well, too; that all schools, all people that want to be involved in this should have a part in this.

Indigenous peoples, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis, have played a foundational role in the history and development of Canada and the—and this province. In recent years, there's been increased public awareness of Indigenous histories, culture and the impacts of colonial policies through reconciliation initiatives and national conversations.

I—as I said, I rise today and speak about Indigenous heritage month, a time set aside to honour, celebrate and reflect on the rich histories, cultures and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people across Manitoba and throughout Canada. It's an opportunity for us to listen, to learn and to acknowledge truths that have too often been overlooked. It is also a time to celebrate the strength, resilience and achievements of Indigenous peoples, both past and present.

Across our province, Indigenous communities have shaped who we are. Their traditions, languages and teachings continue to enrich our shared identity. From the northern reaches of the Inuit, to the vibrant Métis communities of the Prairies, and to the many First Nations across Manitoba, these cultures are foundational to our province and our country.

I'll be happy today to speak of some of the Indigenous communities that I represent, you know, whether it be Long Plain, Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, the area of St. Ambroise, which is a very rich Métis Nation in—on the south end of Lake Manitoba. It ensures that education, reflection and celebration are not forgotten in this busy pace of everyday life.

In my own constituency, we see powerful examples of Indigenous culture and the community pride on full display. This past year, Portage la Prairie Unity Pow Wow brings people together in celebration of tradition, dance, music and unity. It is more than an event, it is a living expression of culture, a place where generations gather, where teachings are passed down

and where all Manitobans are welcome to experience and learn.

Again, I was able to be part of it as a volunteer over a couple days that it was here. I believe that we had over 800 people that visited to Portage la Prairie to take part in the Portage la Prairie Unity Pow Wow, and I hope with all my heart that it only continues and grows from here, and the people from Portage la Prairie as well as the surrounding areas also grab onto this wonderful event.

These gatherings are vital, they break down barriers, they build understandings. They remind us that reconciliation is not just a word; it's something we all must actively participate in.

We also see the deep-rooted history in communities like St. Ambroise. This is a place where Indigenous heritage is not just remembered, it is still lived to this day.

It is in communities like St. Ambroise and St. Marks where we find individuals who—lives tell powerful stories of craftsmanship, tradition and connections to the land.

One such individual is Duncan Ducharme, and I'm so sorry that I never had the opportunity to meet Mr. Ducharme, but I know from the stories that I've read about hunting that Duncan Ducharme is known all over the world. Duncan was known for his incredible skill in carving duck decoys out of fence posts, works of art that have become some of the most sought-after pieces across North America.

But his legacy goes far beyond craftsmanship. He was a guide, he was a teacher, a steward of the land. Through his work, he preserved knowledge, knowledge of the wildlife, the environment and of tradition. His life reminds us that Indigenous knowledge is not something of the past, it is alive, it is relevant and it is invaluable.

And I'm proud to say that I carry some of those duck decoys in my own constituency office in Portage la Prairie that I've been gifted by a number of the Indigenous carvers in the St. Ambroise and St. Marks area.

We cannot speak about Indigenous heritage without acknowledging the painful chapters in our history. The legacy of residential schools is one such chapter, a chapter that continues to impact families and communities today.

That is why institutions like the National Indigenous Residential School Museum of Canada located in Portage

are so important, and, again, the people of the National Indigenous Residential School Museum can be a strong part of this bill that we're looking at today.

The museum stands as a place of truth, a place of education, a place of remembrance. It ensures that stories of survivors are not lost, that future generations understand what happened and that we, as leaders, never forget the responsibility we carry to ensure that such injustices are never repeated.

\* (10:30)

Visiting the museum is not easy, but it is necessary. I was out with a group of motorcycle riders this week—or sorry, this past summer that asked me if I'd meet them at the museum. And I'll never forget when we watched the film about the Indigenous museum, of the tears, of the people that walked out, just the sheer pain on their face. I will never forget that.

We must also take time this month to recognize the many Indigenous men and women who have served and continue to serve in uniform. Indigenous people have a long and proud history of military service in Canada. From the battlefields of the First and Second Wars, to Korea, to modern peacekeeping missions, Indigenous soldiers have stood shoulder to shoulder with their fellow Canadians in defence of freedom and democracy. Their contributions were extraordinary, often made in the face of inequality and without recognition they deserved upon returning home. And yet, they served with honour. They fought for a country that did not always fight for them. Indigenous heritage month gives us the opportunity to correct that, to honour their service, to share their stories and to ensure their sacrifices are properly recognized.

So why does a month matter? Because without intention, recognition fades. I want to conclude by saying that I'm honoured to speak on this today, but there is more work to do ahead before we proclaim this bill of Indigenous heritage month act, that everybody has an opportunity to speak on this. I look forward to spending time at committee on this and hearing the different things that people have to say about this. We need to have conversations, because through these actions, small as they may seem, we build an understanding. And through understanding, we build a stronger, more united Manitoba.

Honourable Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this today.

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** Thank you for the warm applause this morning. It's a full House this morning at the Manitoba Legislature in the Chamber, with, of course, a number of colleagues here supporting this bill. And in fact, it's an honour as a Red River Métis, as an Indigenous educator, to speak on behalf of this bill and to really uplift the work of the MLA of Seine River, who spent a good year consulting a number of people to bring this bill forward. In fact, I know that the MLA for Seine River has spent some time speaking with the Manitoba Métis Federation, President Chartrand, with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, SCO, MKO, Indigenous Elders, of course, and Indigenous educators.

In fact, just this morning, Honourable Speaker, I was at a gathering—a Canadian gathering of Indigenous educators—speaking about the importance of recognizing in our schools, especially for Indigenous youth, who we are, where we're from and where we're going. September is an important month for Indigenous people across Canada. And it's an important month for Indigenous students as they come back to school, and they need to see themselves reflected in their schools. And in fact, the month of September is the perfect month to have Indigenous students get reinvented in their education, culminating, of course, with Orange Shirt Day at the end of September.

I know that September is also a good time to spend time with Indigenous students on the land. I'm a big believer of land-based education, taking students outside. We can do mathematics, we can do reading, we can do all sorts of things outside, but we can also reconnect with our culture, our language and our heritage as Indigenous people, not only in our schools, but also outside.

And, you know, believing in education—education is always, you know, a great equalizer—bringing students back into our schools, making sure that they're involved, and that they're involved with educators, Elders, grandparents, kookums, et cetera. And I think that that's—passing this bill, lastly, Honourable Speaker, is an act of reconciliation. So let's work together, and let's pass this bill.

Miigwech.

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** I rise today to speak to Bill 231, The Indigenous Heritage Month Act.

Bill 231 proposes a straightforward legislative change. It would amend The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act to formally designate September as Indigenous heritage month in Manitoba. The intent is to create an annual opportunity to highlight the histories, cultures and contributions of Indigenous peoples, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

Honourable Speaker, few would disagree with the importance of recognizing Indigenous heritage. Across our province, Indigenous communities continue to shape our shared social, cultural—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

If I could get the clock stopped for a minute and just interrupt the member.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** We have some guests in the gallery from Alberta and Manitoba emergency management: Colin Blair, Vern Elliot, Christine Mijares from Alberta; Chris Hurley and Jason Senyk from Manitoba.

And we welcome you all here this morning.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Wowchuk:** Few would disagree with the importance of recognizing Indigenous heritage. Across our province, Indigenous communities continue to shape our shared social, cultural and economic landscape.

There is also a growing understanding among Manitobans of the historical context of these contributions, including the impacts of past government policies and the importance of reconciliation moving forward. In that context, a designated month may serve as a useful anchor. It can provide a predictable time each year for institutions and communities to focus attention on Indigenous perspectives. For example, schools may choose to introduce new learning materials, or municipalities may host local events and cultural organizations may highlight Indigenous artists, language and traditions.

And I want to mention, too, our MLA who was in recognition opened up the entire opportunity for different MLAs and staff to go down and choose a particular picture of their choice. Importantly, such recognition can also create space for Indigenous-led initiatives. When structured thoughtfully, a commemorative month can support opportunities for communities to share their knowledge on their learning on—

knowledge on their own terms, rather than having recognition imposed externally.

That said, Honourable Speaker, there are several aspects of the bill that invite closer examination. One of the first questions relates to timing. June is already recognized at the national level as Indigenous history month, with National Indigenous Peoples Day taking place on June 21. These observances are relatively well established and have gained increasing public visibility.

The addition of a provincially designated month in September raises a practical question. Does creating a second focal point strengthen awareness or does it risk dividing attention? It's not immediately clear whether Manitobans will engage more deeply with two separate recognition periods or whether efforts may become diluted across the calendar.

Closely tied to this is the absence of a clearly articulated rationale for choosing September. While one could infer that the start of the academic year presents opportunities for schools to participate, the bill itself doesn't explain this reasoning, nor does it—does it indicate whether this timing reflects cultural significance or preferences expressed by Indigenous communities.

Honourable Speaker, that leads to another key consideration, which is consultation. Recognition carries greater meaning when it's shaped in partnership with those being recognized. In this case, it's not fully clear what level of engagement was taken—what has taken place with First Nation, Inuit or Métis leadership in determining both the concept of the month and its proposed timing. Members may wish to explore whether Indigenous communities were consulted, and if so, how their input influenced the bill. If such engagement has been limited, there may be an opportunity to strengthen the legislation through further dialogue.

\* (10:40)

Another point worth considering is how this designation would function in practice. The bill does not establish any formal requirements for programming, nor does it allocate funding. Instead, it relies on voluntary participation from public institutions, educators and community groups.

This approach has advantages, particularly in allowing flexibility. However, it may also lead to inconsistency.

Some regions or organizations may have the resources and partnerships needed to organize meaningful programming, while others may have fewer opportunities to participate.

As a result, the experience of Indigenous heritage month could vary significantly across the province. This raises the question of whether additional guidance, co-ordination or support may be necessary to ensure that the designation achieves its intended purpose.

Honourable Speaker, the role of education is particularly relevant here. Schools are often central to the success of commemorative initiatives. Teachers and administrators may look for curriculum-aligned resources, access to Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and professional development to support respectful and accurate learning. Without these supports, there's a risk that well-intended efforts may not fully reflect Indigenous perspectives or may place additional pressure on educators who are already managing a full curriculum.

Another factor to consider is the broader legislative landscape. The commemoration of days, weeks and months already contains a number of designated observances. Each one reflects an important cause of the community but, collectively, they compete for public attention.

Adding another month to this calendar may have implications for visibility. Members may wish to reflect on whether the introduction of Indigenous heritage month would enhance recognition or whether it would face challenges in standing out among other commemorations.

Honourable Speaker, it is also worth considering how leadership for this initiative would be structured. There may be differing views on whether activities during Indigenous heritage month should be primary-government-led or community-led.

Many would agree that Indigenous communities themselves should play a central role in shaping how this heritage is recognized. And that—if that is the case, then the Province's role may best be focused on support rather than direction. Clarifying this balance could help ensure that the month is both respectful and effective.

Finally, it's important to situate this bill within the broader context of reconciliation. Symbolic measures such as commemorative designations can also contribute to awareness and dialogue. At the same time, they're often most impactful when accompanied by

substantive actions that address ongoing challenges faced by Indigenous communities. Therefore, it may be considered on how this proposal aligns with other initiatives and whether it forms part of a larger co-ordinated approach.

In closing, Honourable Speaker, Bill 231 represents the proposal to formally recognize the Indigenous heritage through designation of a month in provincial legislation. The intent is clear and it reflects an important objective. At the same time, there are a number of questions that remain, including the choice of September alignment with existing recognitions, the extent of consultation and how the designation would be supported in practice.

And I know, in my constituency, I have a number of communities—there's Sapotaweyak, Wuskwi Sipihk, there's also Gambler First Nation, Waywayseecappo—and these are very, very resilient communities and they would have a lot of opportunity to be able to display, you know, their culture and share and educate the public. We recognize the potential of this while also acknowledging the need for careful consideration. We look forward to hearing from rights holders and to further discussion as this bill moves forward through the legislative process.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** Hopefully I'm online and moving forward now. I have a wonderful opportunity to speak on Bill 231, The Indigenous Heritage Month Act. *[interjection]* Thank you for that.

I want to thank the member for bringing this forward. This is something that means a lot to me. I think it's important to get the conversation started, to bring forward bills. As legislators, we have an opportunity to amplify the voices of the people who've sent us here to represent them, and this bill does that.

I have the extreme pleasure of being a part of a wonderful community here in Selkirk and the area of St. Andrews, an area that is filled with rich culture, the heritage, history, everything from trading that happened over at Lower Fort Garry to the Dynevor settlement, to nowadays where we have the Manitoba Métis Federation, Red River Métis federation, doing a tremendous investment into this area, creating housing on Eveline avenue here in Selkirk overlooking the historic Red River, as well as development of a tree nursery that will give lasting jobs and an impact in surrounding areas of bringing back forestry into the province.

There's also another development which is happening at the old boys school just north of Selkirk here in St. Andrews where they have—the Manitoba Métis Federation has actually entered into an agreement, a three-party agreement with themselves, the RM of St. Andrews and the City of Selkirk to deliver drinking water and return waste water for treatment into Selkirk, something very historical.

But we need to talk a little bit more about the Indigenous heritage month, and more in particular, what I'm hoping that it will do. I'm hoping it'll start the conversation where we'll have more education, more training, more review of history that has happened throughout the province, more cross-Canada celebrations of the original peoples of this land.

And as I mentioned before in—several times in the Chamber, at a fairly young age, at the age of 15, I moved into Selkirk area, and I didn't particularly get along with my family at the time and I discovered a new family, a family that took me in. It was an Indigenous family, it was a Chartrand family and I would spend most weekends with them. Eventually, I left home at 16, but I carried that relationship where we'd go over to the Chartrand family typically on a Friday after school, and I would generally stay there throughout the entire weekend and start school on Monday.

It was an incredible time. They welcomed me into their house with open arms, and that was a much part of the community that I was very fortunate to be a part of. And I discovered over time the relationships that the Indigenous people have had throughout the province, throughout history, throughout millennia is quite remarkable. Moving forward to help others unselfishly, and I've had the opportunity to do a number of things and locally in the community.

You know, one of my favourite things is I Love to Read Month, and locally here at Ruth Hooker School, I was welcomed—one of the first readings I did there with a number of the young girls in their ribbon skirts who did a drum song for me.

\* (10:50)

I couldn't have felt more special to be welcomed in. It was the first time that's ever happened for me and it's a lasting memory that I will keep forever. Absolutely incredible that the school system is starting to move forward in a proper direction to educate the students on the history of the Indigenous peoples of Manitoba—of the province and throughout Canada.

And we see that in different schools where they'll have, you know, different artistry set up in their classrooms, in the libraries. They'll have teepees set up. They'll have teachings going on. And some of them even have language classes. Pretty incredible to see. It's something I—you would hope to see in a lifetime, but it's starting to happen. And it's slowly happening, but it's happening nevertheless. I would like to see it happen a lot quicker.

In the area of Selkirk, in Selkirk Park, there's a celebration every year that's taken place for many years—I think almost two decades—which is the Indigenous day celebrations. And I got involved in that many years ago where Minister Alfred Anderson had actually come down and knocked on my door one day—of my business—and said, hey, we're doing this celebration in Selkirk Park and we would like to know if you could help out, if you could rent us an event tent.

Our company manufactures portable buildings and so we do have one of those buildings that we do for—back in the day for small weddings and events. And I said: I'd be happy, but I won't rent the tent; we will supply the tent. We'll come there, we'll put it up for your celebration and we'll have it up for a while. And then we have an opportunity, we'll come back and take it down.

And that went on for a number of years where we did a donation of the tent for the event, but they quickly outgrew our tent. It's bittersweet for myself because it didn't allow me the opportunity to go and present the tent, which was a significant value, but it did show that—the growing celebration. And anybody who's ever had the opportunity to attend, it went from hundreds of people to now thousands of people who attend the event.

And we have several events throughout Selkirk. The Selkirk Friendship Centre puts on a tremendous number of events and local different groups put on events as well. They've had Take Back the Night, which is more directed in protection of missing and murdered Indigenous women and children, and I was very proud to be a part of that. And I think that once you open up the communications and you can move forward, things do happen.

And during the Indigenous day celebrations and also on Orange Shirt Day—now, the events that were there, they had just some tremendous speakers come out and talk about history and what being Indigenous means to them, their culture, their identity. They have—there's two young ladies that I see often at these

events and they are a fancy shawl dancer and a jingle dancer, and the way they interact with the crowd, they explain their dances and how important they are to them, what they mean and how they got involved. Actually, it's a real touching celebration.

But also on Orange Shirt Day, in the Selkirk Park, if I can paint a little bit of a picture for the audience, it's a beautiful park right beside the historic Red River. And the park is protected by a large dike that runs around, and that dike is used now as a walking path.

But along that dike, during the Orange Shirt Day celebration, they laid out placards, these beautiful signs of the 94 Calls to Action for truth and reconciliation. And as you would walk down that pathway and you'd stop at each one and you read from one to 94 and—you know, they had half of them laid out one direction and the other half on the way back.

It was a heavy feeling because there's not a thing that I rent—read on those Calls to Action that I would say: that is difficult to do. I think everything there just falls within our hearts. They're a call for something that should be easily identified, and it should move forward.

I think that there are some tremendous opportunities to bring forward Indigenous heritage month and allow people to research the history more, be a part of a community that has open arms and welcomes everybody.

And I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak today. Thank you.

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain):** I'm honoured to bring some words to this Bill 231, Indigenous Heritage Month Act, and the opportunity to put a few words on the record.

The opportunity I had, to work with many Indigenous leaders and the opportunity to work together in collaboration, I was the minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. I had many opportunities to meet with Indigenous groups within the Lake St. Martin, Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg region when it came to the channels.

And it was an opportunity to—just to listen, to sit and listen to many groups, many leaders who, you know, over time, they—the way that they were treated over history.

It was a chance for them to really air their concerns and differences and how they were treated. And I was so honoured to have that opportunity and understand where they were coming from.

And what I also experienced, too, was—you know—the way that they were treated during the 2011 flood and the 2014 flood. They were impacted, especially communities like Lake St. Martin.

Again, they did not get respected by the government of the day, which would have been the Selinger government. And the opportunity to listen to—and one of the things that they said after the meetings, they had said, finally, we're here, actually people are listening to us.

And the opportunity to collaborate and to make sure that we'll move forward, especially when it comes to any infrastructure out there, that there was collaboration with First Nation communities.

And one thing I also want to put on the record here, too—and I never had the opportunity to really give my condolences. But my condolences to the Amanda Lathlin family for, you know, being the first Indigenous individual to be elected in the Manitoba Legislature. It was such an honour—I came in about less than a year before her—and to have her come in, and a historical opportunity for especially female Indigenous people to be heard, to have a voice.

And I have to say, Amanda Lathlin, she was the most genuine person I ever met. She had—she wore her heart on her sleeve and on her, you know—and the thing is, the opportunities she brought to the Legislature and to—I call her a friend.

She was a person—I see that smile all the time, and she was just, again, a genuine person who really, really having a voice for The Pas-Kameesak and the work that she's done and the bills that she brought forward as private members' bills. She was salt of the earth, and I just want to also now give my condolences to the family and to all the people who were very close to her, who—she will be greatly missed.

And again, going back to, you know, working with First Nations communities, I was honoured to, when I was in Arthur-Virden, first became an MLA there, I had the opportunity to get to know the leaders of a number of communities like Sioux Valley and Birdtail Sioux.

I actually had the opportunity to—Pipestone First Nation, and then was also working with Swan Lake—you know, boundary commission changed, I took over from—for Turtle Mountain and got to know Chief Daniels and working together collaborately.

You know, as a minister, looking at projects, I remember going to—with Grand Chief Cindy Woodhouse to meet when I had an FPT in Ottawa with Bill Blair on EMO. We had Cindy Woodhouse, she was there first, for the first day with Indigenous leaders.

And we had the opportunity to meet with, at that time, Minister Patty Hajdu to talk about a whole bunch of different projects that we would like to see—

\* (11:00)

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have six minutes remaining.

## RESOLUTIONS

### Res. 7—National Strategy for Silver Alerts

**The Speaker:** The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private members' resolutions.

And the resolution before us this morning is the resolution No. 7, brought forward by the honourable member for Kildonan-River East. The title of the resolution is National Strategy for Silver Alerts.

**Mrs. Rachelle Schott (Kildonan-River East):** I move, seconded by the honourable member for Seine River (MLA Cross),

*WHEREAS the safety and well-being of older adults and people living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other cognitive impairments is a priority for the Provincial Government; and*

*WHEREAS across Canada, seniors and vulnerable adults living with Alzheimer's disease and dementia frequently go missing, prompting urgent searches, placing families under immense stress, and highlighting the need for a coordinated system to protect those at risk; and*

*WHEREAS critical incident reviews and missing-person investigations across jurisdictions have repeatedly identified gaps in care planning, communication, and system response. Gaps that, if addressed, could prevent similar incidents and strengthen safeguards for vulnerable adults; and*

*WHEREAS families affected by these incidents, including many who have experienced the disappearance of a loved one, have advocated nationally for improvements to the Alert Ready national public alerting system to issue silver alerts, gathering thousands of signatures from people across the country in support of stronger, more consistent protections for missing vulnerable adults; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government has taken meaningful steps to improve the quality of life for people living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other cognitive impairments, including new investments in community supports, caregiver assistance, and programming to help prevent missing-person incidents and ensure vulnerable Manitobans are safe; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government created a new, independent Seniors' Advocate to listen to seniors and advocate for the supports Manitoba seniors need; and*

*WHEREAS the Federal Government has recently made investments to support people living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other cognitive impairments and their caregivers, demonstrating a shared national commitment to improving dementia care, but recognizing that more action is needed to strengthen public safety and coordinated response systems; and*

*WHEREAS a modernized, standardized, and nationally coordinated silver alert strategy would ensure consistent protections across jurisdictions, strengthen communication between provinces, and provide families with greater peace of mind; and*

*WHEREAS a renewed national approach would support the work already underway in Manitoba, enhance system-wide coordination, and respond directly to what thousands of Canadians have called for through their advocacy and petitions.*

Therefore be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial—or the federal government—let me start that again.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to encourage the federal government to develop and advance a renewed national silver alert strategy that strengthens protections for missing seniors and vulnerable adults, supports families and ensures consistent co-ordinated action across Canada.

**Motion presented.**

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Seine River—the honourable member for Kildonan-River East.

**Mrs. Schott:** I want to take a moment to talk about Earl Moberg.

Mr. Moberg was last seen leaving his home on December 12, 2023. He was 81 years old at the time and living with dementia.

This is not just another story; this is a family in my community of Kildonan-River East that is still living without answers.

From the very beginning, our government took this very seriously. A lot of this work happens behind the scenes. The Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care (MLA Asagwara) and their departments both what-met with the Moberg family. Within days of Mr. Moberg going missing, the Minister of Health, our Deputy Premier, and I sat in the living room of the Moberg family home. We listened to them, we heard directly what they were going through, and while we will never understand exactly what their lived experience was, we were there that day and the days that followed our first initial visit.

We worked closely with the Moberg family and community partners including the city councillor from North Kildonan, Jeff Browaty, the Winnipeg Police Service and community members all across northeast Winnipeg. There were constant conversations about what more could be done because families deserve that kind of presence and respect from their elected officials.

Since that time in 2023, we have been working across multiple departments and with the federal government on this issue. As mentioned, the Department of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, the Department of Justice and community partners have all been involved. We did everything we could at the provincial level to support the family and respond appropriately, but we have also been clear that parts of the silver alert system fall under federal jurisdiction.

That is why strong collaboration matters. We have a strong working relationship with the federal government. While the members opposite have tried to politicize the grief that the Moberg family are going through, our focus has always been on working together and finding solutions for their family and all other families in Manitoba with similar stories.

We have been working—doing that work with our federal partners since 2023, and now we are formally calling for that work to become a co-ordinated national approach. Honourable Speaker, this is—not just government stepping up. The community stepped up also. In the spring of 2024, our team in Kildonan-River East helped organize a community search, and I'll table some documents referring to the call to—out to community and information about what that search entailed—thank you.

We worked alongside the Bear Clan and local residents. Neighbours showed up; volunteers showed up; fellow neighbours in community, church groups; and folks from all across Manitoba that have had their lives also touched by dementia and Alzheimer's—people from across the city and all across Manitoba.

In May of 2025, our government invested an additional \$200,000 into the Alzheimer's Society of Manitoba. Honourable Speaker, that brought the total provincial funding to nearly \$900,000. That funding is helping train staff, expand community supports and build dementia-friendly communities. It also supports the programs that families rely on every day, the caregivers, the programs for the caregivers and the folks living with Alzheimer's and dementia, such as early connections to services, the caregiver supports and education for all Manitobans. This is real, tangible support that is already making a difference.

*Mr. Diljeet Brar, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

Throughout all of this, the Moberg family has shown incredible strength. Despite their grief, they have continued to think about others. They have been focused on how other systems and supports can better improve so that no other family has to go through what they have gone through.

This is a reminder that this issue affects so many families, honourable Speaker. Many older adults in our community live with memory loss. Many families are navigating the challenges of caring for aging loved ones. The Moberg family are our neighbours, and in moments like this, community needs to come together. Manitobans expect their loved ones to be safe, especially seniors and vulnerable adults who may not always be able to protect themselves.

Honourable Speaker, when someone living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia or other cognitive impairment goes missing, every minute matters. Families are left in fear and delays can have serious consequences. Silver alerts are a practical, proven way to respond quickly, sharing critical information across phones, media and communities so more people can help bring their loved ones home safely.

Right now, there is no consistent system across Canada, honourable Speaker. Different provinces take different approaches, leaving gaps in co-ordination and communication when time is critical. At the same time, we know that Canada's population is continuing to age. The largest generation in our history is entering their senior years, and more families are facing the realities of dementia and cognitive decline. The need for a stronger, co-ordinated response is only growing.

Honourable Speaker, families across the country have been clear: they want better tools, faster action and greater peace of mind when a loved one goes missing. Our government is ready to take action to support seniors here at home in Manitoba, strengthening health care, expanding home care, investing in long-term care and creating a new independent Seniors' Advocate.

Honourable Speaker, this motion builds on that work by calling for a national approach that ensures consistent, co-ordinated action where someone lives in Canada—no matter where someone lives in Canada. Because protecting vulnerable people isn't just about policy; it's about making sure that no family has to face those critical moments alone.

\* (11:10)

Honourable Speaker, when we talk about silver alerts, we are talking about something very simple at its core: protecting vulnerable people when they need help the most. A silver alert is not just a missing persons notice; it is a time-sensitive emergency response designed specifically for vulnerable adults, often seniors, who may be living with conditions such as dementia, Alzheimer's disease or other cognitive impairments. These are individuals who may become disoriented, wander from safety or find themselves in situations where they cannot recognize danger or ask for help.

Honourable Speaker, what makes a silver alert different is how quickly and broadly it mobilizes support. Once an alert is issued, this information is shared across multiple platforms—television, radio and mobile devices—ensuring that people across communities are aware and able to help. It transforms an individual case into a co-ordinated province-wide effort. And what we know is the most critical factor in these situations are the first hours after a vulnerable person goes missing can determine the outcome.

The faster information is shared, the greater the chance that someone will recognize a face, a vehicle or a situation that does not seem right.

And, honourable Speaker, before I conclude, I just again want to thank the Moberg family for channeling their grief into advocacy to try to help so many other Manitobans and potentially Canadians so that they do not have the same tragic outcome that the Moberg family had to endure.

And, honourable Speaker, I also want to thank our Premier (Mr. Kinew), our Minister of Health, and our Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) and their

entire departmental teams for their timely, effective co-ordination and appropriate response at the time of the Moberg family needs.

Thank you.

### Questions

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** 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.

The floor is open for questions.

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** I would like to thank the member for Kildonan-River East for bringing this very important resolution forward. It is important because I served for many years looking for these very missing people, and it resonates very closely.

So I'm wondering, in the consultations, did the member for Kildonan-River East consult with Len Isleifson, who brought forward this bill in 2017 regarding The Missing Persons Act and silver alert here in Manitoba.

**Mrs. Rachelle Schott (Kildonan-River East):** I'd actually like to ask the member to repeat his question because there was a lot of background heckling and jargon going on. So I only caught the name of Len someone. And so I'd kindly ask the member for Brandon West to repeat his question.

Thank you.

**MLA Billie Cross (Seine River):** I want to thank the member from Kildonan-River East for bringing forward this really important PMR and for the work she's doing to try and help keep Manitoba citizens safe.

Could the member explain how a national silver alert strategy would build on the progress already being made here in Manitoba?

**Mrs. Schott:** I'd like to thank the member for Seine River for that question.

So throughout all of our meetings with the families, with the lived experience and our co-ordinated collaborative approach with other levels of government and community advocacy groups that specialize in this type of work, we've determined that, as mentioned, every second counts when someone goes missing.

And so, honourable Speaker, the essence of why we need to have a co-ordinated, collaborative national approach is so that we leave no one behind, regardless of where they live in Canada, and we ensure that families feel supported and the message can be—

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Member's time has expired.

**Mr. Balcaen:** I'll repeat my question for the member for Kildonan-River East.

The question was simple: During your—during—sorry, during her consultation, did the member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott) consult with Len Isleifson, who was the MLA for Brandon East at that time and had brought forward legislation bill 214, The Missing Persons Act (Silver Alert), in March of 2017?

I'm just wondering for this co-ordinated effort, seeing though Manitoba was first out of the gate, did she consult with the person who brought this very important bill forward here in Manitoba?

**Mrs. Schott:** I thank the member for that question and I appreciate him repeating it. It's unfortunate that he had to say that it was such a simple question, when I simply wanted to try to give a genuine response and I hadn't heard all the details in his previous attempt at the question.

In 2017, I was not part of this Chamber; I don't know who this individual is that he's speaking of. And I do know that at the time when it was the previous failed PC government, that they didn't have a collaborative, effective working relationships with the municipalities or—especially with the federal government.

So if there was an attempt in—by the sounds of what the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) is mentioning—in 2017 to bring something forward, it was unsuccessful because tragically—

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Member's time is expired.

Member for Spruce Woods. *[interjection]*

Apologies. Member for Seine River (MLA Cross).

**MLA Cross:** Gaps in communication and co-ordination have been identified time and time again across jurisdictions.

Can the member speak to why federal leadership is essential in closing those gaps and ensuring consistent protections for Canadians?

**Mrs. Schott:** I'd like to thank the member for Seine River for that question. I'd also like to just continue with my response to Brandon West very briefly.

So if there was someone in the PC caucus in 2017 who apparently brought something of similar nature up at the time, it would have been a result of their inability to collaborate and work effectively with other levels of government that this wasn't successful in bringing forward a national silver alert strategy. Because in 2023, the Moberg family could not access an effectively working silver alert strategy to utilize in the moments that really counted at their time of need when their loved one went missing.

So thank you to the member for Seine River—

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Member's time has expired.

**Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods):** Did the MLA, when drafting this resolution, reach out to the MP Raquel Dancho to co-ordinate and support our legislative initiative bill 263?

**Mrs. Schott:** I thank the member for that question.

The difference between our local community in Kildonan-River East, and that includes North Kildonan municipally and Kildonan-St. Paul federally, is that regardless of the party line that we were elected as, we work collaboratively to ensure that we don't make issues such as this partisan. And we try to serve all of our mutual constituents.

So that is why, as mentioned, in the moments that counted, right after the tragedy where Mr. Moberg went missing, we worked very collaboratively with the City of Winnipeg and with city councillor for North Kildonan Jeff Browaty, and yes, MP Dancho has brought forward a petition to the federal government—

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Member's time is expired.

**MLA Cross:** Honourable deputy Speaker, we know that time is critical in these situations. Can the member outline how silver alerts help mobilize not just law enforcement, but entire communities, and why that rapid, collective response will save lives?

\* (11:20)

**Mrs. Schott:** Thank you to the member for Seine River for that question.

I normally try to ignore all the, like, heckling and the nonsense in the background, especially on a day where

everyone in this Chamber should rise up and want to put seniors first. But I ran out of time in my last response, so I will continue to uplift MP Dancho, who, as mentioned, is the federal representative for the area in which all of my mutual constituents reside.

And yes, she has been working also with the Moberg family and had a petition in Ottawa to call on the federal government—she's an opposition member—to try to have a silver alert strategy. I don't know the ins and outs of what's going—

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Member's time has expired.

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** I want to thank the member from Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott) for bringing this important resolution forward. My heart not only goes out to the Moberg family, but in my own community most recently, to the family of Stewart Campbell, who went missing, had some dementia issues, as well as found his body weeks later.

But my question to the member would be: Can the MLA advise which other jurisdictions have a silver alert system and the key differences between their approach and Manitoba's?

**Mrs. Schott:** I want to thank the member for Lakeside for this question and also bringing up the relevance for why this is so important to be on party lines in both the City of Winnipeg and all across Manitoba to support constituents and families such as the Moberg family and the family mentioned in Lakeside that also experienced a similar tragedy.

The intent of this is so that, wherever you live in Manitoba or anywhere in Canada, there is a co-ordinated, consistent response so no family, such as the ones in my community or in the community of Lakeside in rural Manitoba, should ever have to be in a similar situation again.

And that's why our provincial government is calling on the federal government to—

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Member's time has expired.

**MLA Cross:** Honourable deputy Speaker, as Canada faces one of the most significant demographic shifts in history with the baby boomers, the largest generation making up nearly a quarter of our population, they are aging rapidly into their senior years.

And as more families are impacted by dementia and Alzheimer's disease, can the member explain how a co-ordinated approach bringing together health care,

community supports and emergency response can better protect Manitobans?

**Mrs. Schott:** I want to once again thank the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) for that question.

This just shows how our government works as a team and tries to serve all Manitobans. We, as mentioned, in the hours and minutes that counted immediately after learning that Mr. Moberg went missing, our Department of Health, our departments of Seniors and Long-Term Care and Justice all worked collaboratively with other jurisdictions to try to effectively support the family as much as possible. And we also—I also mentioned the Bear Clan and Drag the Red supported the Moberg family when they were approached for support.

This is not a partisan issue, and I hope that—

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Member's time has expired.

The time for question period has expired.

### Debate

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** The floor is now open for debate.

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** It gives me great privilege to rise today and speak to this resolution, one that I find extremely important based on my past career and the work that I know has been put into legislation that supports missing people throughout Manitoba and throughout Canada.

I was encouraged when I saw this being brought forward by the member for Kildonan-River East on such a very important issue. And then we got into her opening remarks and she said only the PC government would try and politicize such a bill.

And it's unfortunate that the member, when doing her own address to this resolution, would politicize something that is so very important to Manitobans, especially those families that have a loved one that is suffering from dementia, Alzheimer's or other mental health issues that incapacitate their ability to be able to formulate the thoughts that they need to navigate in society, and can unfortunately become lost or find their way into an area of harm. And, you know, when we look at this, it's very important that we concentrate on what will help police, what will help the public and what will help individuals in locating missing people.

I know we're directing this specifically to people with dementia, with Alzheimer's and with other cognitive disorders, but this also impacts how we look

for missing people across the board, whether it be children, whether it be adults, whether it be a vulnerable person who is involved in a domestic violence situation or anything of the like.

And so I know that there is great work that is being done on the missing persons front and Manitoba is, and will continue to be, a leader in this with a lot of the law enforcement agencies at the table controlling the narrative on this and looking at how these situations are brought forward. And these include The Missing Persons Act that was brought forward—I believe it was around 2012, honourable deputy Speaker—and at that time former chief of police with the Brandon police service, Ian Grant, was responsible for a lot of the authoring of The Missing Persons Act through the Manitoba government. And that was under the direction of the Progressive Conservatives.

And it's important to note that Chief Grant retired, spent a year of secondment with the Manitoba government in the Justice division, and he spent hours upon hours of research and stakeholder consultations with a number of different jurisdictions, and Manitoba then became the No. 1 province in Canada when it came to missing persons because of the act that we had in place. And again, that fell under the time when the PC government was in power. So saying that the Manitoba PCs did nothing on this or politicized it is absolutely false and just political rhetoric by the member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott).

I also move a little bit forward—and I mentioned it earlier, honourable deputy Speaker—but in March of 2017, then-sitting MLA Len Isleifson, the MLA for Brandon East, brought forward bill 214, an amendment to The Missing Persons Act, to add silver alerts, and that's because he had the foresight, and our PC party had the foresight, to say: We need to do more; we need to do something that will help individuals that are missing, that suffer from these cognitive deficiencies, and wanted to make sure that they were protected, that they were ones that were being searched for, that there was a mechanism put in place for that.

\* (11:30)

And I know that MLA, at that time, Isleifson did consultation with police services across Manitoba because I happened to do some consultations with him on this very act. So, in combination with Chief Grant, who wrote this act under the PC government and Len Isleifson, who brought forward the amendments to The Missing Persons Act, I would dare say that

we were well out of the gate before many, many jurisdictions when it came to this area.

And so, honourable deputy Speaker, silver alerts are important in many ways, but I always look at things because of my past experience in law enforcement, but also as the critic for Justice, and what we can do from a judicial perspective when it comes to missing people. And we know that there's always room for improvement, and that's why I'm glad to see the work being done at a federal level that complements the work that our PC government have—has initiated here on a provincial level.

So we look at some of the provincial systems that are in place, and Alberta and Manitoba have established silver alert protocols through amendments to The Missing Persons Act, respectively, in their provinces, though these do not typically send mobile device notifications like AMBER Alerts do. And that's something that's important to make sure because almost everybody nowadays carries a cellphone with them, or some sort of mobile device. And it's important that there's the ability to send out these alerts so that people can recognize faces, can recognize vehicles, can recognize situations; and having that timely is the most important aspect. I'm sure anybody has watched some of the crime movies or detective movies on TV, and it's very true: the first 48 hours of a case is the most important part of any case.

But when we're looking at missing people, we're talking the first minutes, the first hour, so that we can track where they have been, where they have left, where they're headed to. A lot of this is extremely important, and there's only so many police officers on the street. There's only so many law enforcement that are out there working when there is a silver alert or when somebody goes missing.

And that's why it is extremely important to engage the public. And I know work has been done with a lot of the public services that are offered through municipalities or through the province to send those alerts out as well to them, including transit operators who, a lot of times, are eyes and ears because they're constantly working, driving the streets and are out there looking for these individuals when they go missing. And that can assist law enforcement greatly when it comes to this.

It's also important to recognize the general public. And because there are 1.51 million people or thereabouts in Manitoba, having each and every one of them aware really sets forward the assistance that can

help out any agency, whether it be law enforcement, whether it be a group home or a seniors' home where the individual has gone missing from, could even be a hospital or a care facility. So having those alerts out there are very important.

I would like to thank the PC government for always investing in Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable deputy Speaker.

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** First, I want to start by acknowledging the Moberg family. This is a family who's been through a great deal. I've had the privilege of sitting with the family in their living room to talk about the impact the absence of their missing loved one has taken on their family.

I was able to do so with my colleague, the MLA for Kildonan-River East, who has brought forward this really important motion today. And I want to thank her for continuing to foster a relationship with the Moberg family and also continuing this really important work of engaging with families, communities, experts, in terms of what we can do to help keep our older, adult, senior, elderly loved ones safe in our communities.

I've had the pleasure of joining the MLA for Kildonan-River East at different seniors' homes in her constituency and surrounding constituencies. She has an incredible appetite for outreach. She not only meets the needs of her own constituents, but she's in a number of neighbouring PC constituencies, meeting with the seniors that don't hear from their PC MLAs.

And, you know, her commitment to Manitobans is deep and is reflected in her bringing forward a motion today that is calling on a national strategy for silver alerts to be developed. This is a really important resolution that's been brought forward. It's one that calls on Canada to lead the way in a really critical area to help protect seniors in our communities.

I want to take a moment to also highlight and emphasize the good work of the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba. I had the pleasure recently of sitting down with their executive director, Erin, who's a wonderful champion for those living with Alzheimer's and dementia in Manitoba.

I also had the privilege of inviting to that meeting—we try to keep those lines of communication open very regularly—but I had the opportunity to invite a local Manitoban who goes to regular groups with women and spouses of those living with Alzheimer's

in Union Station. And so I want to thank Bev for joining us at that meeting, for talking about the realities that caregivers face and for bringing forward ideas, really concrete ideas, in terms of what we can do more as a province to support families and caregivers and those living with Alzheimer's.

So, ultimately, you know, our government's approach is to do everything we can to make our communities safer, more dignified, healthier, welcoming, more connected for seniors in this province. And I hope that Manitobans can see that we have folks on our team who are dedicated to moving this work forward.

We need Canada to really step up here and ensure that silver alerts have a national strategy. We're doing a lot of work right here in Manitoba and of course, we'll work with them as a full partner, but this is a really important moment for them to ensure that no matter where you live in this country, silver alerts are in place in supporting families in those really crucial minutes, seconds, hours, when somebody should leave a place where they're meant to stay or potentially go missing.

This is about protecting vulnerable adults, protecting vulnerable community members. You know, the member opposite for Brandon East stood up and talked about his former PC colleague and the work that he did. And I think it's always important to acknowledge when former colleagues bring forward motions or do work, but I do want to point out that what he wasn't able to stand up and talk about was what his former colleague actually delivered on for Manitobans, because he didn't really deliver on anything.

And he had seven and a half years with the former government—seven and a half years—two terms of a government to invest in making sure that seniors are safer in this province.

Our government has wasted no time whatsoever to take real steps to keep seniors safer. Despite the opposition getting in the way of our efforts, we have been able to ensure that the independent office for the Seniors' Advocate is established here in Manitoba by law. That is something that families have been advocating for for years. We made sure that has happened.

And I'm also happy to share with the House today that the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba can now, thanks to our government's investments and thanks to the advocacy of the MLA for Kildonan-River East and

the advocacy of families like the Moberg family, our government has ensured that they have over half a million dollars of permanent funding for their organization—permanent funding for their organization so that they can focus on doing what they do best, and that is providing supports and resources for those living with Alzheimer's and dementia and for their families and caregivers.

We've also invested in making sure that we have elder abuse strategies rolling out across rural communities, not just in Winnipeg. So we're investing in making sure that seniors have more supports and services in this province, but we know that taking action on having a strategy regarding silver alerts is a really important part of this work.

\* (11:40)

It is fundamentally so important that this is in place and that, here in Manitoba, all of the work we're doing at the provincial level can then be strengthened and complemented and enhanced by the federal government taking this really important step. And again, we will work as a full partner to make sure that we have an enhanced system-wide co-ordinated response for families.

Honourable Speaker, you know, here in Manitoba, like the rest of the country, we see the rates of Alzheimer's and dementia increasing, and we actually see it affecting folks at younger and younger ages. We recognize that there's a lot for us to understand in this space, and so we're working with local experts in the research field to ensure that we have as much evidence and information as possible to inform and guide the way forward here in the province.

Certainly, of course, we would welcome any efforts at the national level by Canada in terms of research. We're in an environment right now, nationally, where we've got a lot of experts in our neighbouring country, the United States, who are looking for a place to lend their research expertise. I would argue that this is one particular area where we should nationally welcome these experts to Canada, welcome them to Manitoba, of course—our doors are wide open for those experts—and work together to make sure that we are leading the way in terms of research in this area so that we can be as proactive as we possibly can in keeping seniors as safe as possible in our communities.

Now, we know that, so often, initiatives that are rolled out to help keep seniors safe—a number of which, under our government, we've taken action and

will continue to—are disproportionately here in Winnipeg. And we know that this needs to be rolled out across the province and certainly rural and northern communities.

And so I am happy to also share with the House today that our government is working with our regional health authority partners to ensure that across rural and northern communities, there are more experts available in our communities who can provide education, awareness, information for families, answer their questions in real time and to work with our care providers at sites, making sure that if you have a loved one who's gotten this diagnosis, maybe was admitted to hospital, that you are connected to the services in your community proactively so that you're safer when you go home, so you've got the right supports in your communities.

Now, this is, again, all work that we're doing at the provincial level. And, you know, this is work that I've heard directly from caregivers of those with Alzheimer's. Again, I want to shout out Bev and her crew of women who meet regularly in downtown Winnipeg to share their ideas, concerns, maybe commiserations, who have welcomed me to their table to have a cup of coffee and talk about what we can do more of to support them.

But what I've heard loud and clear from these folks is that silver alerts is an area that would really, really help round out all of the work we're doing at the provincial level; that a resolution like what the MLA for Kildonan-River East has brought forward today must be taken seriously by the federal government; and that we should all be unified in making that call to Canada to say that having a national strategy on silver alerts is going to save lives—it is going to protect vulnerable Canadians, it's going to protect vulnerable Manitobans; and that we should be working together to make sure that this rolls out in every corner of our country as quickly as possible, as sustainably—sustainably as possible and with, you know, folks who live with this disease and their loved ones in mind and at the heart of it.

And so I want to commend the MLA for Kildonan-River East for bringing this very, very important private member's resolution forward today. This is a call we should be making in unison to Canada; it is a call that our government will continue to make on behalf of all Manitobans.

And we're going to continue to invest in the care, supports, and services that those living with Alzheimer's and dementia and their families need in

our province. And of course we will work with partners at every level of government to make sure that we have a national strategy on silver alerts and the additional services that will keep people safe and protected in our communities.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** Thank the member for bringing this very important resolution forward.

And I rise today to speak in support of this resolution respecting the development of a national silver alert strategy, and I want to begin by stating clearly that, without hesitation, that I would—will be supporting this motion.

It's an issue that reaches beyond the usual boundaries of partisan debate. It's rooted in something far more fundamental: responsibility we all share to protect those who are most vulnerable in our communities. It's about ensuring that when a senior—someone's parent, someone's grandparent, someone who's contributed a lifetime to building this province and the country and their community—goes missing, systems we have in place respond with the urgency, co-ordination and effectiveness that the situation demands.

The resolution before us sets out the case a thoughtful and measured way, recognizes the growing number of Canadians living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia and other cognitive impairments, acknowledges the profound stress and uncertainty faced by families when a loved one disappears and, importantly, it highlights the gaps that continue to exist in our current response systems: gaps in communication, gaps in co-ordination and gaps in the speed at which critical information reaches the public.

Honourable Speaker, those gaps are not theoretical; they are real and they have consequences. Most recently in my constituency in—of Lakeside in summer of 2025, we experienced this in a deeply personal, tragic way through the disappearance of Stewart Campbell. When he went missing, what followed was not simply a search effort, but a prolonged and agonizing period of uncertainty for his family and for the broader community. Days passed, weeks passed, his vehicle was located—which brought a measure of hope, but also heightened concern—and then, after that long and painful wait came the devastating outcome that no family ever wants to face.

For the Campbell family and for those who knew him, that experience does not end with the conclusion of the search. It stays with them, and for us as

legislators, it leaves us with a responsibility to ask difficult but necessary questions: Could more have been done in those early hours? Could information have been shared more quickly? Could a broader, more co-ordinated alert system have made a difference? These are not easy questions, but they are essential ones, because when a vulnerable senior goes missing, time is not simply important, it is everything.

We know that conditions such as Alzheimer's and dementia can impair judgment and erase a person's sense of direction and leave them exposed to risks that most of us would instinctively avoid. We also know that the window for a safe recovery can be very narrow; a missing senior is not located within a matter of hours, the likelihood of serious injury or worse increase—worse increases dramatically. That's precisely why silver alerts matter.

At its core, silver alert is a straightforward concept. It is a system designed to rapidly disseminate information about a missing vulnerable person through mobile devices, media and public alerting systems, so that the broader community can assist in the search. It is built on the same fundamental principle as the AMBER Alert system, that when the public is informed quickly and clearly, they can become an essential part of the response.

And, honourable Speaker, we know that the public will respond; we have seen it time and time again. People are given the information they need. When they know who to look for, what vehicle is involved, where someone was last seen, they act; they check their properties, they review their cameras, they report sightings. In many cases they help bring people home.

That only works if the information reaches them in time. Present Canada does not have a consistent national cellular-enabled silver alert system. While provinces such as Manitoba and Alberta have taken important steps to establish protocols within their jurisdictions, those systems often rely on media dissemination and do not always utilize the full capabilities of modern, geotargeted mobile alerting; creates a patchwork approach, where the level of response could vary depending on where a person goes missing, also creates challenges when a missing individual crosses provincial boundaries. And there is no unified framework to ensure seamless communication and co-ordination.

This is where the resolution before us is both timely and necessary. Calls on the provincial government to encourage the federal government to

develop and advance a renewed national silver alert strategy, one that builds on the existing alert-ready system to deliver rapid, targeted notifications to the areas where a missing person is most likely to be found.

Such a system would not only improve response times, but it would also help address concerns around alert fatigue by ensuring that notifications are geographically relevant and used appropriately. It would bring consistency across jurisdictions, strengthen interprovincial co-ordination and provide families with greater confidence that every possible tool is used to locate their loved ones.

\* (11:50)

Honourable Speaker, I also want to acknowledge the work that has already been done in this area. Here in Manitoba, we were the first province in Canada to legislate a silver alert framework, thanks to the leadership of former MLA Len Isleifson. That was an important step forward and it demonstrated a clear recognition that we have a duty to ensure that, when someone goes missing, we have the tools to respond effectively.

Now, the half a million dollars that the member, the Minister of Health, mentioned is very much welcome, but it's a shortfall from the \$1.3 million that the previous PC government invested in 2022.

Honourable Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not speak to the powerful advocacy that has emerged from the families who have lived through these experiences.

The case of Earl Moberg here in Winnipeg is one such example. For a family motivated by love and the desire to prevent others from experiencing the same loss has called for stronger, more immediate alerting systems.

Their efforts and the thousands of Canadians who have supported them underscore the fact that it is not an abstract policy discussion. It is a matter of real lives and real families.

This resolution is about recognizing that seniors matter, that their safety matters, that their dignity matters. These are individuals who have built our communities, raised their families, contributed to our economy and shaped the society we live in today.

When they become vulnerable, it is our responsibility to ensure that they are not left behind. Supporting a national silver alert strategy is one way

we can fulfill that responsibility. It's a practical measure that has the potential to save lives.

It is a compassionate response to a growing challenge as our population ages, and it is an opportunity for governments at all levels to work together in a co-ordinated and effective way.

So, honourable Speaker, I will be supporting this resolution. I support encouraging the federal government to move forward with a national silver alert framework, I support improving co-ordination across provinces and I support strengthening the systems that protect vulnerable Canadians. But I do so with the expectation that this will not end with the passage of a motion.

It must lead to action, real, tangible improvements that ensure that when the next person goes missing, the response is immediate, comprehensive and effective, because the reality is that there will be a next time.

And when that moment comes, we must be able to say that we did everything within our power to ensure that the outcome is different. That is our responsibility, that is our duty and that is why this resolution deserves the support of this House.

Thank you, honourable deputy Speaker.

**MLA Billie Cross (Seine River):** What a robust round of applause. I just want to put some words on the record to support the member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott), but also to support members of our caucus who have family members living with dementia.

And so they understand day to day what that means, what that looks like. And there's always that fear that maybe it's their family member who will be the one to go missing.

And so based on listening to all—everybody in the House today, I think there's an agreement right across this Chamber, which is a welcome thing for a change because that doesn't always happen, that we need to protect Manitobans, and I'd love to see us actually come together today and do just that.

And I do believe that the member for Kildonan-River East, knowing who she is, her tenacity, that this will be actionable. This isn't just putting something forward, and this is not a political wedge. This is actually taking care of Manitobans, because they expect their loved ones to be safe, especially seniors and vulnerable adults who may not always be able to protect themselves.

When someone living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia or another cognitive impairment goes missing, every minute matters. Families are left in fear, and delays can have serious consequences.

We have members in this Chamber that know what that means. They have a lived experience of a family member going missing and never knowing what happened. I do not want to see that happen to any Manitoban. I can't even imagine living through that.

Silver alerts are practical, proven ways to respond quickly, sharing critical information across phones, media and communities, so more people can help bring someone home safely. Right now, there is no consistent system across Canada.

Different provinces take different approaches, leaving gaps in co-ordination and communication when time is critical. I can appreciate that a former PC member brought forward that work here in Manitoba.

Now let's all build on it together. Let's make this a national strategy that has consistency, that is timely, that makes sense.

You know, Canada's population is aging. That is something we're all acutely aware of. The largest generation in our history are entering their senior years, and more families are facing the realities of dementia and cognitive decline. There is a need for a stronger, co-ordinated response.

Families across the country have been really clear. They want better tools, they want faster action and a greater peace of mind when a loved one goes missing.

Our government is already taking action to support seniors here at home, strengthening health care, expanding home care, increasing—investing in long-term care and creating a new Seniors' Advocate. And I was proud to be a part of a team of MLAs from across all parties to hire that advocate, to ensure that they get that office set up properly, which takes time. And every member in this Chamber knows exactly what that means.

Nobody's delaying anything, nobody's stalling anything. We are doing it right.

You know, this motion builds on the work that we've already started by calling for a national approach that ensures consistent, co-ordinated action no matter where someone lives in Canada.

Let's be pioneers here in Manitoba. Let's push for something that the rest of the—of Canada can benefit from.

Because protecting vulnerable people isn't just about policy, it's about making sure no family has to face those critical moments alone.

You know, the purpose of this is to develop and advance a renewed national silver alert strategy that strengthens protections for missing vulnerable adults and is co-ordinated right across our country. I don't think anybody in this Chamber can argue otherwise. I don't think anybody here cannot vote in support of this resolution.

And I'm going to be honest, I will be really disappointed if we talk this out today, because I don't think there's a need to that. I don't think it's a political win for anybody not to support this resolution. I don't care who brought it forward, whether it would be our caucus or another. Sometimes as legislative members, we need to stand up and do the right thing.

So I'm going to sit down, honourable deputy Speaker, with the hope that everybody in this Chamber lets us call the question and we vote in support of this so we can start moving forward with a national strategy that protects Canadian citizens.

Thank you.

**Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods):** Hello, honourable deputy Speaker. I am really pleased with this legislation—or resolution—to come forward.

I—imagine a loved one—your parent, your grandparent, a neighbour—leaving home one day, not finding their way back.

I personally had my mother-in-law leave the personal-care home in Souris and she actually passed by my own house because I lived down the street. But I seen—I didn't see her at the time—but I seen this whole commotion. And in a small town, people realized this elderly lady walking down the street with her walker and no coat on in the middle of winter, there was an issue.

So the people pulled over to—a small town, again, everyone knows everyone. So by then, I was notified and went to meet her and to return her to the personal-care home. I just can't imagine if she would have gone where no one would have seen her in that weather, with no clothing whatsoever hardly on.

So I understand how important this can be and how a silver alert system is very, very important to have across the country, because not only does it happen in Manitoba, it happens across Canada.

And, actually, 60 per cent of patients with Alzheimer's will at some point just leave or run away.

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Mrs. Robbins:** Excuse me.

Anyway, I want to thank the MP Raquel Dancho, that is bringing forward Bill C-263 to the Parliament and on March 10, 2026, to establish a national silver alert framework in Canada.

The bill would ensure authorities can quickly alert the public when a vulnerable senior goes missing, allowing communities to ask—

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member would have eight minutes remaining.

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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, April 14, 2026**

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