



**Third Session – Forty-Third Legislature**

**of the**

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Tom Lindsey  
Speaker*



**Vol. LXXX No. 54A – 10 a.m., Tuesday, May 12, 2026**

ISSN 0542-5492

**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
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DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
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KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
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LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
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MOYES, Mike, Hon.	Riel	NDP
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NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
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WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	The Pas-Kameesak	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 12, 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, Anishininewuk, 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

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

**MLA David Pankratz (Deputy Government House Leader):** Could you please call for second reading and debate Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act; followed by, at 10:30 or sooner, if we conclude debate on Bill 300, call Bill 301, The Westminster United Church Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act.

**The Speaker:** It has been announced that we will proceed to second reading of Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act; followed by second reading of Bill 301, The Westminster United Church Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act, at 10:30 or sooner.

## SECOND READINGS—PRIVATE BILLS

**Bill 300—The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act**

**The Speaker:** So, now second reading of Bill 300.

*French spoken*

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** Je, Député Loiselle, avec l'appui du député de Lagimodière, propose la deuxième lecture et le renvoi en comité du Projet de loi 300, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Fondation dénommée « The Winnipeg Foundation »; The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act.

*Translation*

*I, Member Loiselle, seconded by the member from Lagimodière, move that Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act, be read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.*

*Motion presented.*

**MLA Loiselle:** Happy Manitoba Day to you and everyone, the day the government of Manitoba ratified the Manitoba act and Manitoba becoming the first province to join Canada after confederation. So it's a day that we can all be proud of.

So, Honourable Speaker, The Winnipeg Foundation should be representative of all Winnipeggers in Manitoban. The foundation wants to create a community for all and this is why it is important that the foundation remains current in the work that it does so it can continue to meet the unique needs of each community.

Removing the mayor from the board will support the foundation in its goal of being as apolitical and as inclusive and diverse as possible. Digitizing their financial recordings will allow the foundation to be more accessible to the people of Winnipeg.

*French spoken*

Donc, l'Honorable Président, la Loi sur la Fondation de Winnipeg est modifiée de deux façons : premièrement, le maire de la ville de Winnipeg n'est plus tenu d'être membre du conseil d'administration de la fondation; deuxièmement, les renseignements concernant la vérification des états financiers de la fondation doivent être publiés sur son site Web. À l'heure actuelle, ces renseignements

doivent être publiés dans un journal et des copies du rapport du vérificateur doivent être fournies sur demande.

### **Translation**

*Honourable Speaker, The Winnipeg Foundation Act is amended in two ways: first, the mayor of the City of Winnipeg is no longer required to serve on the foundation's board of directors; second, information regarding the audit of the foundation's financial statements must be published on its website. Currently, this information must be published in a newspaper, and copies of the auditor's report must be provided upon request.*

### **English**

Honourable Speaker, The Winnipeg Foundation has been a cornerstone of community support in our province for more than a century. Founded in 1921, it is the oldest community foundation in Canada and has played a vital role in strengthening Winnipeg and communities across Manitoba. Through the generosity of donors, the foundation has built a lasting legacy and now manages an endowment that is supporting over 1,000 charitable organizations each year through those funds.

Over time, it has contributed more than \$500 million in grants supporting initiatives in health, education, arts and culture, environment and community services. The foundation has also shown leadership in responding to emerging needs, whether through COVID-19 emergency support, reconciliation-focused funding or innovative programs like Fast Pitch that connect business and the charitable sector. Its research and reporting, including the saint-Vital Signs initiative, help provide a clear picture of the needs and opportunities within our community.

Honourable Speaker, The Winnipeg Foundation represents the very best of Manitoba's spirit of generosity, partnership and community building, and its impact continues to be felt across the province every single year.

### **French spoken**

L'Honorable Président, nous voulons tous que les gens de Winnipeg et de partout au Manitoba puissent s'épanouir dans leur communauté et se sentir partie intégrante d'« Un Manitoba ». Et la Fondation de Winnipeg est une pionnière dans la concrétisation de cette vision.

La Fondation de Winnipeg place la communauté au premier plan depuis plus de 100 ans, et elle est

devenue l'une des plus importantes fondations, non seulement à Winnipeg, mais aussi au Canada. En favorisant la philanthropie, en créant les partenariats et en soutenant divers organismes de bienfaisance, la Fondation de Winnipeg vise à être un chef de file dans le renforcement du bien-être communautaire. La fondation partage des valeurs importantes avec notre gouvernement : soutenir les familles, les aider à s'épanouir et bâtir nos communautés. La fondation souhaite créer une communauté inclusive pour tous, et c'est pourquoi il est important qu'elle demeure à jour dans le travail qu'elle accomplit, afin de continuer à répondre aux besoins uniques de chaque communauté.

### **Translation**

*Honourable Speaker, we all want the people of Winnipeg and across Manitoba to thrive in their communities and feel like an integral part of one Manitoba. And The Winnipeg Foundation is a pioneer in making this vision a reality.*

*The Winnipeg Foundation has put the community first for over 100 years and has become one of the most important foundations, not only in Winnipeg but also in Canada. By fostering philanthropy, building partnerships and supporting various charitable organizations, The Winnipeg Foundation aims to be a leader in strengthening community well-being. The foundation shares important values with our government: supporting families, helping them thrive and building our communities. The foundation seeks to create an inclusive community for all, which is why it is important for it to stay current in the work it does, so that it can continue to meet the unique needs of each community.*

### **English**

Honourable Speaker, communities develop and change over time. Winnipeg's population has increased exponentially, and, with that, the city has grown to be a beautifully diverse and multicultural mosaic. Established in 1921, The Winnipeg Foundation is the oldest foundation at over 100 years old and it has historically adapted to the city's evolving communities.

Now, The Winnipeg Foundation Act was amended in 1943, 1980, 1990, 2004 and again in 2011. These proposed amendments to the act will support the foundation in the changes in their methods of governance, so that the board can be as representative of all Winnipeggers as possible.

\* (10:10)

**French spoken**

L'Honorable Président, le retrait du maire du conseil d'administration aidera la fondation à atteindre son objectif d'être aussi apolitique, inclusive et diverse que possible. Le conseil d'administration de la Fondation de Winnipeg vise à être aussi apolitique que possible et, comme nous le savons tous, la fonction de maire est un poste politique. Le conseil d'administration de la Fondation de Winnipeg cherche également à être aussi inclusif et diversifié que possible. Le conseil de la fondation vise à atteindre, d'ailleurs, la parité entre les genres et à inclure autant de communautés de Winnipeg que possible.

Le conseil cherche aussi à recruter des personnes possédant des compétences particulières dans le domaine juridique, comptable, culturelle ou linguistique, entre autres. Winnipeg est une ville merveilleusement diversifiée et multiculturelle. Ainsi, le retrait du maire du conseil d'administration de la fondation permet une meilleure représentation de la mosaïque culturelle de Winnipeg.

**Translation**

*Honourable Speaker, the mayor's removal from the board of directors will help the foundation achieve its goal of being as non-partisan, inclusive and diverse as possible. The Winnipeg Foundation's board of directors aims to be as non-partisan as possible, and, as we all know, the office of mayor is a political one. The Winnipeg Foundation's board of directors also seeks to be as inclusive and diverse as possible. The foundation's board aims, in fact, to achieve gender parity and to include as many Winnipeg communities as possible.*

*The board also seeks to recruit individuals with specific expertise in the legal, accounting, cultural or linguistic fields, among others. Winnipeg is a wonderfully diverse and multicultural city. Thus, the mayor's removal from the foundation's board of directors allows for better representation of Winnipeg's cultural mosaic.*

**English**

Honourable Speaker, these amendments will support The Winnipeg Foundation in its modernization and accessibility efforts. Digitizing their financial records will allow the foundation to be more accessible to the people of Winnipeg.

Currently, audit information about the foundation's financial statements must be published in a newspaper, and copies of the auditor's report must be

provided on request. These amendments will require that audit information about the foundation's financial statements be published on its website.

Winnipeg is home to over 850,000 people and not all of them read the paper, Honourable Speaker, so publishing their financials on their website will actually make it more accessible to Winnipeggers and Manitobans. It will also help people learn more about the incredible work The Winnipeg Foundation does every year to better our communities.

Merci, l'Honorable Président. [*Thank you, Honourable Speaker*]. Miigwech. Thank you.

**Questions**

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

The floor is now open for questions.

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** I'd like to thank the member for bringing forward this bill. We do have a few questions, though.

Has the member—regarding the removal of the mayor from the board of directors—has the member consulted with the mayor's office, or the City of Winnipeg or current councillors about this provision of the bill?

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** Well, actually, The Winnipeg Foundation has consulted with the City on this, consulted with the mayor. The goal of The Winnipeg Foundation is to become as apolitical as possible and, by removing the mayor from the board of The Winnipeg Foundation, it thus achieves that goal.

So, yes, The Winnipeg Foundation and its lawyers have consulted with the City on this.

**MLA Shannon Corbett (Transcona):** Thank you to the member for St. Boniface for bringing forward this bill.

Can the member elaborate on what it was that inspired them to introduce this bill that amends the act related to The Winnipeg Foundation?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, thank you to the member for that question.

Actually, I had the chance, over the years, to serve on a number of boards, including a very particular foundation called Francofonds, which is the francophone foundation here in Manitoba. And, through that work, I had the chance to get to know The Winnipeg Foundation a little bit. And a couple of years ago, all MLAs here received a letter from The Winnipeg Foundation asking for someone to move this bill forward.

So, having a certain relationship with boards and foundations, I decided that it was time to continue working with The Winnipeg Foundation and to get this bill moved forward.

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Can the member tell this House whether he believes that forcing Manitobans to go to a website to get information on the financial status of the foundation is better than publicly putting the knowledge in newspapers in the province?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, thank you for that question.

I'd like to remind the member that the Winnipeg Free Press is actually available online as well and available digitally.

So we know that all Manitobans today have access to the Internet, whether it is at home or on their phone or whatnot. So I think the goal of The Winnipeg Foundation here is to make their information more accessible to all Manitobans for greater transparency.

Thank you.

**MLA Corbett:** The Winnipeg Foundation has a great relationship with the community as a whole.

Could the member from St. Boniface please explain to us how the changes they're suggesting will improve that connection to the community?

**MLA Loiselle:** Thank you for that question.

As we know, foundations actually build communities across Manitoba. Not only is The Winnipeg Foundation the oldest foundation in Canada, it's one of many here in Manitoba. From all corners of Manitoba, I can think of a number of foundations that help build the fabric of Manitoba. Governments can't do it alone, so Winnipeg Foundation, its goal as the largest foundation is to help continue building community here in Manitoba.

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** I'd like to ask the member what the rationale behind removing the mayor from The Winnipeg Foundation was.

**MLA Loiselle:** Thank you for that excellent question from the MLA from La Vérendrye.

Of course, The Winnipeg Foundation, its goal is to be as transparent as possible and as apolitical as possible. So they've consulted with the City of Winnipeg and with the mayor on this by removing the mayor from the board of the foundation. It now creates an apolitical board, and, in fact, they want to build a greater board, a more multicultural board, a board that has parity on it.

So I think that, you know, removing the mayor is a good thing and it's sending the foundation in the right direction. Thank you.

**MLA Corbett:** Can the member explain how these proposed changes will support The Winnipeg Foundation in staying current in the work that it does for the community?

**MLA Loiselle:** Another excellent question for the MLA from Transcona. I think everybody's on fire today; it must be Manitoba Day or something.

But, of course, The Winnipeg Foundation, its goal is to be as transparent as possible, as inclusive as possible. In fact, they're looking for parity on their board from now on. They're looking to include, you know, members from different communities onto their board. So their work is ongoing, and, as I said in my comments earlier, The Winnipeg Foundation Act has been modified over the years because times are always changing, and The Winnipeg Foundation tries to stay current with the times.

**Mrs. Cook:** Can the member tell us, what is the current makeup of the board of directors, and who is currently required to be on the board, and how that will change with the removal of the mayor?

**MLA Loiselle:** So, currently, The Winnipeg Foundation board is as inclusive as possible. They're always trying to look for certain expertise to be on the board, so whether it's someone coming with legal experience or accounting experience or experience from different cultural communities in Winnipeg. We know that Winnipeg is a very multicultural city and that all cultural communities should be represented on The Winnipeg Foundation board, which is not just the oldest foundation in Canada, but actually the largest foundation in Manitoba as well.

So the makeup is very multicultural, and now they're trying to work through a—you know, a process to make it a board that has parity, so an equal number of women and men as well.

**MLA Corbett:** How will these proposed changes support The Winnipeg Foundation in strengthening its transparency with the community as a whole?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, as I've said before, The Winnipeg Foundation is quite a large foundation. Over the years, they've given out hundreds of millions of dollars to the community for a number of programs and they want to make sure that, moving forward, that all communities in Winnipeg are supported, that the transparency shows that good work.

I believe that 4.5 per cent of, you know, their funds have to go out annually, so, by being more transparent with Winnipeggers and everybody sees that the general community, the general communities in Winnipeg, the multicultural aspect of Winnipeg is supported through the good work of The Winnipeg Foundation.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** The last answer from the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle), who I might remind this House was also chair of the all-party committee to see what could keep newspapers healthy in Manitoba, is proposing legislation today that takes the requirement to remove advertising from newspapers in Manitoba.

Can the member please explain again his rationale for this?

\* (10:20)

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, once again, I want to remind the member that the Winnipeg Free Press is available online through something called the Internet. It's something that might be of news to the member, but, you know, by making the Winnipeg Free Press more available online, it's available to more Manitobans. I know that a lot of Manitobans like to get their news through the Internet. So the goal of this bill is to make The Winnipeg Foundation more accessible and more available online to all Winnipeggers and Manitobans.

**MLA Corbett:** Can the member from St. Boniface tell us how the absence of the mayor as a mandatory member of the foundation allows for the board to be more inclusive?

**MLA Loiselle:** Thank you for that excellent question from the member for Transcona (MLA Corbett).

So, as we know, the mayor is a political position. And, by removing the mayor from the board of

The Winnipeg Foundation, it actually makes room for more multicultural diversity on the board. It makes room on the board for, perhaps, better parity, because it is a goal that The Winnipeg Foundation is trying to achieve. And I think it makes also the point that, by being as apolitical as possible and as inclusive as possible, The Winnipeg Foundation represents who it's trying to work with and for.

Thank you.

**Mr. Narth:** Can the member tell the Assembly about some of the great work that is done by The Winnipeg Foundation and all of its community foundations that it supports around our province?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, that's a good—great question. In fact, gives me the chance to highlight the excellent work of The Winnipeg Foundation, which does excellent work here in Winnipeg on a cultural level, educational level.

It's helped over the years with housing programs, nutrition programs. In fact, I believe I was discussing with one member this morning, there's a conservation fund to help support Manitoba parks.

So The Winnipeg Foundation, being the largest foundation in Manitoba, has the money to make the difference when communities need it the most. Governments can't do it alone. We know this. So The Winnipeg Foundation is there to support, in all aspects, in fact, with sometimes bridge funding, long-term funding, short-term funding, to help communities achieve their goals here in Manitoba and Winnipeg.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The time for question period has expired.

### Debate

**The Speaker:** So the floor is now open for debate.

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** Thank you, Honourable Speaker, and if you'll indulge me for just a moment, I, too, would like to wish everyone a happy Manitoba Day. I know we have a practice that we do not comment on what members in the Chamber are wearing, so I will just say generally that there is some very nice Manitoba tartan in the Chamber today, and it looks quite sharp.

I'd like to thank the member for St. Boniface for bringing forward this public bill. You know, we know that, periodically, there are updates that need to be made to governing legislation for some of the

institutions in our province. This is one of those occasions.

But it does give us an opportunity to reflect on some of the great work of The Winnipeg Foundation and its long and storied history in our province. And, as the member mentioned, The Winnipeg Foundation is Canada's first community foundation and acts as a permanent endowment to support local charitable causes.

Based on data from a couple of years ago, at that point, it was managing approximately \$2.4 billion in assets. And, last year, they distributed \$115 million, supporting roughly 1,000 charitable organizations. They do incredible work at The Winnipeg Foundation.

It was originally founded with a \$100,000 gift from banker William Forbes Alloway, and its first grants in 1922 included \$6,000 that was shared among five organizations, including the Children's Hospital. What a long way The Winnipeg Foundation has come, Honourable Speaker.

In 2021, the organization marked 100 years of operation and reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening community well-being. The foundation pools gifts to create permanent endowment funds, distributing the investment earnings to charities. It grants across a number of program areas, including arts and culture, community services, animal welfare and the environment, education, health and recreation. The Winnipeg Foundation also supports Endow Manitoba, a network of 56 community foundations across the province.

So, in looking into some of the work that The Winnipeg Foundation does and the legislation that governs them, I learned about some of the projects they funded in the last year alone ranged from major capital projects, like the Anne Oake recovery centre, Ka Ni Kanichihk, Willow Place and the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre. They also funded a number of arts, culture and heritage grants, including grants to the Manitoba Theatre for Young People, the Métis Historical Society of Manitoba and Winnipeg Youth Orchestras. They provided funding last year to Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, Centre Flavie, Downtown Community Safety Partnership and Meals on Wheels.

They also take care of grants in the area of environment and animal welfare. Last year, they funded Ducks Unlimited, Take Pride Winnipeg! and the Canadian Animal Blood Bank Foundation. They fund a number of grants in the area of health,

wellness and recreation, including grants to the Manitoba Brain Injury Association, the Robb Nash Project and the YM-YWCA of Winnipeg, as well as a number of grants in the area of literacy, education and employment.

And, as the MLA for Roblin, I just want to mention a couple of grants that were provided to organizations in the constituency of Roblin, including the Charleswood 55 Plus Active Living Centre and Hood and Dagger Productions, and I may have missed others as well. Thank you to The Winnipeg Foundation for the work they're doing across our city, across our province and also in the constituency of Roblin.

The member for St. Boniface (MLA Loisel) touched on this in his remarks, but the most notable thing about The Winnipeg Foundation is its role as the architect of the community foundation movement in Canada. Now Manitoba is home to dozens of active, very strong community foundations. In the constituency of Roblin, we have the Headingley Community Foundation. Established in 1921, The Winnipeg Foundation is the first of its kind.

It's also had a number of notable milestones I'll just touch on quickly. In 2022, the foundation received a \$500-million bequest from a local business owner, Miriam Bergen. This was the largest gift ever made to a Canadian charity by an individual and was expected to nearly double the foundation's annual grant-making capacity over time. And that just speaks to the generosity of Winnipeggers and of Manitobans generally, Honourable Speaker. And I'm grateful that we have an organization like The Winnipeg Foundation that can enable that generosity to continue over generations.

The Winnipeg Foundation also has a history of accepting community contributions even in small amounts. Historically, one of their most celebrated moments occurred back in 1924 when they received a gift—an anonymous gift—of just \$15. This donation became symbolic, establishing the foundation's core philosophy that every gift, regardless of size, matters to the community's long-term health. In total, the foundation has distributed over \$700 million in cumulative grants since its inception, fundamentally shaping our city's social, cultural and environmental landscape.

With that, Honourable Speaker, I believe I'll conclude my remarks on the good work of The Winnipeg Foundation, and we're ready to allow this bill to come to a second reading vote.

**The Speaker:** No further members wishing to debate?

Then is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**The Speaker:** Question before the House, then, is second reading of Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act.

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

**Bill 301—The Westminster United Church Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act**

**The Speaker:** As previously announced, we will now move on to second reading of Bill 301, The Westminster United Church Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act.

**MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo):** I move, seconded by the MLA for Lagimodière, that Bill 301, The Westminster United Church Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act, be read for the second time.

\* (10:30)

***Motion presented.***

**MLA Compton:** This feels a little extra special for me today to be bringing this bill forward on behalf of Westminster United Church. As someone who was raised in the United Church and whose mother is now a retired United Church minister, it just holds a little extra special place in my heart to be able to be bringing this forward on their behalf.

So this bill, Bill 301, The Westminster United Church Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act, is truly a bill that is about making practical updates to the governance of the Westminster United Church Foundation. This is about ensuring continuity and clarity in its leadership structure. It strengthens accountability by clearly outlining trustee succession and ensuring decisions can continue without disruption. The legislation will also ensure that, if the foundation is ever dissolved, its assets will continue to serve the public good by being directed to registered charities.

This bill respects the long-standing history and legacy of Westminster United Church while ensuring its foundation is equipped to operate under modern governance standards. It supports the ongoing work of a community institution that has served Manitobans for generations through outreach, cultural programming and support for families.

Strong community organizations play an essential role in building connection, resilience—resilient communities, and this legislation helps ensure that they continue that work. This is also about stewardship, making sure resources are managed responsibly and continue to benefit Manitobans now and into the future. And I think many folks can attest to the fabric of our province. And, today being Manitoba Day, we think of what are the institutions, what are the churches, what are the different religions and spiritualities that have—that are part of the foundation of what is Manitoba.

And we know the United Church has a rich history, and we know that Westminster United Church has been around for many, many, many years. And so I know our government is committed to working in partnership with community organizations and ensuring that they have the tools and the structures needed to succeed.

So, going back specifically to Bill 301, what are the practical changes that they're asking for? So the amendment that they're asking for is that, if the immediate past chair position is vacant, the vice-chair of general board—of the general board of Westminster United Church is to serve on the board of trustees. So this is making sure, when we talk about succession planning or role planning, that there isn't a gap so that decisions can continue to be made should that position be vacated. Because, currently, that would create barriers and hiccups to processes moving forward in the foundation.

In addition, the foundation's assets are to be distributed to registered charities, as determined by the board of trustees, if the foundation is dissolved. So the second part is speaking to a current reality of how their legislation is—is, should the foundation dissolve, all the assets are to be directed to Winnipeg presbytery, or the—which is an entity that no longer exists.

So I think you can appreciate how this could be problematic for an organization, a foundation that truly aims to serve the community and serve people, that, should they dissolve right now, they have no more capacity to actually determine where their assets would be sent to. So this is truly about updating things. Maybe think of it as organizational estate planning might be another way to think of it.

But this is something that the church, the folks from Westminster United Church Foundation, they've been working to have this update for many years now. They've brought it forth to quite a few different

governments over the years. And I know we're—our government is happy to be able to support them in bringing it forward. And I know we're really hoping that this can be a non-confrontational—a way we can all, in this Chamber, work together and support Manitobans that are bringing work to us and asking us to move forward on it.

There is history around their incorporation act. They've been incorporated since 1968. And they have also had a previous update in—or amendment back in 1990, similar to The Winnipeg Foundation that my colleague from St. Boniface has previously spoken to as well. And when we think of Westminster United Church and the significant role that they play within Winnipeg, within the Wolseley community, I'd like to just lift up to the Chamber here or remind folks some of the role that Westminster has played.

So, in the early 1900s, Winnipeg was experiencing rapid economic expansion and population growth, with new neighbourhoods developing across the city. And as families settled in areas like Wolseley, there was a growing need for community institutions that could bring people together. In 1909, members of Westminster Presbyterian Church made the decision to construct a new church building to serve this growing population. The site at the corner of Westminster Avenue and Maryland Street was carefully chosen for its accessibility to local families and its central role in the neighbourhood.

The building, which opened in 1912, was designed by renowned architect J.H.G. Russell and constructed using Manitoba Tyndall stone, giving it both durability and a distinct architectural identity. It's designed in the late Gothic revival style, and the church features pointed arches, detailed stonework and a prominent rose window that has become a recognizable feature of the building. Its innovative design included a steel and cast-iron structural system, allowing for a large, open interior space without pillars, making it ideal for large gatherings, services and community events. And then the church also became known for its exceptional acoustics and its Casavant pipe organ, one of only a few of its kind in Winnipeg, further establishing it as a cultural landmark.

At its height, Westminster was one of the largest congregations in western Canada, serving not only as a place of worship but as a central gathering space for the community. Over time, as Winnipeg has continued to evolve, Westminster adapted alongside it, remaining a constant presence while responding to the

changing needs of Manitobans. And today the church stands not only as a historic building, but as a symbol of generations of community life, service and connection that have taken place within the walls.

Westminster United Church continues to be making contributions to Manitoba and Winnipeg. For generations, they've served, as we've said, as a hub for community life, but also, as we are evolving as a province, as a city, new things have evolved within the church. Like, they have now child care—is something that is a significant role within the community; as we know, child care is often discussed in this place. And since—in 1965, the Westminster's child—or care centre was established in response to a growing need for child care within the community. So some could say they were ahead of their time.

What began as a small initiative to support working parents has grown into a well-established, professional child-care program that continues to serve families today. The centre has played an important role in child development, offering a safe and supportive environment where children can learn, grow and build social connections. It reflects Westminster's long-standing commitment to meeting the practical needs of the community.

And Westminster has also made significant contributions to youth engagement over the years. Through recreational programming, leadership activities and the use of the gymnasium and community spaces, the church provided opportunities for young people to develop skills, build friendships and stay connected to their community.

\* (10:40)

So, Honourable Speaker, I see my time is starting—is coming to a close. And I'd just, again, like to lift up how this is an amendment that the church foundation has been working for years to have updated. They're wanting to be good stewards of their assets, of the building, of the space that they're responsible for. And they want to make sure that, should some changes happen down the road, that processes are in place, that their good work can continue to help others in their legacy.

So, thank you.

### Questions

**The Speaker:** A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from

another party; this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question. No question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods):** Can the member explain why this is the right time to modernize the governance structure?

**MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo):** I thank the member from Spruce Woods for this question.

Yes. Right now is the right time. Well, they might actually argue the right time was maybe 10 or 12 years ago. Winnipeg Presbytery is—no longer exists. And so, if an entity no longer exists, but they are the ones that have control over should the foundation dissolve, that can be very problematic. So now is absolutely an essential time for this amendment to pass.

Thank you.

**Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology):** River Heights is a location in which there's a lot of this sort of work going on. I've been engaged with my own community around the same sorts of issues.

Could the member speak to why it is important to update governance structure for Westminster United Church Foundation in order to ensure continuity and accountability moving forward?

**MLA Compton:** I thank my colleague for that question.

The United Church, in and of itself, is based similarly to government. They really value having clear policies, procedures and governance structure. And, if that structure is no longer serving, if it creates a challenge in accountability and responsibility, then things need to be updated and changed.

And now is absolutely the right time for this amendment to happen so that the Westminster foundation can continue to be accountable and responsible in how they conduct themselves to do the good work that they do.

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** Can the minister explain how the proposed changes will improve continuity and stability on the foundation's board of trustees?

**MLA Compton:** Oh, I thank the member opposite for my new title, but I will just remind them I am still just a member.

But, right now, I believe there has actually been a situation where, in their current governance structure, and I believe—pardon me, I'll grab my notes here—that when, the reason they have that appointment that if a past president I believe it is—or past chair is no longer available, to have the vice president step in, I believe they had an instance where there was an actual hole and they weren't able to move forward some of their business.

So this is to make sure that the—

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

**MLA Moroz:** Westminster United Church has been a cornerstone of the Wolseley community for more than a century.

Could the member please share why it's important to support institutions with such a long-standing history of service to Manitobans, to update their mandate moving forward?

**MLA Compton:** Thank you for that question.

I think many members in this House can agree that a church is not just a building. And when a church has been around for as long as Westminster United Church has been—it started as a Presbyterian Church and became a United Church. It is part of the community's foundation, part of the fabric of day-to-day life, with their child-care centre, with their youth programming. I'm quite certain there's different musical events that happen. It is a space for community connection.

And we know, especially in this day and age, to have safe spaces that are inclusive and welcoming to all Manitobans are so important. And we want to support organizations and groups and churches that—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mrs. Robbins:** I will—I would like to ask the member, how will the updated act better protect charitable assets and donors?

**MLA Compton:** I thank the member for that question.

As I previously mentioned, the current structure has that, should the foundation dissolve, all assets go to Winnipeg Presbytery, which is an entity that no longer exists. And so by changing it—the way the amendment reads—is it allows that, should they dissolve, all the assets, all the donations, everything that is at their discretion to manage and be stewards of, they can send them off or move them to where is appropriate that's in alignment with their mission

and continues to do the good work that those assets, gifts, donations were given under.

This is keeping autonomy—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**MLA Moroz:** I want to touch on what I think is a most thoughtful part of this bill, and that is that it ensures if the foundation is ever dissolved, its assets continue to support registered charities.

Could you please explain why this kind of stewardship and protection of charitable resources is so critically important moving forward?

**MLA Compton:** I thank my colleague for that question.

And we know, in our own estate planning, you have gifts that you want to give to charitable organizations or in your ongoing day-to-day life, you like to know where your gifts are going, where your donations are going, supporting the causes and organizations you believe in.

And that's what this—that's one of the things this amendment is talking about, is making sure that, should the foundation dissolve, that they can intentionally disperse of their assets in alignment to other organizations or other charities that continue the good work that they have been doing. They want to be able to have the autonomy to make sure that they are directing those assets and resources in a responsible way and in a way that's in alignment—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mrs. Stone:** Can the member speak to the broader role that churches and faith-based organizations play within Winnipeg and our broader communities?

**MLA Compton:** I thank the member for that question.

We know the makeup of Manitoba is very diverse and we become more and more diverse every year, every day. And we have some long-standing faith-based churches, various denominations, that even their own evolution in our own history as a province—Westminster United Church began as a Presbyterian church.

The United Church is a unification of the Methodists, of the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians. And so much of the church's own history is kind of similar to Manitoba, in that it is about collaboration, coming together as a community, evolving and adapting—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**MLA Moroz:** The Westminster Children's Care Centre is one example of how the church has supported families and children over the years.

Could the member highlight how initiatives like this demonstrate the ongoing impact of community organizations?

**MLA Compton:** I thank my colleague for that question.

We know that having access to needs—or to things like child care in the community is meeting the needs of the community. And churches, other faith-based organizations or community spaces are so important in our communities to make sure that we are bringing communities together, that we are bringing people together, that we are creating a solid foundation for our young people to support them to be healthy members of our society as they continue to grow and evolve.

And churches often are about meeting people where they are. I know, in the United Church, a big part is about meeting people where they are with open—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mrs. Robbins:** Can the member outline how this bill will ensure accountability and transparency in the management of the Westminster United Church Foundation?

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Transcona—Tuxedo.

\* (10:50)

**MLA Compton:** Everything about this amendment is about transparency and accountability and responsibility. The Westminster foundation has been working for years to get this legislation updated to make sure that they are working in accordance in a good way. When there is an entity that is part of their legislation that no longer exists, that's a problem, and so it's very important that we pass this amendment today to support this foundation that is doing good work, has done good work, is a significant contributor to the community, to the foundation of the—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

The honourable member—no, the honourable member for Spruce Woods (Mrs. Robbins).

**Mrs. Robbins:** How does this legislation ensure the charitable resources remain focused on serving Manitobans and the community causes?

**MLA Compton:** The whole point—one of the main points is that, should the foundation ever find itself that it needs to dissolve in the future, that it can ensure that the allocation or the disbursement of their resources of—whether it's the building, whatever assets that still remain under their jurisdiction—that they're disbursed in a way that is in alignment with their values, with their mission, that continues to serve people. They want to make sure that, should they no longer be, that what is left still, their legacy lives on.

And—yes. So, thank you.

**The Speaker:** The time for questions has expired.

### Debate

**The Speaker:** The floor is open for debate.

**Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods):** I'm pleased to rise today to speak in support of Bill 301, The Westminster United Church Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act. At its core, this is a modest and practical bill. It updates the governance structure of the Westminster United Church Foundation to ensure—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** If I could just interrupt for a moment, we have some guests in the public gallery that need to leave right away. So we have from Woodlands School, 45 grade 5 students under the direction of Chris McLean. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. King).

And we welcome you all here this morning.

\* \* \*

**Mrs. Robbins:** Okay. The institution behind the bill deserves broader recognition. This legislation gives us an opportunity to reflect on the important role that the Westminster United Church and faith-based charitable organizations more broadly have played in Manitoba's history and continue to play in communities across our province today.

Westminster United Church has deep roots in Winnipeg and in Manitoba's social and spiritual life. Like many historic churches in our province, it was established during a period when churches were not simply places of worship but also community anchors. They were gathering places, centres of volunteerism, providers of charity and often among the first 'institutions' to respond to hardship in their communities. Long before governments developed the

modern social programs we know today, churches and religious charities were feeding families, caring for newcomers, supporting the sick, helping the poor and creating spaces where people could find connection and support. That history matters.

I also want to spend a moment talking about the United churches in Spruce Woods and in Westman. In southwestern Manitoba, United churches such as Knox United Church in Brandon and other long-standing congregations reflect the deep roots of faith communities and prairie development. Many of these churches began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as Presbyterian and Methodist congregations serving growing railway and agriculture centres.

When church union took place in 1925, they became part of the United Church of Canada, but their role in the community life remained just as strong. Churches like the Knox United became not only places of worship but also centres of music, volunteerism and social support. Over generations, they've hosted community programming, support at 'loca' charities and provided spaces where people could come together during times of 'proprat' and hardship. In many ways, these churches reflect the broader story of southwestern Manitoba, itself communities built on co-operation, service and looking out for one another.

In Manitoba, churches were instrumental in helping immigrant communities establish themselves. They operated soup kitchens, clothing drives, youth programs, seniors outreach, daycare programs and community events. They supported refugees and new Canadians as they built lives in our province. They offered comfort during economic downturns, floods, fires and personal tragedies. And, importantly, they did this work for non-profit—not for recognition and not because legislation compelled them to do so, but because people in those congregations believed in serving others and strengthening their communities.

Westminster United Church has been a part of that broader tradition. The foundation associated with the church was incorporated—in 1968, and later continued under Manitoba legislation in 1990. The very existence of the foundation reflects a long-standing commitment to stewardship and 'charital' givings.

Foundations such as this are established to ensure that charitable work can continue over the long term, not simply for the generation, but for future generations as well. This is an important idea.

A charitable foundation is ultimately about legacy. It is about ensuring that resources entrusted by donors and congregants continue to support worthwhile causes and community initiatives into the future.

The people who contributed to the Westminster United Church Foundation over the years did so because they believed in strengthening their community and helping others. Bill 301 helps ensure that mission can continue in a modern-day and accountable way.

The general board of Westminster United Church is vacant—and the vice-chair may be served instead. This is a straightforward governance update, but it is an important one. Organizations need continuity. They need clear succession planning. They need the flexibility to function effectively, even during leadership transitions.

In many ways, this 'amendment' reflects good governance, principles that organizations across Manitoban—strive to implement. It recognizes that vacancies can occur and that institutions should have practical mechanisms in place to maintain effective oversight and decision making.

The second amendment concerns the dissolution provisions of the foundation under Bill 301. If the foundation is dissolved, and after all debts and liabilities are paid, any remaining assets must be distributed to registered charities as determined by the board. Again, this is a very reasonable modernization.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** If there are no further speakers, is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**The Speaker:** So the question, then, before the House is second reading of Bill 301, The Westminster United Church Foundation Incorporation Amendment Act.

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** Can I seek to see if there's leave to recognize this as unanimous, please, Honourable Speaker?

**The Speaker:** Is there leave to recognize this motion as being passed unanimously? *[Agreed]*

The motion is accordingly recorded as being passed unanimously.

\* (11:00)

Order, please.

## DEBATE ON RESOLUTIONS

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

**The Speaker:** The hour being 11 o'clock, we now move on to private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is resumption of debate on resolution No. 7, the National Strategy for Silver Alerts, standing in the honourable—standing in the name of the honourable member for Swan River, who has nine minutes remaining.

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** At its core, a silver alert is a simple idea. When a vulnerable person goes missing, we act quickly, we share information widely, and we give the public the ability to help on this very important issue. It builds on a model that Canadians already understand.

AMBER Alerts have shown us that when information is shared rapidly and directly, outcomes improve. People pay attention, communities respond, and lives are saved. The question before us is, why would we not apply that same urgency to vulnerable adults?

*Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

Here in Manitoba, we have already taken important steps. In 2017, former Brandon East MLA Len Isleifson brought forward amendments to The Missing Persons Act to establish a silver alert framework. That work made Manitoba a leader in recognizing the need for better tools to respond when vulnerable individuals go missing. It was a thoughtful—or it was thoughtful legislation, grounded in a clear understanding of public safety and community responsibility. And it reflected something important: that government has a role not just in responding to crisis but in preparing—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

I'd ask that we stop the clock. And I'd ask the member if he has a headset with him that he could use.

Thank you.

**Mr. Wowchuk:** Okay.

The previous Progressive Conservative government made investments to strengthen community-based supports, working with organizations like the

Alzheimer Society of Manitoba, to ensure individuals and families have access to information, guidance and services. Programs like First Link helped connect people earlier in their journey to the supports they needed. Investments in home care and caregiver supports recognized that safety often begins at home with the people who know and care for someone best.

These measures were not just about health, they were about stability, they were about prevention, they were about reducing the likelihood that a crisis would occur in the first place. But we also know this, no amount of planning can eliminate every risk. And even with strong supports in place, there will still be moments when someone goes missing. When that happens, the question becomes, how quickly can we respond? Because in these situations, time is not just important; it's decisive. The longer someone remains missing, the greater the risk becomes.

While Manitoba has a silver alert framework, it does not yet fully leverage the tools available to us today, particularly the ability to send immediate geotargeted alerts to mobile devices. Instead, information often relies on traditional media or delayed distribution. That approach has value, but it's not enough—not in a world where most Canadians carry a cellphone, not in a world where information can be shared instantly, and not in situations where every minute matters.

We have seen the consequences of that gap. In December, 2023, 81-year-old Earl Moberg went missing in Winnipeg. His family acted quickly. Law enforcement responded. Community members volunteered their time to search. There was no shortage of effort, but there was a limitation in how quickly and how widely information could be shared, and that limitation matters. Because somewhere, someone may have crossed paths with him. Someone may have noticed something unusual. Someone may have been able to help, but without timely information those opportunities can be lost.

Families like the Mobergs have turned their experience into advocacy, calling for a system that would notify people directly through their phones in the area where someone was last seen and it is supported by thousands of Canadians who have signed petitions and spoken out of this issue. At the national level, there is now an opportunity to act. The approach is both efficient and effective. It uses infrastructure that already exists. It allows alerts to be geographically targeted, reducing unnecessary

disruption and it ensures that people most likely to help are the ones who receive the information.

This is not about creating something entirely new, it's about improving what we already have. It's about co-ordination and it's about consistency. And it's about recognizing that public safety doesn't stop at provincial borders. People move between jurisdictions, families live in different provinces and our systems should reflect that reality. A national framework would ensure that, no matter where someone goes missing, there's a consistent, reliable approach to alerting the public. It would strengthen provincial efforts like those already in place in Manitoba and it would give families confidence that action will be taken quickly, no matter where they are. Modern alerting systems are capable of being targeted and specific. Alerts can be limited to define geographic areas, ensuring relevance and reducing unnecessary disruption.

This is not about sending more alerts, it's about sending smarter alerts. And, when weighed against the potential to save a life, the balance is clear. Honourable Deputy Speaker, the issue ultimately comes down to values. Do we believe that vulnerable individuals deserve the same urgency of response as anyone else? Do we believe that families deserve every possible tool to help find their loved ones? Do we believe that when a solution is within reach, we have a responsibility to act? I believe the answer to all of these questions is yes.

Manitoba has already shown leadership through the work of Len Isleifson and the steps taken to establish a provincial framework. Now we have an opportunity to build on that leadership, to work with our federal partners and to support a national approach and to ensure that when a vulnerable person goes missing, we are ready to respond quickly, effectively and together. Because, at the end of the day, this is not about technology, it's about jurisdiction. It's about people and it's about families and it's about making sure that when someone is lost, we do everything we can to bring them home.

Thank you.

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** It's an honour to have the chance to speak to this bill this morning, this bill which is, in my mind, about public safety, well-being and empathy.

In fact, in St. Boniface, we have a long tradition of empathy. We have the oldest hospital in western Canada, St. Boniface Hospital, which actually

celebrates its roots to 175 years this year. We have a number of seniors homes: place Despins, place Aulneau. We have Actionmarguerite. We have 400 Des Meurons, et cetera. We have a number of seniors homes, and, you know, we care for our seniors.

\* (11:10)

I remember when I was a young child, my great-grandfather, you know, Alphonse Bélanger, he went to go live with my grandparents, actually, on La Vérendrye. And I was a young child, and I remember my great-grandfather being very vibrant and very capable, liked to go for walks. Unfortunately, he developed Alzheimer's, and sometimes he'd get up at 3, 4 o'clock in the morning and go walking in St. Boniface. And, at the time, St. Boniface was still a city and we had our own police department. And the City of St. Boniface police would pick up Alphonse at 3, 4, 5 o'clock in the morning.

And it's a good thing that he was being picked up by the police and not wandering to the Seine River or the Red River and getting himself into trouble that way. But they'd pick him up and they'd bring him back home, wake up my grandparents, and then it happened again and again. And then they'd lock the doors. And my grandfather—my great-grandfather would still get up at 3, 4, 5 o'clock in the morning, find a way to unlock the doors and go walking. And it's really a good thing that he never wound up hurting himself. And it's also a good thing that the police department at that time, you know, St. Boniface being a close-knit community, knew who he was.

But, today, with, you know, technology, growing older population, we want to keep our seniors safe and we know that, sometimes, when your seniors go missing, there are faster, better ways to find them, to keep them safe. In Manitoba, we believe when somebody goes missing we go looking for them and we should use every tool at our disposal—to go and find them, just like we have AMBER Alerts across Canada.

So I think the silver alert is a great idea. I know that in my family, we could have benefited from it in the early '70s, had it been available. In fact, I will remind everybody, back in the early '70s, there used to be phones at the corner of certain streets where you could call the police—actually, those disappeared in the '70s.

#### ***French spoken***

Mais l'honorable Président, j'aimerais continuer mes remarques avec le fait que les Manitobains

s'attendent à ce que leurs proches soient en sécurité, particulièrement les personnes âgées et les adultes vulnérables qui ne sont pas toujours en mesure de se protéger eux-mêmes, comme mon arrière-grand-père, Alphonse Bélanger. Lorsqu'une personne vivant avec la maladie d'Alzheimer, la démence ou un autre trouble cognitif, chaque minute compte. Les familles vivent dans la peur, et les retards peuvent avoir de graves conséquences.

Les alertes « silver », ou argent en français, constituent un moyen pratique et éprouvé de réagir rapidement en diffusant des renseignements essentiels par téléphone, dans les médias et auprès des collectivités afin que davantage de personnes puissent contribuer à ramener quelqu'un sain et sauf à la maison.

À l'heure actuelle, il n'existe aucun système uniforme à l'échelle du Canada. Les provinces adoptent des approches différentes, ce qui crée des lacunes en matière de coordination et de communication lorsque le temps est un facteur critique.

Par ailleurs, la population canadienne vieillit, je l'ai mentionné en anglais, on le sait. Les plus grandes—ou la plus grande génération de notre histoire entre dans ses années de vieillesse, et de plus en plus de familles sont confrontées aux réalités de la démence et du déclin cognitif. Le besoin d'une réponse plus forte et coordonnée ne cesse de croître, l'Honorable Député Président.

Les familles partout au pays ont été claires : elles veulent de meilleurs outils, des interventions plus rapides et une plus grande tranquillité d'esprit lorsque quelqu'un, ou quelqu'un être cher, disparaît.

Notre gouvernement agit déjà pour soutenir les personnes âgées ici même au Manitoba, en renforçant les soins de santé, en élargissant les soins à domicile, en investissant dans les soins de longue durée et en créant un nouveau poste indépendant de défenseur des personnes âgées. D'ailleurs, le défenseur des personnes âgées est venu en poste, on le sait, au mois de novembre dernier.

Notre gouvernement agit déjà pour soutenir les personnes âgées ici même au Manitoba. Donc cette motion s'appuie sur ce travail en réclamant une approche nationale à l'échelle du pays, une approche pancanadienne, qui garantit une action cohérente et coordonnée, peu importe où une personne vit au Canada. Parce que protéger les personnes vulnérables ne relève pas seulement des politiques publiques,

il s'agit de veiller à ce que aucune famille n'ait à traverser seule ces moments critiques.

Donc, lorsque nous parlons des alertes argent, nous parlons avant tout de quelque chose de très, très simple, et à la base, protéger les personnes vulnérables lorsqu'elles en ont le plus besoin, lorsqu'elles ont un besoin d'aide.

Une alerte argent n'est pas simplement un avis de personne disparue. C'est autre chose. Il s'agit d'une intervention d'urgence sensible au facteur du temps, conçue spécialement pour les adultes vulnérables, souvent des personnes âgées qui peuvent vivre avec des troubles comme la démence, la maladie d'Alzheimer, ou d'autres déficiences cognitives. Il s'agit de personnes qui peuvent devenir désorientées, s'éloigner d'un lieu sécuritaire, ou se retrouver dans des situations où elles ne reconnaissent pas le danger ou ne sont pas en mesure de demander de l'aide.

Ce qui distingue une alerte argent, c'est la rapidité et l'ampleur avec lesquelles elle mobilise le soutien. Une fois l'alerte déclenchée, l'information est diffusée sur plusieurs plateformes, c'est important de signaler : télévision, radio et appareils mobiles, afin que les gens partout dans les collectivités soient informés et puissent contribuer aux recherches d'une personne vulnérable portée disparue. Cela transforme un cas individuel en un effort coordonné à l'échelle provinciale, et même à l'échelle nationale, si le cas est besoin. À ce moment-là, les Manitobains ordinaires – conducteurs, navetteurs, familles – deviennent alors eux aussi parties prenantes de l'intervention.

Cette participation communautaire est la véritable force d'un système d'alerte argent. Au lieu de compter uniquement sur les forces de l'ordre, le système élargit les recherches bien au-delà des patrouilles et des ressources officielles. Il permet à des milliers de personnes de garder l'œil ouvert en même temps dans les stations, sur les routes et dans les quartiers. Et dans de nombreux cas, ce sont justement les renseignements transmis par le public qui permettent de retrouver une personne saine et sauve. Nous savons que le temps est le facteur le plus critique dans ces situations : les premières heures suivant la disparition d'une personne vulnérable peuvent déterminer l'issue de la situation. Plus l'information est divisée – diffusée rapidement, plus grandes sont les chances qu'une personne reconnaisse un visage, un véhicule ou une situation qui semble inhabituelle.

Et, d'ailleurs comme je l'avais mentionné avant, à Saint-Boniface, nous avons grand nombre d'aînés. On veut absolument les garder en sécurité, on veut

s'assurer que, quand quelqu'un de vulnérable disparaît, qu'on soit en mesure de les retrouver rapidement pour les ramener à un lieu sûr et certain, pour aussi donner à la famille le message que, en travaillant ensemble, on est capable de garder nos communautés, que ce soit nos aînés ou autres, en sécurité.

Merci, l'honorable Député Président.

### **Translation**

*However, honourable Speaker, I would like to continue my remarks by noting that Manitobans expect their loved ones to be safe, especially seniors and vulnerable adults who are not always able to protect themselves, such as my great-grandfather, Alphonse Bélanger. When someone is living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia or another cognitive disorder, every minute counts. Families live in fear, and delays can have serious consequences.*

*Silver alerts are a proven and practical way to respond quickly by disseminating essential information via phone, media and community networks so that more people can help bring someone home safely.*

*Currently, there is no standardized system across Canada. Provinces take different approaches, creating gaps in co-ordination and communication when time is of the essence.*

*Furthermore, as I mentioned earlier in English, Canada's population is aging—we know this. The largest generation in our history is entering its later years, and more and more families are facing the realities of dementia and cognitive decline. The need for a stronger, co-ordinated response continues to grow, honourable Deputy Speaker.*

*Families across the country have been clear: they want better tools, faster responses and greater peace of mind when someone—or a loved one—goes missing.*

*Our government is already taking action to support seniors right here in Manitoba by strengthening health care, expanding home care, investing in long-term care and creating a new independent Seniors Advocate position. In fact, as we know, the Seniors Advocate took office last November.*

*Our government is already taking action to support seniors right here in Manitoba. This motion builds on that work by calling for a national, Canada-wide approach that ensures consistent and co-ordinated action, no matter where a person lives in Canada. Because protecting vulnerable people is not just a*

*matter of public policy; it is about ensuring that no family has to go through these critical moments alone.*

*When we talk about silver alerts, we are talking first and foremost about something very, very simple: at its core, protecting vulnerable people when they need it most, when they need help.*

*A silver alert is not simply a missing person's notice. It is something else. 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 people who may become disoriented, wander away from a safe place or find themselves in situations where they do not recognize the danger or are unable to ask for help.*

*What sets silver alert apart is the speed and scale with which it mobilizes support. Once the alert is triggered, the information is disseminated across multiple platforms, it must be noted—television, radio and mobile devices—so that people throughout communities are informed and can contribute to the search for a vulnerable missing person. This transforms an individual case into a co-ordinated effort on a provincial scale—and even a national scale, if necessary. At that point, ordinary Manitobans—drivers, commuters, families—become active participants in the response.*

*This community involvement is the true strength of a silver alert system. Instead of relying solely on law enforcement, the system expands the search far beyond patrols and official resources. It allows thousands of people to keep their eyes open at the same time at gas stations, on the roads and in neighbourhoods. And in many cases, it is precisely the information provided by the public that leads to a person being found safe and sound. We know that time is the most critical factor in these situations: the first few hours after a vulnerable person goes missing can determine the outcome of the situation. The wider the information is divided—shared rapidly, the greater the chances that someone will recognize a face, a vehicle or a situation that seems unusual.*

*As I mentioned earlier, in St. Boniface, we have a large number of seniors. We are absolutely committed to keeping them safe; we want to ensure that when a vulnerable person goes missing, we are able to find them quickly and bring them back to a safe and secure place, and also to convey to the family the message that by working together, we are capable of keeping our communities, whether our seniors or others, safe.*

*Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.*

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** So this morning we're speaking to the resolution about a national strategy for silver alerts. And, of course, we know that silver alert uses the same infrastructure and approach as AMBER Alert to help locate missing seniors who are vulnerable to various dangers while missing.

A silver alert is a public notification system designed to quickly locate missing seniors or vulnerable adults, particularly those with Alzheimer's or dementia. While Alberta and, of course, right here in Manitoba—and I'll get to that right away—have provincial systems, Canada lacks a national cellular-enabled silver alert, prompting federal petitions for a nationwide strategy.

\* (11:20)

I do want to continue on but also, sort of, start off giving credit where credit is due, here in the great province of Manitoba, and that's former colleague, Len Isleifson, the MLA for Brandon East, who specifically addressed silver alerts right here in Manitoba, bringing forward a bill in 2017.

And for that, you know, we need to commend Len and his hard work for bringing forward bill 214 in the year 2017. During second reading on March 14, 2017, Len highlighted that no other Canadian jurisdiction had a silver alert system, stating Manitoba would be the innovators, and that Ontario was observing Manitoba's efforts, with interest on potentially adopting one.

In third reading on May 13, 2017, he acknowledged support from then-Brandon police chief, Ian Grant, who helped draft related legislation and emphasized the bill's passage. I know that the current member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) aided in some of that work as well. And so former police—Brandon police chief, Ian Grant, and current MLA for Brandon West also deserves some accolades for moving this forward.

But, with that, with the legislation passing, they also stressed that further government work was needed for implementation: co-ordination with law enforcement, broadcasters and public education, without referencing a national framework.

The bill passed final reading on May 24, 2017, making Manitoba the first Canadian province with statutory silver alert provisions aimed at missing seniors or those with cognitive impairments akin to AMBER Alerts. Congratulations to the former Progressive Conservative government on bringing

that bill forward and moving it forward in the case and on results for seniors here in Manitoba.

We do also know, honourable Deputy Speaker, that, you know, under this current government, and it's interesting that—and I'm hoping that the member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott) is listening to today's comments being put on the record—that this current NDP government had, unfortunately, when they formed government, had cut the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care, which we had a dedicated minister and department, absolutely advocating for seniors and long-term care here in the province.

And this Kinew government had cut that department and slid it under the large 'monstrosity' of the Department of Health. And I don't feel, and we don't feel, that seniors and long-term care are getting the attention that they so deservedly deserve.

It is encouraging that another member of the NDP actually stood up to speak to the resolution today, because that's a little abnormal. Usually what they do is they put one or two speakers up, usually a Cabinet minister, which, in this case, they put a Cabinet minister up during private members' time and spoke to this particular resolution, which is calling on the federal government, of course, to get a national strategy for silver alerts.

It is interesting that none of the sitting Cabinet ministers, nor the Premier (Mr. Kinew), has had the conversation with the member for Kildonan-River East to actually send a letter or something. I mean, the Premier has mentioned on more than one occasion he's drafted a stern letter to the federal government or to the Prime Minister and, basically, you know, with no results.

And so on this resolution, which we, on this side of the House, the Progressive Conservative Party, absolutely supports the call for a national strategy, of course, because we were the ones under the guidance of former MLA Len Isleifson, the former MLA for Brandon East, brought forward that said bill.

Now, it doesn't stop there, honourable Deputy Speaker. We have the MP for Kildonan-St. Paul, the Conservative MP for Kildonan-St. Paul, who I think in—the member for Kildonan-River East maybe mentioned that federal MP member, Raquel Dancho. Raquel has definitely strongly advocated for bill C-263, the Silver Alert National Framework Act, emphasizing the urgency of rapid public alerts for missing

vulnerable seniors, particularly those with dementia or cognitive impairments.

She had highlighted the critical time factor in these cases, stating that, every minute matters when a vulnerable senior goes missing, end quote; as she added, quote, this bill is about ensuring that when time is critical, Canadians have the tools and awareness needed to avoid—I apologize—awareness needed to help bring loved ones home safely, end quote. I think that's the goal of all party stripes here in the Manitoba Legislature, is to make sure that seniors or vulnerable adults experiencing various different cognitive disabilities are safe.

And, again, that's why I believe that the Progressive Conservative government had put in a Ministry of Seniors and Long-Term Care. And, again, the first minister of that so happened to be Scott Johnson [*phonetic*], and I know that he toured the province many times, speaking with various different senior advocacy groups and trying to make sure that the good work had continued to make sure that seniors and long-term care was a high priority, unlike the Kinew government. One of their first initial steps was, when they formed government in 2023, was to cancel that department. I don't quite understand the rational thinking behind that. Maybe there wasn't any rational thinking behind that. But it was a move, nonetheless, by this Premier. So it just sort of shows where the priorities are of this Premier.

So I'll go back to MP Raquel Dancho for a couple seconds, and I'd like to say that her advocacy draws directly from the 2023 disappearance of Winnipeg senior Earl Moberg, who was never found, inspiring an e-petition she sponsored that gathered over 7,300 signatures calling for a national silver alert system.

She stressed that the bill's role in addressing Canada's aging population, noting that, by 2030, nearly 1 million Canadians may live with Alzheimer's, with up to 60 per cent at risk of going missing and the risk of serious injury or death rising dramatically after 12 hours. She also positioned the framework as a complement to AMBER Alerts, requiring federal collaboration with provinces, territories and law enforcement to set national standards for timely, targeted public alerts.

I know that this—it falls under the jurisdiction of the federal Minister for Public Safety, and I'm hoping in the upcoming months, when our provincial ministers have their FPTs, that they will bring this forward to the federal ministers and try to get this

rolling a lot faster than the work that we've seen here in Manitoba to date on advocating to the federal government.

I look forward to hearing more speakers on the topic of silver alerts, a national strategy.

**Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** Happy Manitoba Day to all Manitobans. Always a special day when we can recognize that.

\* (11:30)

I'd also like to thank—to begin, to thank the member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott) for bringing forward this important resolution and for really being such a strong advocate for seniors in our province, whether we're talking about health care, whether we're talking about seniors homes, personal-care homes or, in this case, silver alerts, it's been really inspiring to watch the member for Kildonan-River East be such a strong voice for some of our most vulnerable.

And that is exactly what happened in this case, where the member for Kildonan-River East has been very involved with the Moberg family and in the search for Earl Moberg. And, you know, I give my condolences to the family. Obviously, this is a deeply moving incident and something that we hope Manitobans never have to go through.

This is not a partisan issue. This isn't—you know, there's times when there's partisanship in the Chamber, for sure. But there's also issues where I think all Manitobans can recognize the need for something. And I think, in so many instances, we lose sight of that. But in this one, I hope that all members of the Chamber will come together. And the whole premise of this is that when someone goes missing, we go looking. That was the whole idea with searching the landfill. That was something that was successful. That was something that hopefully brought some closure to a number of families.

And I hope that it's a message to all Manitobans that, in your time of need, Manitobans will be there for you. That is what one Manitoba is all about. It's about, we come together. And nothing could be—in my mind—could be more frightening for a family than having a family member, maybe someone that has dementia, maybe someone that has other cognitive impairments, maybe someone that is battling other illnesses, to go missing. And as so many people have already mentioned, and as the member of Kildonan-River East has mentioned, the hours,

the minutes, the seconds that go by immediately after someone goes missing is crucial.

And so I think it's critically important that we move on this issue, that we move this resolution forward and call on the federal government to have a co-ordinated response on this. I don't think that there's any party out there, I don't think there's any member out there, any MP, any MLA that would argue against this. It seems like such common sense, especially when we look at the system that's in place right now. There's no consistent system right across Canada. There is different systems being put in place, but there's not a co-ordinated effort, and that's exactly what we need.

We need a stronger, co-ordinated effort so that, when someone goes missing, we go looking immediately. And that we can have thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of people looking, as opposed to a family having to take that on their own. I think our families, our seniors, deserve this. I think that no family should have to face this alone, and instead should have the community wrap around them in their time of need. So, ultimately, this is about protecting the vulnerable. This is about ensuring that we are having a time-sensitive emergency response when it's needed.

Now, I recognize that, you know, sometimes we want to make sure that we're, I should say, there's going to be times when we're using this that I guess we should be careful in how we use this, I guess, is the best way to move it forward. We want to make sure that the alerts are clear, that they are accurate, that they're only used in the most urgent of situations, because I would hate to see people become desensitized to this. But that's not what we see when there's an AMBER Alert. And I don't think that—I think that there's enough safeguards in place, I think that there's enough calm heads around the tables that co-ordinate these things to ensure that we would be using this in a good way and ensuring that it is only used in an emergency situation.

And so, ultimately, this is what reflects our values. It's Manitoba values. It's about one Manitoba. It's about looking for people in those times of need and being there for seniors. And so I would just ask members of the opposition to get on board and join us in calling for the federal government. We need a co-ordinated response that goes right across our country, and let's get this done.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** I am very pleased to rise this morning on Manitoba Day and put a few words on the record with respect to the resolution from the member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott). It's an important resolution.

I think I'd like to start by first talking a little bit about what a silver alert, as I've had to explain this to a couple of constituents who had asked me about this. I learned that a silver alert is a public notification system designed to quickly broadcast information about missing seniors, especially those with cognitive impairments. Much like AMBER Alerts that we are all familiar with, used in cases of missing children, these alerts mobilize communities. They can use highway signs, media broadcasts and mobile notifications to spread crucial information fast, because in these cases, as we know, every minute counts.

Critics sometimes argue that silver alerts could overwhelm the public or desensitize people to emergency notifications. But the reality is that the cost of inaction is far greater than inconveniencing people. When a senior goes missing, their risk of injury or death increases dramatically with each passing hour. Exposure to harsh weather, to traffic dangers or even simple disorientation can turn a disappearance into a tragedy.

Silver alerts are not just about finding someone. They are about giving families hope, giving law enforcement a powerful tool and giving communities a chance to act with compassion. They also send a broader message, an important message, that seniors matter, that their lives, their safety and their dignity are worth protecting. As we all know, they—we all have seniors in our lives that are important to us. These are the people who raised us, taught us and built our communities. Supporting silver alerts is one way we can stand up for them when they are at their most vulnerable. And in places like Manitoba, where silver alert systems have been implemented, they have already proven effective, helping locate missing seniors faster and saving lives.

So expanding and supporting these systems is good policy. Alberta and Manitoba have both established silver alert protocols. And due to rising dementia cases, there are a number of petitions ongoing to establish a federal system that would enable immediate geo-targeted alerts to cellphones when a vulnerable senior disappears. Because the fact is, honourable Deputy Speaker, we know that we have an aging population in Manitoba.

By 2030, nearly 1 million Canadians are expected to be living with Alzheimer's disease. And studies suggest that of those, up to 60 per cent may go missing at some point. If a missing person is not located within 12 hours, their risk of serious injury or death increases significantly.

Now, there are a couple of other elected officials that have set the stage for the resolution that we're debating today. One of those is federal MP Raquel Dancho, who introduced private member's bill C-263 in Parliament on March 10, 2026. And that bill would establish a national silver alert framework in Canada, which is, of course the subject of this resolution today.

MP Dancho's bill would help ensure authorities can quickly alert the public when a vulnerable senior goes missing, allowing communities to act as extra eyes and ears during the critical early hours. Using Canada's existing national public alerting system, silver alerts could be geotargeted to nearby areas where a missing senior is most likely to be found, helping to deliver rapid awareness while avoiding unnecessary alert fatigue.

\* (11:40)

And, here in Manitoba, former MLA for Brandon East, Len Isleifson, introduced bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act (Silver Alert), which passed third reading and became law in Manitoba in 2017, making Manitoba the first province in Canada to implement such a system. And, at the time, he said, quote: We have a duty and responsibility to make sure we have things in place for our citizens so that when, unfortunately, they do go missing, we have the tools to bring them back as soon as possible.

I'd like to thank Len for his foresight in this matter and for positioning Manitoba where we are today. And I believe, as a Province, given that we've implemented this kind of tool here on the provincial level, we're uniquely positioned to advocate with the federal government for a national system, which would, of course, be more effective.

And now you may be asking yourself why the MP for Kildonan-River East—or sorry, the MLA for Kildonan-River East and the MP for Kildonan-St. Paul have both been active on this issue, and that's because of the advocacy efforts of the Moberg family, the family of Mr. Earl Moberg. And I, too, have had a number of conversations with the Moberg family, with—particularly with Britt Moberg, Earl's daughter,

who's really been the catalyst for this silver alert movement in Manitoba and in Canada.

In December 2023, Mr. Moberg went missing. He had dementia and he was known for wandering. At the time that he went missing, his last known location was in Winnipeg's North Kildonan and River East neighbourhoods.

Now, the family's been advocating for a number of things. One of those is a national silver alert notification system. And the reason for that is that the Moberg family believes that cellphones, which are used by 90 per cent of Canadians, may be the key to improving how people are notified about silver alerts. The Moberg family has a petition to get alerts sent to people's phones, and that petition ran between 2024 and 2025, garnering thousands of signatures across Canada.

And Mr. Moberg's wife, Brenda, told media, quote: The petition was for a silver alert that would notify people in the area that the senior went missing. We feel that the silver alert may have helped Earl if the silver alert was issued immediately. Right now, the silver alert only goes out to the media. And Earl's daughter Britt added, quote: The information about my dad being missing, it just didn't reach enough people quickly enough, unfortunately, to find him alive.

So that's a really good example of the tragedy and devastation to a family that can result when someone goes missing. And we have before us the potential for a national tool that could help prevent these types of tragedies.

And I also want to touch on—I believe it's the third clause of the resolution we're debating today, which talks about critical incident reviews and some of the gaps that they have identified. And, certainly, for members' awareness, there was a critical incident review conducted in the case of Mr. Moberg and the home-care services he was or was not receiving and that critical incident review identified a number of gaps in both the home-care program specifically and with dementia care more generally, and it identified a need for additional resources to support Manitobans living with dementia.

In particular, it identified a need for the establishment of clear dementia-care pathways. We know this is going to be an ongoing issue in Manitoba. As I said, we have an aging population and an increasing number of Manitobans living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. And there are organizations

in Manitoba who have done great work to support Manitobans living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. The Alzheimer Society is one.

And I mention that because, when I asked the Minister of Health's office about the status of the recommendations in the Moberg critical incident review, they pointed to funding that had been allocated to the Alzheimer's society's First Link program. First Link program's a great program, but it can't provide ongoing dementia care and support to families who are dealing with this on a long-term basis and it's not responsible for establishing those dementia-care pathways that are going to be necessary to help ensure Manitobans with dementia get the care and support they need, and hopefully it can prevent them from going missing in the first place.

I do want to close my remarks by noting that I believe Manitoba is well positioned to advocate with the federal government in this regard. My colleague from Lac du Bonnet mentioned this should be coming up at First Minister's meetings and I hope that it is. And, with that, I will close my remarks and we'll hear from some others.

Thanks.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we move on to the next speaker, I'll just direct all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have grade 5 students from Woodlands School, under the direction of Chris McLean. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. King).

Welcome here.

\* \* \*

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** I'm pleased to get an—the opportunity today to rise on this resolution regarding National Strategy for Silver Alerts.

And, Deputy honourable Speaker, we know that it often starts with something small: a walk around the block, a quick trip to the store, a familiar routine. But for a senior living with dementia or Alzheimer's, that routine can suddenly become disorienting, and what should have been a short outing can turn into a frightening disappearance.

So I want all members here to think of how that would feel; how frightening, not just for the senior but for their family members, their loved ones, their neighbours and their community. Conditions like dementia and Alzheimer's do not just affect memory

but they can erase a person's sense of direction, their judgment and their awareness of danger. Someone who has lived in the same neighborhood for decades can suddenly become lost just a few steps from home.

When that happens, time becomes the most critical factor, because every minute counts. I've had a few loved ones that have lived with dementia, another one with Alzheimer's. And as a family member, it is deeply heartbreaking to watch the progression and sometimes a very, very fast progression of your loved one lose their memory.

And so when a vulnerable senior goes missing, their risk of injury or death increases dramatically with each passing hour. Exposure to harsh weather, traffic dangers or simple disorientation can quickly turn a disappearance into a tragedy. And this is the reality many families face and exact—is exactly why silver alerts are so important.

A silver alert is a public notification system designed to quickly broadcast information about missing seniors, especially those with cognitive impairments. And, much like AMBER Alerts for children, these alerts mobilize entire communities: they activate highway signs, they interrupt radio and television broadcasts and they send alerts directly to mobile phones. They turn everyday citizens—everyday Manitobans—into extra eyes and ears, because, while law enforcement works tirelessly, they cannot be everywhere at once, but a community can and often are. And when a community is informed, it responds. People pay attention, they report sightings and they help bring someone home.

That kind of rapid awareness is not just helpful, it is life-saving. Silver alerts are not just about finding someone, they're about giving families hope during their most desperate moments. Silver alerts also give law enforcement a stronger, faster, more co-ordinated tool and they are about giving communities a chance to act with compassion.

They also send a broader message—one that matters deeply—that our seniors matter, that their lives, their safety and their dignity are worth protecting. These are the people who raised us and when they are at their most vulnerable, we have a responsibility to stand up for them.

\* (11:50)

Some critics argue that systems like silver alerts could overwhelm the public or desensitize people to emergency notifications, but what we need to be clear about is what is at stake, because this is about

human lives, and the cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of awareness. Because if it was your loved one missing—your parent, your grandparent, your brother, your sister, your neighbour—you would want every possible tool used. You would want the public to know and you would want people to look, and silver alerts make that possible.

There are places where silver alert systems have already been implemented and they have proven to be effective in helping to locate missing seniors faster and saving their lives. But, despite that, the reality across Canada is inconsistent. Some jurisdictions do have systems in place but others do not and some rely on limited or informal processes. So this creates gaps in response and those gaps can have serious consequences.

But vulnerability doesn't stop at a provincial border and neither can our response, and this is why it is so important for a national system where we have coordination, consistency and leadership. A national framework would ensure that no matter where a senior goes missing, the response will be swift, effective and aligned and it would strengthen communication between jurisdictions and provide clear standards for action and we have an opportunity to move in that direction.

So I do want to take a moment to acknowledge the work that has already been done on this issue because, nearly a decade ago, a former colleague, the PC MLA for Brandon East recognized the importance of protecting vulnerable seniors and took action to advance this conversation by introducing bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act. That leadership mattered then and it still matters now. So I do want to recognize the former PC MLA, Len Isleifson, for making that possible.

For all members of this House, I want to remind them about dementia and why this alert system is needed. Dementia is not a disease that affects only the person diagnosed, but it is a condition that reshapes entire families. It's often slowly and painfully, as roles, relationships and daily routines are fundamentally altered. And as I mentioned earlier, this can happen slowly or it can happen very, very quickly.

And, at first, some of those changes may seem small: missed appointments, repeated questions, moments of confusion, forgotten keys. But, over time, these moments accumulate into a reality where loved ones must confront the gradual loss of the person they once knew.

Sometimes this can be an individual reverting back into a time when they were once younger, whether they were at—a child or a university student. They might look at their grandchild and think that they're their daughter instead.

So as these moments accumulate into a reality, family members must confront this loss. Spouses become caregivers, children may take on parental responsibilities, grandchildren may take on those responsibilities and families often find themselves navigating emotional strain, financial pressure and physical exhaustion all at once.

And this financial strain can grow as medical costs, home modifications or reduced work hours take a toll. And in many cases, families are forced to balance their own responsibilities, careers, their own families and personal well-being, while becoming sometimes almost full-time caregivers.

And one of the most frightening realities families face is the risk of a loved one wandering and becoming lost, possibly their loved one jumping into a car because they believe that they still have their licence and can still drive as they have always done. This is a common and dangerous symptom of dementia, and this fear can be constant.

This is where silver alerts play an essential role in supporting families and protecting vulnerable seniors. By broadcasting descriptions through media, digital platforms, these alerts mobilize entire communities to help locate the individual.

And beyond their immediate impact, silver alerts bring awareness to the realities of dementia and Alzheimer's and the risks associated with it, and they highlight the importance of community vigilance and encourage people to look out for one another, especially the most vulnerable. Although, while it doesn't remove the emotional and physical toll of caregiving, it does provide an important safety net.

Ultimately, dementia and Alzheimer's places an undeniable strain on families. But tools like silver alerts offer practical, life-saving support, helping ensure that when a loved one does go missing, they are not alone and neither are the families searching for them. And as our population ages and grows, as the boomer population ages and grows, the urgency of this issue grows as well.

I also want to recognize Member of Parliament for Kildonan-St. Paul, Raquel Dancho, for her action towards a silver alert strategy. This is an important—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot):** I, too, want to speak to this particular resolution. I'd like to thank my colleague for Midland who raised the important issue of a demographic bomb that's coming towards all of Canada and specifically Manitoba.

We've got an aging society where we're going to have a lot more individuals that are going to be suffering with dementia. We're going to have a lot more individuals that are going to be suffering from Alzheimer's and we've got to start addressing the needs and the challenges we're going to have with that aging demographic, not just in personal-care homes but in the personal-care homes that we're going to need dementia wards.

We're going to have to make sure that we are taking care of individuals who, no fault of their own, not because of something they've done, but because of their aging process—and we don't fully understand where this comes from—but they are no longer able to take care of themselves and they can get themselves into difficulty.

There is the example out of North Kildonan, and we've had that addressed several times. Earl Moberg—that was December 2023—at 81 years old went missing, and how tragic for that family. They have no closure, as he is still missing as of today.

So the fact that Member of Parliament for Kildonan-St. Paul, Raquel Dancho, brought this issue forward on a national level, we'd like to thank her and her leadership. She is a great parliamentarian who represents Manitoba incredibly well, not just as Manitobans, but she represents us well on a national and on the international stage.

And for her to bring this issue forward—and I know that this issue resides in her riding—it's good to see that this Legislature is going to follow the good work that's being done by MP Raquel Dancho and follow her lead in what's being done on a national level. It would be good to see this as a national policy backed up by legislatures across this province.

And families sometimes don't recognize all the symptoms or—I mean, we've seen it from time to time, they might live in some kind of denial and not exactly recognize that a loved one of theirs is suffering from dementia or the early stages, the onset of dementia, and then don't realize that their loved ones may wander; they get into difficulty.

I was working in my yard a couple years ago, and one of my neighbours had their mom staying with

them, and I recognized her. She was walking the dog and she stopped and she said, hi. And I greeted her, and she kind of recognized me. We had a little chat. And then she said to me, very kindly and very sad, she said, I am lost. You know who I am. Could you tell me how I get home?

So I indicated to her how she should get home, and I said, you know what, I'll watch, make sure you

get to the right house, but you're going to be okay. And I watched—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

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