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PROCEEDINGS
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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
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SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
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STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Point Douglas	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, if you canvass the House, I believe you will find there is leave to proceed to private member's Bill 222.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to consider second reading of Bill 222 this morning? [*Agreed*]

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 222—The Planning Amendment Act

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), that Bill 222, The Planning Amendment Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Martin: I'm delighted to see as much interest as I have across the way with members opposite. I think three quarters of their caucus is here this morning for Bill 222, The Planning Amendment Act.

The act is a very straightforward amendment, Madam Speaker, that has been asked for for some time in the home building community, as well, as within the department. Due to a number of reasons, the previous administration failed to make what is really quite a modest change in the big picture, but we'll ensure that there's consistency across the board in Manitoba for the application of The Planning Act.

So, currently, under some—subsection 148(3) of The Planning Act, if changes to development bylaw—

zoning bylaw, or secondary plan have been initiated, an application for the development permit may be held for up to 125 days if the proposed changes—if the proposed development plan does not conform with the pending changes. This bill shortens that time frame from 125 days to 90 days, which brings it into a timeline with the development—under the City of Winnipeg charter.

While it is not uncommon for local planning authorities to amend a planning bylaw to accommodate a development proposal, there are not many examples of a municipality amending a planning bylaw to prevent a specific proposal.

Madam Speaker, I think it's worth noting that there are no departmental concerns from the Department of Indigenous and Municipal Affairs for this amendment, and it has received widespread support from the local development community.

Madam Speaker, this bill goes to our government's agenda in terms of reducing the overall red tape burden on Manitobans, whether it is in the business community, whether it's individuals, whether it is the not-for-profit sector.

As co-chair of that committee, Madam Speaker, I had an opportunity to reach out and engage a number of Manitobans, whether it was under the transportation sector, agriculture, agri-business, the not-for-profit or land development. They shared an overriding concern that the amount of red tape that those sectors were under was significant, and there were opportunities to reduce it.

As we said at the front end, Madam Speaker, of that exercise, that the goal there was to identify regulations or regulatory requirements that may be outdated, that maybe no longer fit with the times that we're in due to changing technologies or changing information. In some instances, it was a matter of clarity that maybe the legislation or the regulation was poorly written and open to multiple interpretations which can cause confusion for those on the receiving end and also on those bureaucrats delivering those messages.

As well, sometimes it was duplicated in other manners so that a organization may find itself resubmitting the same information time and time again. And, as well, sometimes there's just a lack of

consistency, Madam Speaker, when it came to regulatory requirements here in the province of Manitoba.

This amendment act, Bill 222, deals with the latter, Madam Speaker, and that one to do with consistency. As we know, the construction season in Manitoba is short. This amendment will attempt to modestly reduce red tape while allowing more efficient and effective use of development capital. Stakeholders have identified that outdated and unnecessary red tape here in the province of Manitoba costs our economy at least \$360 million a year.

For this reason, we believe that eliminating unnecessary barriers and burdens, while ensuring that we're protecting the health and safety and environmental considerations of Manitobans, will foster job creation, energize Manitoba's economy and unleash our province's true potential.

To be clear, Madam Speaker, when we're talking about development, we're talking about—it's broadly defined as any construction, removal, soil or vegetation, excavation or change in intensity of a building or the land. The amendment again, as I said, is rather minor, as development permits are generally required after any other necessary local improvements are obtained from the local planning authority.

Subsection 148(1) of the act is what will be amended, Madam Speaker. I know that, as I indicated, there is broad support for the legislation. The Manitoba Home Builders' Association former president or outgoing president Mike Moore recently indicated that: I have a group of developers ready to contribute to the discussion whenever you deem it appropriate. They are very interested in this initiative and assist wherever they can in supporting and implementing it. End quote.

So, as I indicated, there is widespread support. This is a minor amendment that will ensure consistency here in Manitoba when it comes to The Planning Amendment Act so that we are under the same rules and regulations that we currently see within the city of Winnipeg. And with those brief comments, Madam Speaker, I'm more than happy to take some questions on the legislation. Thank you.

Questions

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

following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from another party; this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question; and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): So I'd like to ask the member: This bill is such an important initiative on the part of the government to cut red tape, why is the government not introducing the bill?

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Appreciate the question from my honourable colleague across the way, and I'm not sure if the honourable colleague is confused or he needs his glasses checked, but this bill actually is being introduced by government. Last time I checked, I am a member of the Progressive Conservative government of Manitoba which currently holds 40 seats here in the Manitoba Legislature. By extension, I am part of that government. I am very pleased to offer this amendment forward as part of that government and as part of that team, Madam Speaker.

* (10:10)

So unless the member opposite is aware of something that I am not, I think that question's been addressed.

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Gimli): Can the member for Morris please inform this House who he consulted with during the drafting of this legislation?

Mr. Martin: Well, I appreciate the question from my colleague, the honourable member for Gimli. And, as I indicated, this legislation has received broad support during our red-tape review. Madam Speaker, we interacted with a number of organizations, individuals and agencies on a lot of files. In particular, with this amendment to The Planning Act, we engaged and received support from the Manitoba Home Builders' Association, the Urban Development Institute, the Department of Indigenous and Municipal Relations, the City of Winnipeg as well as the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I thank the member for his comment.

Is he trying to suggest that every bill that's produced by a private member on the government side is a government bill? That's certainly not been the practice in the past.

And I have a specific question on this particular bill: How long is the average wait time today, and

how many of the, you know, changes which would fit in this category take over 90 days today?

Mr. Martin: I appreciate the question, Madam Speaker, from the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), and he is right; there is an opportunity for delay up to 125 days under the current legislation. However, in the city of Winnipeg that delay is only up to 90 days.

What we found in engaging with those community stakeholders that there are instances where it can go above the 90 days. What they were seeking, what this bill is seeking is simply consistency across the board. So whether you're on the east side of McGillivray in the city of Winnipeg or on the west side of McGillivray—say, in the RM of Macdonald where I reside, there would be that consistency, Madam Speaker.

So that is what this bill will do. It'll ensure that 90 days is the consistent measure across the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Maloway: The member for River Heights is right. This is a private member's bill. This is a bill that the government didn't deem important enough to sponsor by one of its ministers. So I'm just wondering how committed the government is to this particular initiative of the member.

I'd like to ask the member, then: How could a rushed decision making by municipalities lead to developments which ignore the wishes of other communities?

Mr. Martin: Madam Speaker, the member opposite makes two points that, unfortunately, are just that: unfortunate.

The first point is to disparage the role of backbenchers in this Legislature. The member opposite may recall that he was a backbencher for quite a number of years, and for him to suggest that his role was minor or irrelevant within the course of the Legislative Assembly is truly unfortunate. And I would actually disagree with him on that point. I think he did have an important role.

The member also makes reference to a rushed process. Again, this legislation brings The Planning Act outside the city of Winnipeg in line with what we're currently seeing within the city of Winnipeg. The city of Winnipeg is currently 90 days. Outside the city of Winnipeg it is 125 days. If the member is

suggesting that there—it is a rushed process in the city of Winnipeg, then he—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): I want to thank the member for bringing forward this legislation. Although it is very brief and really amounts to just changing one number to another number, it's—it is necessary and helpful information. And I appreciate, also, the work that the member has done by consulting with the groups that he listed in response to the honourable member for Gimli's (Mr. Wharton) question.

And so my question for the member is: I mean, when choosing the one number, what made the member for Morris choose a timeline of 90 days rather than, you know, perhaps some other random number? What drove you to choose that number? That's my question.

Thank you.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Martin: Well, Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question. And despite the heckling of members opposite, who may use a tar—or a dartboard to seek their targets, the 90 days was chosen, again, because it is consistent with The City of Winnipeg Charter. The City of Winnipeg Charter is 90 days. What we're trying to do is ensure consistency throughout the province of Manitoba.

There are other jurisdictions. Take, for example, the Province of British Columbia allows 60 days. In this instance, we thought 90 days was a reasonable measure. Ninety days is the standard for the city of Winnipeg, where the larger population resides. In this instance, we think that if it is applicable to the city of Winnipeg, if it has worked well within the city of Winnipeg, I think it is more than willing to suggest it would work outside the city of Winnipeg as well.

Mr. Maloway: I'd like to challenge the member on his commitment to red tape reduction. I mean, that's very milquetoast approach here. He wants to reduce only 35 days off the process. I would, given that his commitment and this government's commitment—as he says, he's part of the government—to red tape reduction would be to eliminate the process completely. Like, why, if 90 days is his target, why doesn't he pick 60? Why is it 90? Why is it not 60 or 30? That would be more in keeping with his ideology.

Mr. Martin: Madam Speaker, in the—I thank the honourable member for the—that question. In the—in his first question, it was clear that his glasses needed to be checked. In this question, it's—I think it's pretty evident that his hearing needs to be checked.

The 90 days was chosen to be consistent with The City of Winnipeg Charter. The member opposite was a member of the previous NDP administration for a number of years, for 17 years, I believe, notwithstanding a short departure to put his feet into federal politics. During that time frame, they had that opportunity to reduce it to 60 days. If the member opposite is willing to put forward a friendly amendment to reduce it to 60 days, I may be willing to consider it.

In this instance, Madam Speaker, we're trying to get consistency across the board. Ninety days is the template here in the city of Winnipeg. We believe that is a reasonable measure and we believe it is something that is supported by all stakeholders.

Mr. Wharton: With approximately 88,000 regulations currently on the books in Manitoba, it's certainly a burden to Manitobans and their families.

Can the member from Morris please explain the legislation and how his legislation would bolster our government's mandate to reduce red tape and regulatory burdens on Manitobans?

Mr. Martin: Well, I appreciate the question from the honourable member, Madam Speaker.

And, as I indicated in my preamble, our government's commitment to reducing red tape is more than just in identification and elimination of regulatory requirements. In some instances, Madam Speaker, it's an issue of offering clarity in terms of legislation or regulations that may be poorly written or open to multiple interpretations.

In this case, Madam Speaker, it's an issue of consistency. We have a situation where, in the city of Winnipeg, home to approximately 750,000 people, the planning amendment is subject to a 90-day time frame, where outside the city of Winnipeg, where the larger geographic centre is, it's subject to up to 125 days. In talking to the key stakeholders, they indicated that 90 days was a reasonable approach.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): My question is very—will be very simple.

The—is this bill applicable to new changes to land use?

Mr. Martin: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, the member for Tyndall Park for that question. As I indicated in my preamble, The Planning Act requires a landowner or developer to obtain and develop a permit from the local municipality or planning district before any development can occur on their property.

In this instance, Madam Speaker, development is broadly defined as any construction, removal or soil or vegetation or excavation or change in intensity in a building or land.

Mr. Teitsma: Just one last question: Can the member for Morris (Mr. Martin) explain once again for the House, so that everybody's clear, what the benefits of shortening this withholding period and the further benefits of aligning it with the timelines used by the City of Winnipeg will be? Thank you.

* (10:20)

Mr. Martin: Again, Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for that question.

As I indicated at—out front, and I think all of us in this Chamber are very well aware, construction season here in Manitoba can be a short season, especially depending on weather conditions. This ensures that that construction season is used to its maximum opportunity. I believe, and the stakeholders that we've consulted with and—including a—the department, AMM, the City of Winnipeg and others, Madam Speaker, do believe that the city of Winnipeg standard of 90 days is a reasonable standard, and that ensuring that consistency whether you are in The Pas, whether you are in Emerson or whether you're in the city of Winnipeg will ensure that that the regulatory burden here in the—Manitoba is minimized.

Madam Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate

Madam Speaker: Debate is open.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I'm very pleased to speak to Bill 222, the bill drafted by the member opposite. The purpose of this act, it's—under The Planning Act, if changes to a development plan bylaw, zoning bylaw or secondary plan have been initiated, an application for a development permit may be held up for—to—for—to 200—125 days if the proposed development does not conform with the

pending changes. The bill shortens the period, as explained by the member, from 125 to 90 days.

And, as the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma) has pointed out—and other members, including the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin)—is why—why does the member—why has the member decided that 90 days is the magic bullet here? The member for The Pas said why not 89 days? The member for Radisson, I think he was sort of aiming at 60. Another member suggested maybe 30 might be in order.

I mean, where—the question, here, really boils down to this member's ideological commitment to deregulation and elimination of rules. And I would say I would like to look at the spectrum of ideology because I've certainly been interested in different ideologies over the years, and it seems to me that a stronger commitment to red-tape reduction—the gold standard would be no regulations whatsoever. So the member is really selling himself short in this debate because he takes a very modest—maybe he feels that's his sure route to the Cabinet, but he has—he is arguing for 90 days rather than 125. So that's, like, a 35-day reduction. But you can see where the purity and the ideology is over on that side. The member for Radisson is far more pure. He wants to go down to 60. And I would guess, if you really had purity over there in the ideology, the member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield) would want to argue eliminate the rule completely. Like, why do we have these rules?

So I hate to set the cat among the pigeons there over in the Tory caucus, but I'm sure they'll spend the rest of the day arguing among themselves at who is more pure than the other.

So the question is, Madam Speaker, that we don't support this bill. We support the rules as they stand right now because we feel there's a benefit to having a period of time where people can properly examine a plan and properly consult. And, you know, the member is taking a purely development approach. He's consulting—when we talk about consulting, he said he consulted with the Home Builders' Association. Well, I'd like to ask him: Did he take the time to drive down Henderson Highway and consult with all those homeowners who are happily putting up signs opposing the government's shutting down of the Concordia Hospital emergency room?

They have a lot of things to tell members of the government—if they could find a member of the government, that is. They would be unloading on

that member and I invite him to take this—take his proposal and do some broad consulting. Go out down Henderson Highway and talk to some of those folks out there and see what they say about his government's changes to the health-care system. See what they have to say about his approach to red-tape reduction.

I mean, we can go back a number of years on red tape. They hid—the Premier (Mr. Pallister) is actually the ultimate authority on red-tape reduction. When he was first elected in, I believe, 1993—yes, and he was in a by-election after Ed Connery left. When he came in he was put in the Cabinet a couple years later and his main thrust at that time was red tape reduction. As a minister, that's what he talked about was red tape reduction.

Well, you know something, Madam Speaker, years later we in our party decided to try to discover, like, where was all this red tape that he reduced. And we couldn't find a single, not a single regulation that the Filmon government reduced while he was a minister. None of that, in fact, happened. So I know they talk a good line over there.

The Premier, when he was a minister years ago, talked a great line about red tape reduction. End of the day that's all it was. It was a lot of talk. There was no red tape being reduced, and somehow they make a virtue of red tape reduction in—somehow regulations are bad.

And, you know, we often point out that there's good regulations. There's daycare regulations that most people in this province would consider important. There's the food-safety regulations. There are regulations everywhere that the public support—*[interjection]* And, as the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe) pointed out, they want them all out, gone. And why do they want them gone, not because it makes any sense. It's just because of the ideology of where they sit on their china, like, out-impress one another. But I'm more radical than you. I'm going to take those—eliminate all the regulations so I can be more ideological pure than the other guy.

And so we, Madam Speaker, are definitely going to oppose this bill, and we're going to oppose a lot of this—these regulation removal initiatives that this government is bringing in now and will be bringing in in the future on the basis that they want to improve the economy and speed up decision making and, you know, let business thrive, when, in reality, it is basically a Trojan Horse. The whole idea here is to

help business at the expense of the public of Manitoba. That's what it's all about.

That—these people are basically, at the end of the day, will be hurting the citizens of Manitoba by eliminating regulations that are there for a purpose. Like, they seem to conclude that somehow all regulations are bad, and they basically do a disservice to our forefathers, foremothers in—who have sat in this Legislature over the last 100 years who have actually come up with regulations because of a need, a demand by the people because there has been some action taken by some persons that have caused the public to say, well, you know, there's an injury here to the public and we have to solve the problem by bringing in regulations.

And it wasn't just the NDP who did this. This didn't just start with Ed Schreyer in 1969. It's like they'd like to pretend that somehow in 1969 there was no regulations, none. Duff Roblin had them all eliminated; there was nothing. And all of a sudden since the NDP came on the scene in 1969 there's regulations everywhere and they are starving and throttling the economy in Manitoba. That's all the NDP's fault.

Well, I have to remind the member he should open his eyes, look back and realize that there were tons of regulations there before we ever became the government. Conservatives are great at setting up regulations and they were done for a reason: because the public demanded them because unfettered free enterprise basically leads to chaos in itself. That's why we have a—the system we have with checks and balances. *[interjection]*

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Even the most ideologically pure over there, at the end of the day have to recognize that there has to be balance in the economy and you can just not let unfettered free enterprise run rampant because it will be—it will lead to a lot of disorder. And there's no jurisdiction anywhere, really, that allows that to occur.

There's all sorts of regulations everywhere you look. It's just, basically, a political argument that they make, that they feel that they're going to somehow gain some public support by saying oh, well, you know, we're going to stand up to deregulate. Well, at the end of the day, Madam Speaker, after four years—by any measure—they're going to end up with probably more regulations than we have right now.

* (10:30)

So, Madam Speaker, I know there are other people that want to speak to this bill, and I certainly would like to hear from them.

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Gimli): It is a pleasure, Madam Speaker, to put some words on the record and facts regarding Bill 222, The Planning Amendment Act, brought forward by my friend from Morris.

As members are aware, our PC government is committed to reducing red tape burdens on Manitobans. This effort will involve updating, replacing and repealing regulations that are out of date, conflicting and redundant. However, it will also involve expediting government approval and review processes.

As part of our government's red tape reduction efforts, a task force was struck, Madam Speaker, to examine four key sectors of Manitoba's economy. I had the pleasure to chair on a subcommittee dealing with land development. In the course of our consultations, we heard feedback from all parts of the development industry. There were great variety of feedback, but one consistent comment from the industry was the need to streamline the often very lengthy process to receive permits and applications.

Construction costs in Manitoba are relatively high due to our climate and geology. In addition to—construction season is also very short, Madam Speaker. Unfortunately, there's nothing we can do about that. However, actions to reduce some of the administrations and burdens faced—that, of course, the industry face on a daily basis.

The construction and land development industry support tens of thousands of well-paying jobs; full-time jobs in this province, Madam Speaker. These are often unionized jobs, so I'm sure that all members of the House, including the members that are next to me, will agree that this is probably an eager thing to move forward with.

Red tape task force should have public report soon, which is very important. We had consultations, Madam Speaker, as I alluded to earlier, and I was pleased to engage many, many stakeholders at public meetings. And I can tell you that the theme was very consistent. We need to ensure that regulations are up to date. And, of course, with 88,000 regulations on the books currently, I'm sure that there's a number of regulations that are probably outdated and need to be changed.

The Planning Act requires that landowners or development obtain development permits from local municipalities or planning districts before any development can occur on property. Here, development could mean any construction removal of soil or vegetation—as my member from Morris had mentioned earlier—excavation or change, and potentially rebuilding of the land.

Currently, the act states the development permit may be issued if the planning district or municipality is satisfied that the proposed development conforms with local planning requirements. Subsection 148, section 2—and I'm sure members opposite would want to write this down—of the act: the planning district municipality within 60-day period to review the application and determine if it conforms to local planning requirements.

Well, speaking from a municipal level, Madam Speaker, where I served for my constituents of the Winnipeg Beach area for a number of years—and four of those years, three of those years as deputy mayor—I can tell you that regulations was definitely a burden for municipal governments as well, along with the constituents in the riding that wanted to move forward with development in their areas.

The act also provides a planning district's board, municipal council may withhold a development permit after the 60-day period for an additional 125 days. Madam Speaker, the bill shortens that period from 125 to 90 days.

Approval timelines are very inconsistent across the province due to different climates and varying soil conditions. As we know, we have clay in one area and sand in the other, so—and weather does play an active role. However, many, many within the development community have called the current timelines under The Planning Act to be unnecessarily lengthy.

Therefore, we have chosen to standardize The Planning Act in the city of Winnipeg, as mentioned earlier by the member for Morris (Mr. Martin), which allows for a 90-day delay. With this amendment, the timelines for applications and review for development permits will be ever—will be even across Manitoba.

Now, I know members opposite have an issue with that. They seem to build silos everywhere including Winnipeg and throughout the province and throughout the rural areas. Well, of course, our government is focused on breaking down those silos

and ensuring that communication can continue on an open and transparent way.

The other provisions of the act are, of course, unchanged. The conditions of issuing development permits, the powers that municipalities and planning districts have also been unchanged. All of this bill—all this bill does is simply standardize the timelines outside of Winnipeg with the timelines in Winnipeg. It provides more reasonable, consistent timelines and should there be no adverse effects to the change whatsoever.

The amendments to The Planning Act are in line with the government's larger commitment to reduce red tape and help businesses and municipalities and Manitobans. Stakeholders have told our government that outdated and unnecessary red tape costs Manitobans up to \$360 million a year, Madam Speaker. Initial investigations have shown that, again, with 88,000 pages of government documents and organizations—and every day Manitobans have to comply with. We cannot let this massive burden increase and, again, our government is moving forward.

Later on this afternoon or this evening, I'm looking forward to—in committee in debating Bill 218, The Red Tape Reduction Day Act. And I'm looking forward to those discussions, as well, as we move forward again on ensuring that regulations are necessary, but they are not outdated and become a burden on society. Some of those regulations are necessary and we recognize the importance, of course, Madam Speaker, of reasonable, evidence-based regulations in place to protect the health and safety of all Manitobans. However, reducing the regulatory burden will benefit local governments, non-for-profits and all Manitobans.

We are committed to ensuring, Madam Speaker, Manitoba has the most improved—the regulatory requirements and accountability by 2020. With construction season very short—as was mentioned earlier—in Manitoba and is a reality—I know members opposite may argue that, but this is a reality; we have a short season for construction.

The amendment will help to reduce red tape while allowing more efficient and effective use of development capital. It will also provide consistent clarity for an industry that is very important to the economic success of our province and, of course,

creates thousands of jobs, good paying jobs, Madam Speaker.

I look forward to seeing it pass and I hope that all members can support this bill. Bill 22 is another action to make sure, Madam Speaker, that we are putting our province back on the road to recovery.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I'm pleased to get up on the bill proposed by my friend from Morris.

I want to say that during the question and answer, the member from Elmwood who's the—really, the dean of MLAs in this House, gets up to ask the member a few questions, and how is he greeted? With really not the kind of respect due to a member who has held his position in this House for many, many years, has been an MP in Ottawa.

Madam Speaker, you'll know that Dale Carnegie wrote the book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, but I'm discouraged by the member from Morris because he seems to have written a book about how to lose friends and how to discourage people who are asking genuine questions about a bill put forward in this House today that's not—does not appear to be on the government's agenda particularly.

Here we are on a cool, rainy Tuesday morning debating this bill that seems like an afterthought for the government rather than as central priority for the government. So I would have expected the member from Morris to show the proper degree of respect. When we get up to ask you questions and answers about bills, it not ought to be met by disrespect, but it ought to be met by a willing desire to engage in issues that matter to the people of Manitoba, that actually matter to the well-being of our families and of our children. And so I've—would invite him next time that instead of taking the low road, that he takes the high road so that we can actually engage in the kind of debate that's expected here in the Chamber by people of Manitoba.

* (10:40)

Now, I have to say 'thent' when I look at the bill and I review what it's recommending, no one will mistake the member for Morris (Mr. Martin) with Jane Jacobs. This is hardly a bill that is designed to enhance the well-being—the health and welfare of communities, of—it's not a bill that's designed to promote sustainability in communities about liveable neighbourhoods, about walkable communities. It's

about none of those things, Madam Speaker. And one would expect that when we have bills put forward in the House, especially a private member's bill, it ought to reach for the stars. It ought to contain some vision, some appreciation for the kind of communities, the kind of neighbourhoods that I think we ourselves, as members of this House, but we as members of families and living in communities want to live in ourselves. And, in this respect, a bill that simply takes a permit application and says, well, you have to do it by 90 days instead of 125, there's no particular evidence, no foundation upon which you can say, well, yes, that really needs to happen in order to build healthier communities.

In fact, it almost seems like the reverse would be true, that the more time you take, the more opportunity there is to review these kinds of applications, the more time that citizens and neighbourhoods have an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the developer, with government representatives, with planners in order to ensure that there's the right kind of outcome. And I think what we get here is something quite different.

Now, I respect my friend who says, well, it's 90 days in the city of Winnipeg so it builds conformity across the province, and I suppose there's some rationale to that. I want to give him credit for saying, you know, at least we're building in some kind of consistency. But then he doesn't provide any evidence as to why we should do so. That—he—there's no—there was no real huge list of projects or developments that improve the well-being of communities that were held up as a result of the 125-day rule as opposed to the 90-day rule, and I think my friend from River Heights asked him something in that very—in the question and answer period that very kind of question. You know, like, so what is it? What project, what circumstance, what group of citizen activists has come pounding on the door of the member from Morris to say we really need this to happen?

And, in fact, he's unable to provide any kind of answer in that regard, and it's really a fact that it's something that he's pulled—seemingly pulled out of his hat. The member from Elmwood made quite clear that this is purely an arbitrary number. Is 125, 90, 60, 30—one would have expected, and I would have expected the member from Morris, who's—I would say, is a very sharp individual—to provide that solid, strong foundation of evidence in order to encourage all members of the House to support a bill—a private member's bill, as it may be—a

private member's bill that the government seems not to care about, but in order to encourage all members to get on board so that we can work to the benefit of all the people of Manitoba every day. And I know on this side of the House that's what we try to do. That's what we tried to do in government. That's certainly what we feel is our duty and our obligation as members of the opposition.

And so it would be incumbent upon the member for Morris (Mr. Martin) to provide that kind of evidentiary foundation, and for—to bring us on side in order for us to be able to say yes, he's on to something here. He wants to build strong, healthy, sustainable communities and he's got a great idea. But he's provided none of that neither in the bill itself, not in his opening commentary, not in his questions and answers. He's had ample opportunity to do all of those things, and so it's something of a disappointment—to me, anyways, if not to other members—that there wasn't a more solid foundation for this kind of a bill except to say, well, it happens in the city of Winnipeg so it should happen across Manitoba, and that's the only reason for doing it and, otherwise, there's no real requirement.

I have to say, in my constituency office this has never come to our attention as being a priority for people in Manitoba. Nobody has said, you know, outside the Perimeter we really need to get that application process down from 125 to 90 in order to ensure something. And, you know, I have some respect for the home builders. They do an important job here, and I—of course, the member knows I'm a former employee at the City of Winnipeg, and I know how I worked in the CAO Secretariat for about 10 years or 11 or so before I was elected. I had a very excellent relationship with the planning department and with planners because I know those are the individuals that at—are at the heart of strong, safe and healthy cities and healthy communities, and so I have not had any of my planning friends come to me and say, well, this needs to happen in order to ensure that we can enhance the well-being and welfare of our communities. No one has actually raised it with us, and it seems like an afterthought on the part of the government, certainly not a priority that we're debating this on a Tuesday morning.

And I have to say, Madam Speaker, just as my time winds down here, if this were presented as an enhancement to planning, as an enhancement for strong, safe and healthy communities, it might be more persuasive argument. Instead, the member brings it in as part of his red tape reduction

fascination, his obsession with deregulation in our communities. The government's already put forward some jaw-dropping red tape reduction bills that are in-going to imperil the very well-being of health and safety in our communities, of environmental standards and are taking us truly back, not even into the 20th century when it comes to some of this stuff, but right back into the 19th century, when there was an absence of the kind of regulatory framework to ensure that our communities were strong and they were safe and they were healthy and that they were about, first and foremost, the people and the families who lived there, not about what—not about the well-being of developers, although an important role that they play too in the development of our communities.

So I just want to say in closing that this—while I appreciate the member bringing this forward, it actually is a significant disappointment to me that he came with no evidence, that he's presented it as part of his red tape reduction obsession, which threatens the very well-being of our communities, their health, their safety and standards that need to be maintained and enhanced to ensure our families live good and productive and happy lives.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I was pleased to learn earlier in this discussion that private members' bills introduced by MLAs who are part of the Conservative caucus are to be considered as government bills. You know, I am pleased to learn, then, that several of the bills which have been brought forward by the MLA for Assiniboia are now to be considered government bills, and we look forward to them being discussed and debated, as with the other government bills.

I'm disappointed that the MLA for Morris wasn't able to provide information on the average wait time today. We know that he wants to shorten the wait from 125 to 90 days, or the potential wait. We don't know how many currently have to wait that long or whether all of them are now passed in 90 days. But—and I would also have liked to learn and the question that I asked was: Of the last few years, how many more actually take more than 90 days? How necessary is this legislation?

Now, that being said, I am—appreciate efforts to reduce delays. Clearly, particularly, if the City of Winnipeg has 90 days, that rural areas and rural municipalities should be able to get things done, particularly with today's technology and that this

should be possible within 90 days, and as Liberals, we will certainly support this bill. Oh, this is, you know, a small effort, but we think it's a reasonable one. However, I note that the MLA for Morris was saying that there's 88,000 regulations. I hope we don't have 88,000 bills to address each of them individually. But—that—we will do them one at a time, whatever the member brings forward, and I look forward to more bills coming. Though, hopefully not quite the full 88,000.

With those few words, Madam Speaker, thank you very much. Merci.

* (10:50)

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): Madam Speaker, this is a bill that deserves more consideration considering that it is an attempt on the part of the sponsor of the bill to put his name somewhere. It's not well-thought-out; it's a hurry-up-and-wait bill.

There is a—currently a Red Tape Reduction Task Force that this bill is jumping the gun on. This is not the proper time to put this bill in. I think it's not even proper to call it a government bill. I echo the statement from the member from River Heights that this bill, well, it does not conform to a government bill. But, then, it was labelled as such by the sponsor. I really am confused, as I always am, especially from statements from members of the opposition.

The objection that I really have regarding this bill is that it pretends that it's only an administrative review of what the periods of time are. It's actually a very sneaky way of introducing something about the dynamics of the municipal and city planning boards, how they take into account an application for a development permit. Because the way that it affects applicants is that, if there should be a delay in the approval or rejection refusal of the development permit, is that the municipality will be penalized for it. Or the city will be penalized for it. Or the town will be penalized for it. And it's not really one of those things that I would approve of, especially considering that most municipalities in our province are—there are part-time bureaucrats in our municipalities.

Some of the work that has been put in by those folks from our rural areas are tremendously important in the lives of those who live in their respective communities. Now, the way that this was presented was that it's—the question that I had was whether this would include the speeding up and

expediting of building barns. And—or even changing the use of a particular piece of land. Is this something that will affect our water, especially when there's a compulsion on the part of those who are considering the application to hurry up—hurry up in the approval or refusal?

And the way that I see it is that the 125 days usually would give enough time for those who are submitting evidence opposing or supporting any development permit application. They have enough time to put the submissions in their proper perspective so that a meaningful judgment is taken by the boards who are considering those applications and that the correct judgment is made.

My work, previously, in the Metropolitan Manila government was that we were assigned some projects that involved mobility and, of course, the approval of applications for urban sprawl, which means that there were some areas of the Metropolitan Manila area that were considered as forests. And my experience is that the developers usually go to where land is cheap, apply for a change of use, say, from farmland or agricultural land to residential or even commercial, and that's where, I think, this is headed, wherein the planning boards and the officials who are running those agencies will be compelled to act without proper consultation because they're under the gun.

Ninety days is, by all accounts, short because within 90 days, there may only be 66 working days, taking out all the weekends. Now, with 125 days or, for that matter, 120 days, we have enough time or we give enough time for those officials to at least take the time and do the metrics and do the analysis of the application for development.

I am worried that, if a business suddenly wants to build somewhere along the lines of a five-storey building right next to the airport in my constituency, it will be subject to the 90-day rule. Hurry up; decide whether you will approve it or not. And it is that type of compulsion that we put those boards under.

* (11:00)

I am of the impression that this bill should have given more facts and more evidence as to what its intended consequences are. There's nothing in this bill that says anything about the consequences of 90 days versus 125, as it stands now. I think The Planning Act should be left alone and we should try to at least comply with 125 days as it is written today, and not 90 because 90 is too short a time. And

we are at that point where any and everything that we do in this House, in this Chamber affects our constituents all over the province. Without any exception, those impacts might even be so nefarious. And we—

Madam Speaker: Order.

When this matter is again before the House, debate will be open.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 14—Child Advocacy Organizations

Madam Speaker: The hour now being 11 a.m. and time for private member's resolution, the resolution before us this morning is the resolution Child Advocacy Organizations brought forward by the honourable member for Fort Richmond.

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma),

WHEREAS in Canada, one in three girls and one in six boys experience an unwanted traumatic event before they are 18 years of age, which includes but is not limited to physical, sexual and psychological abuse or exposure to intimate partner violence; and

WHEREAS tragic consequences arise when there is a failure to intervene early and effectively to protect endangered children; and

WHEREAS organizations like the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, the Joy Smith Foundation, the Child Protection Branch and others across our country work to ensure vulnerable children and families have the supports they need; and

WHEREAS Theoren Fleury, along with other advocates, victims and their families have started the Victor Walk Movement to bring awareness and a voice to those who have been affected by these traumatic incidents; and

WHEREAS through his child advocacy center and through the Respect in Schools initiative, Sheldon Kennedy has dedicated his life to ensuring that children have the best assistance available to start them on the right path; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government has introduced both the Protecting Children (Information Sharing) Act and the Advocate for Children and Youth Act, legislation that is designed to better protect vulnerable children in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS communities must work together to provide services and supports that are responsive to the needs of children.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize the organizations and advocates who work to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable Manitoba children.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Guillemard: Madam Speaker, some subjects are painful to think about, speak about or even make reference to. Child abuse in all forms is one of those subjects. The emotions that this topic evokes in us is instinctual. For those who have been raised in healthy households with loving parents, the thought of someone harming a child causes protective reactions, and it should.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

We will never live in a world free from people whose intentions are to harm others, whether it be from learned behaviour or simply an evil drive, there's an acknowledgement that not everyone is a kind person. Not everyone protects children. Some look to harm children in the most cowardly and disgusting ways.

As horrific as some actions against our most vulnerable citizens are, these actions are only the beginning point of a long and complicated ripple effect of pain. Broken bones whether treated or not will eventually heal. Bruises fade and return to healthy-looking tissue. Cuts will scab over and, eventually, new skin grows where the harm was done. There is one area, Mr. Speaker, that is not so easily healed, and that is in the deepest corner of a child's soul.

Have you ever seen a child's spirit slowly die? Have you ever looked into a living, breathing young child's eyes and seen emptiness and felt the helplessness of no future? It's one of the most heartbreaking experiences short of losing your own child in this life. And the amount of time and effort to resuscitate a dying soul is measured in years, not days or weeks. There's no cast strong enough to prevent further injury to the soul, nor any pill that could touch the seeping darkness that threatens to remove any glimpse of light that loved ones try to shine into the hopelessness. Patience, love, tears, perseverance, prayer and relationship—the science behind this kind of treatment is felt with the heart; it's not measured in blood or seen on X-rays.

An 11-year-old girl called up a friend to join her at the local playground. It was the playground next to the school they both attended and a new set of swings had recently been installed. It was a sunny afternoon and they had a couple of hours to run around before they had to be back for dinner.

While at the playground, they met up with some older kids from their school and soon a basketball game was begun. There was one older boy from high school that the girl did not recognize or know, but he seemed to be friends with the group, so no red flags were raised. The older boy began taunting the girl with inappropriate comments about her body parts. It made her feel very uncomfortable, but she didn't want to make a scene and her friends didn't seem to react to the words either, so she continued to play basketball.

The high school boy then started to talk about grabbing the little girl in places she did not want to be grabbed. That year in school, she had learned a small song during a unit on appropriate versus inappropriate touch. The song lyrics went like this: My body's nobody's body but mine, / You have your own body, / Let me have mine.

She rationalized in her head that since the boy had not touched her, there was no need to react. It was shortly after this thought when the larger group ran after the basketball that had been lobbed across the court, and the boy overpowered the girl and carried out his verbal threats. The little girl's mind could not handle the shock and disgust that followed and she burst out into tears and ran all the way home.

The police were contacted; they promised to send two female officers, only, two males showed up to take the statement. The little girl shared her statement through the numbness. A trial was set for six months later. There were interviews with lawyers and therapists; there was no escape from reliving the details.

The little girl endured prank calls and threats while riding her bike in the neighbourhood from the high school boy and his friends. The neighbours were overheard saying, at least she didn't get raped, as if to diminish the awful experience she had gone through. Nightmares prevented sleep and the girl became paralyzed with fear to even leave her home without the protection of her parents. Every single detail of the incident played over and over in the little girl's mind as she tried desperately to figure out what she had done wrong to make all this happen to her. As the trial date came closer, she even had

thoughts of ending her life to avoid being in the same room as the monster who had hurt her.

The day came to testify. The girl walked slowly into the courtroom with her mother but had to separate from her to sit by herself in the centre of the room in a small witness box. The first few questions were easy to answer, but then the judge asked her to point out the person who had hurt her. She slowly turned her head to look at the face that had lived in her nightmares for months, and as she pointed her finger towards him, he sneered at her with glaring eyes. This was the moment the girl no longer felt part of her body, and as the defense lawyer took his turn, trying to pick apart her story, she no longer believed she had done the right thing by telling someone what had happened. The damage had been done; her spirit no longer focused on a bright future or achieving dreams. She was in survival mode and would remain there until the love and support of her family would slowly revive her back to health years later.

That little 11-year-old girl was me, Mr. Speaker. She will always be part of who I am today, but not as a broken piece anymore. What I learned through this traumatic experience has given me an insight to offer hope to others who may not have the same supports I was blessed with.

Mr. Speaker, the harm that children endure through abuse is not temporary in nature, even if the broken bones heal and bruises disappear. This is why organizations exist, not only to teach children to recognize abuse in all forms, but also to support them through the awful years of acute trauma, chronic trauma and eventual road back to independent and productive life. Some of the organizations that are instrumental in the healing process are the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, the Joy Smith Foundation, Snowflake Place and Marymount, just to name a few. We have countless advocates who work tirelessly to help protect our children from predators, but also to bring determined messages of hope for those who suffer.

Theoren Fleury, a former NHL star, has been advocating for years on behalf of youth who have endured trauma. Motivated by his personal tragic experience as a young hockey player who was sexually abused by a coach, Theo has dedicated years to helping others speak out and heal from trauma.

The Victor Walk was created to raise awareness and to help fund various organizations who provide resources to young people who have been victims of

abuse. This national movement, powered by the Orange Wave of Courage, recently held a walk in Winnipeg in 2016. Its purpose is to give a voice to those affected by childhood sexual abuse and rape.

* (11:10)

Sheldon Kennedy, another former NHL star, turned his horrific experiences with sexual abuse into an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of many people. His focus on prevention has led to many legislative changes in Alberta, as well as right here in Manitoba with his support of The Protecting Children (Information Sharing) Act. His understanding of how important communication is between caregivers, as well as those involved in making decisions for children in care, has been invaluable as organizations and governments move towards better policies and laws to protect children.

Kennedy has shared that his biggest mission is to allow children the ability to share the experiences they have lived in order to assist in the healing process and moving past their trauma.

Mr. Speaker, although I wish no one would have to face the ugly process of healing a broken and dying spirit, I am thankful there are people in this world that make the journey less lonely. If you have spent time in the abyss and found your way out, you have the opportunity to become a guide to others out of the darkness.

Hope is a powerful force, and one that needs to be shared with many. This is why I'm bringing forth this resolution before the House today. I want to salute and encourage those who are willing to travel back into the pain in hopes of leading others back to wholeness. These are the angels that walk among us, and society owes them a debt of gratitude for their sacrifices.

In the gallery today we have some very special local angels: from Marymount, CEO Ben Van Haute and clinical director Analyn Einarson; from Snowflake Place, Cheryl Martinez. And I am told that we are also expecting representatives from Children and Youth in Challenging Contexts. Thank you for your hearts.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Questions

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held, and questions may be addressed to the following sequence: the first

question to be—might be asked by the member for— from another party. Any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties, each independent member may ask one question, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Would the member advise what kind of investments the—her government will be putting in place of support of advocacy organizations here in Manitoba?

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): I thank the member for that question, and thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This resolution is focusing on giving credit to and bringing praise to the organizations that do exist today. This government is fully supportive of those who work alongside those who have been hurt, who require the resources and time to bring them back to wholeness. And our government is absolutely supportive of this resolution, is supportive of the children, especially those who are vulnerable and in need of care.

Thank you.

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): I do want to thank the member for bringing forward this resolution. I think it's important, certainly near and dear to my heart and, clearly by what we've heard her say today, we understand, I think, a little bit better of why it's near and dear to her heart.

So my question for the member is: Can she speak about why early intervention is so important when young people experience these kinds of traumas, this kind of—these kinds of events in their lives?

Mrs. Guillemard: I thank the member for the question.

Absolutely this is near and dear to my heart and, although I have lived through a long journey towards healing, the early interventions and cares, and having many people there to support knowing the silent trauma that these young youth and children go through, that they cannot verbalize it or understand it themselves—it is absolutely paramount that we have resources in place that know the invisible hurts, the invisible pain that these children are in, who may not be able to verbalize them right away. But they certainly need that relationship.

The—in fact, I've been told that children who do experience this—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Ms. Fontaine: Would the member tell the House how the cuts that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) has made to the health and education systems will impact on Manitoba's most vulnerable children?

Mrs. Guillemard: I thank the member for the question.

My hope was that this particular resolution would not become political in nature as I do not believe that this is a partisan issue.

The supports that come for children who have gone through trauma don't always require funding. A lot of times it requires the support of the community around them from those who care and love for them to understand their role in the healing process and bringing these children back to wholeness, and standing by them and giving them that support. And I would hope that all members of this House would support this resolution recognizing that the children need all of us—our voices together working towards their healing and support.

Thank you.

Mr. Teitsma: I also want to personally thank the people who have come from these many organizations within our city, within our province, and to thank you for the work that you do and the help that you provide.

And so, with my next question I'd actually just like to give the member who's brought forward this resolution an opportunity to reflect on some of those organizations, such as the ones represented in the gallery and others, as to what they do in the roles that they play in dealing with these kinds of trauma.

Mrs. Guillemard: Thank you for that question.

They absolutely play a pivotal role in helping society by coming alongside these children who have been harmed, and the organizations that we have been in contact with through this resolution preparation is the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, the Joy Smith Foundation, Snowflake Place, Children and Youth in Challenging Contexts, the Theoren Fleury victory walk organization, Sheldon Kennedy, respecting school program, and there are a few other organizations that we did reach out to. And these organizations recognize that the success and the healing process is not measured in months or days, it's measured in years—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): I would like to ask why has the government failed to bring in a customary-care model for CFS where this 'bodel' was supported by many First Nations leaders, and including my community of OCN.

Mrs. Guillemard: I thank the member for the question.

And, again, I do want to go back to the purpose of this resolution, and really the spirit of this resolution it is to acknowledge the organizations that do exist, that have come alongside and helped our youth and those who have gone through tragedy, those who are most vulnerable in our society. And they have come alongside them and recognized that there is an area of need, of developing relationships and training them how to re-establish healthy relationships with society and with those who they care about.

So I really want to get back to the resolution in recognizing these organizations that spend not only time and energy, but they give their whole hearts to these youth and children who need that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona): I'm familiar with some of the organizations that you've mentioned in here, Canadian Centre for Child Protection as well as Joy Smith, but the Snowflake Place is something I haven't heard about yet, and in this building part of what we have to do is learn. Could you elaborate a little bit more what Snowflake Place actually does?

Mrs. Guillemard: I thank the member for that question.

I'd absolutely love to share a little bit about what Snowflake Place does. It's a child advocacy centre focusing on the needs of children and youth that have experienced abuse. The centre is designed to facilitate multisystem collaboration and foster best practices in child abuse investigations to ensure that victims receive sensitive and immediate support in a child-friendly setting that puts their needs first. Their team is able to engage with the child victim and their non-offending caregivers and have the ability to conduct interviews, case planning meetings and provide support services.

Ms. Fontaine: Can the member advise the House why her government failed to vote in favour of the extension of care resolution?

* (11:20)

Mrs. Guillemard: I thank the member for the question.

And it just actually brings me pleasure to bring the focus right back where it belongs, and that's on these organizations that provide such an invaluable service to the children who need it most.

And this is not about how the government has discussed other bills or other functions; this is solely about showing respect for those who have given their lives—given a lot of their souls in order to help others to come out of the darkness.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Teitsma: I can share with the House that I've certainly been working in this kind of an area for, well, more years than I care to remember, honestly, because even as a teenager I was often providing, you know, friendship, support, counselling to those—to victims of childhood sexual abuse. And one of the things that I observed was that all too often it—these children can be—after experiencing sexual abuse—certainly can be left out, and that makes them, in a way, more vulnerable for human trafficking. And the Joy Smith Foundation is near to my heart—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mrs. Guillemard: I thank the member for that question, and I do believe it was leading down towards questions about the Joy Smith Foundation, which is another organization that I am very impressed with and proud to support.

The Joy Smith Foundation works to ensure that people are safe from manipulation, force or abuse of power designed to lure or exploit people into the sex trade or forced labour. And I personally have met with Joy Smith multiple times to hear about the harrowing stories that she will bring forth. She helps multiple young women out of the sex trade. And to hear the stories of how they were lured into this particular devastating path is heart-breaking because most people do look at certain demographics of this population, but everybody—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Ms. Fontaine: Can the member advise how will these cuts that her government has made—how it will affect the caseloads of individuals that are actually working in child advocacy organizations here in Manitoba?

Mrs. Guillemard: I thank the member for that question, and I think I'll go back again to the fact that this resolution really is an opportunity to highlight the wonderful work done by the organizations we have here in Manitoba and across Canada who are working tirelessly, not only to try to prevent cases of trauma where there would be years of therapy following, but to support those who have been through it.

The sad reality of this life is that we will never eradicate abuses in this world. But to have people who can make a less lonely journey, that is invaluable to have in our society.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The time for question period has expired.

Debate

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The debate is open. Any speakers?

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): So I just want to acknowledge the member for bringing the private member's resolution to the House this morning and to allow us to have what is a really important discussion. And I had a conversation with the member just prior to us starting this, and those words and those sentiments still exist directly to that—to the member.

I—and I know that we've, you know, talked about this issue, debated this issue, rose in this House about the issue of abuse of children, sexual abuse, physical abuse, cultural abuse, and I know that every single person in this House wants the best for their children and for all of Manitoba children. So I don't think that that's up for debate today. I think that we all love our children. We all feel a deep and profound sense of responsibility for all children here in Manitoba and across the country.

I think that I want to acknowledge all of the myriad of different organizations and individuals that work directly with children who have experienced sexual abuse or physical abuse. And, actually, in Manitoba we have quite a few organizations that do just phenomenal work. And I agree with the member that individuals that dedicate their lives to working

with children who are just so traumatized, and at very, very early ages, it takes extraordinary human beings to be able to do that work.

It's not easy work. I know that I've done that work in a myriad of different ways, in a variety of different capacities, and I've actually—and I think I've mentioned this before in the House, that I've worked with several individuals who have worked directly with children who have experienced just grotesque levels of abuse, who, often because they put their whole heart and spirit in to that work and into that child or the children that they're working with, actually end up themselves getting vicarious trauma. And a lot of individuals end up having to take time off.

I know several individuals that have actually had just full breakdowns. And actually I know one individual who worked in one of our group homes with some of the most traumatized children coming from all over Manitoba—that she—her spirit was so hurt and so traumatized by the stories of the children that she worked with, that she loved so much, she had a nervous breakdown and she actually ended up losing all of her hair. That's how much the trauma impacted her.

And so, certainly, a private member's resolution that recognizes the individuals that do this work is fitting, and certainly, I think called for.

And you know, I know that the individuals that work in—again, all across Manitoba and really, all across the country—often don't get the recognition in respect of the profound sense of commitment that they have to children.

And so, you know, I do want to just stand in the House today and say that I do recognize and really honour the work that individuals do in the lives of children and in the lives of some children that actually have nobody to advocate for them and have very, very little supports.

So we know that some of the individuals that work in these organizations really are that kind of first line of support. And it—they are the first line in which this child has some sense of safety, and security, and actually believing in their story, and actually believing in them that they can, you know, in some respects, help them get onto a healing path.

I'll mention just a couple. We have some extraordinary human beings, obviously, in the House with us this morning, but we have, you know, the phenomenal folks that work at Ma Mawi Wi Chi

Itata. We have the amazing people that work at Ka Ni Kanichihk. I know that it's in the private member's resolution here; the Child Protection Branch, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, they do extraordinary work.

And I do want to mention, actually, Sheldon Kennedy and Theo Fleury, because they are mentioned in here, but I actually remember back in 1998, watching the news. If anybody knows me, you'll know that I'm constantly watching the news. And I remember it was the first time I had heard of Sheldon Kennedy. I'm not a hockey person, so, of course, I wouldn't have known about him, but I remember watching the news and they were reporting on the fact that he was rollerblading all across Canada to bring attention to sexual abuse of children here in Canada and that he had come forward with his own story of abuse.

And I thought that it was extraordinary because the reality is—and, as everyone in this House and everyone all over the place knows, I am a victim of sexual abuse starting at the age of five. I'm actually, you know, four generations of Fontaine women who have been sexually abused as children. And again, that stems from the residential school. I think that there was a space in which women—and it's still difficult, but there was a space in which women were more inclined or more able to talk about their sexual abuse.

And actually, in the last maybe, you know, 10, 15 years, we see more men coming forward—like, as adults, coming forward with their own stories of sexual abuse. And I think that that's very telling that we've created as space in Canada where now men, and young men, and boys can come forward with, you know, again, just the absolute grotesque violation of their innocence and of their rights.

* (11:30)

And I remember being just absolutely amazed with Sheldon Kennedy, that he had come forward in such a public way, as such a public figure. And it—actually, when you—when you're able to do that, and it's—and I know I talk about this often, but it is such a sacred responsibility that he was able to garner the courage and, very publicly, talk about sexual abuse for himself. It actually is transformative in the lives of other survivors. Right? When somebody can hear another young boy, or young—another young man, or another man can come forward and say, well, you know, I've heard Sheldon Kennedy or Theo Fleury talk about their sexual abuse.

I was actually—I don't know when in September I had done some article in which we talked about sexual abuse within the indigenous community, and I talked about my own story, blah blah blah. And, actually, what was interesting about that is, you know, I'd gotten several messages, you know, dah dah dah, whatever. But, actually, what I thought was, again, really telling was I actually got quite a bit of messages from men who talked about their own sexual abuse. And that was, actually, the first time that, actually, some men had actually reached out to me. And one individual that I know—I've known for years, who's a lawyer, who is so active within the indigenous community across the country, who actually shared that with me.

So, you know, this private member's bill, I do—I will say, you know, builds on the work of us being open and honest about sexual abuse and physical abuse of children. Because, if we continue to deny it—if those of us that have experienced it continue to not talk about it in a very public way, it just continues. And, certainly, everyone in this House—and I know we all are committed to this—that we have to create a space in which sexual abuse of children—and young children, like, you know, I used to participate—I used to work with some of our probation officers at the high-risk sex offender unit. Like, some of the stories that I was informed of, like, sexual abuse on babies—on babies. It is absolutely grotesque and savage to be able to execute such—I mean, I—anyways, as we know.

So, I just want to say that I think that it is important that we speak about sexual abuse and that we, you know, as a society demand that our children are safe. We all want our children to be safe, and they have the right in this country to be safe from sexual and physical abuse.

And so, finally, Deputy Speaker, I just want to, on behalf of our NDP caucus, just really lift up the work of individuals that do this work here in Manitoba and across the country. Miigwech.

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): I'm grateful for the opportunity to speak on this resolution. I've said earlier that it's important to me. I think I've expressed in this House that I have three daughters. And some of you may remember me speaking of how I want them to grow up in a society where they're free from intimidation, from bullying, from sexual violence, and that's also why I brought forward a private member's resolution earlier this session talking about

reducing the impacts that sexual imagery can have on our youth.

And while I have three daughters, I also have three sons, so I'm very much aware of the impacts that the member for St. James brought forward—or, St. Johns, rather, brought forward in terms of that this is not a—this is not necessarily a problem that's exclusive to one gender or the other.

Certainly, as a father, I take it very seriously that I have a significant role in protecting my children—my own children, but also the rest of children that are in my community, that are in my social circle, and that I have the opportunity to provide protection. And I think what is important is for all of us, as 'legislators,' is to recognize that we have a higher level of accountability in that regard, that in that sense we're responsible for the children of the whole province and we need to bear that in mind.

As a parent, too, I've known from an early point how important it is for me to affirm my children and not tear them down, and I think so often it's that desire for approval that isn't being met in the home that takes some of these kids out of their homes, away from their parents, where they're not getting approval, where they're not getting that safe environment, and then they end up in places where abuse can happen, where they can be groomed and—yes, these things, unfortunately, are far too common in our society.

It's interesting—when I read the resolution, you know, the first statement hit me. It says there's one in three girls and one in six boys experience an unwanted traumatic events, including physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, or exposure to intimate partner violence. So as someone who's been exposed to more than one of those things—I thought one in six was a little low, honestly, so—and I suspect the people in the gallery might think so, too.

But I think we have to always remember that although this sad—I'd like to say it's a chapter, but it's not a chapter because it's a thread that weaves its way throughout human history so that this sad reality that we live in, although it is sad and tragic, doesn't need to be without hope, and I'm just going to share with you a brief story.

I have a friend who's—they're a couple, actually, a married couple, that provide counselling and they also assist with trying to deal with trauma that occurred in a childhood age and was suppressed and now, many years later, you know, it can come to

light, and they shared with me a story of three sisters. And—they were counselling one of the sisters—but there had been three sisters; they were indigenous and their parents had died, one of disease and one of a violent death, and so they became the wards of their aunt. And their aunt apparently had no regard for them, and pimped them out at a very young age. I believe they were seven, nine, and 11 when the abuse began.

One of them committed suicide as a teenager. One of them remained trapped in addiction and sex trafficking—sadly still a victim, but the one that they were speaking with had broken free. She had chosen not to let those experiences define or keep her down—let's put it that way, to put her down, and instead used them in a way that spoke more to her strength.

And so I think it's—what I'm trying to get at is that there's always hope, and in all these situations there needs to be a consistent message of hope, and that's why I think it's so, so important that we recognize who delivers that hope on a day-in, day-out basis, and that's who we have represented in the gallery today.

That's who many of us in this Legislature have met with and have encouraged and have, you know, given personally of our resources, our time, our talents, our money, to encourage them and the work that they do and to want to see it grow and expand so that all children can get the help that they need when they need it.

And that's one of the things that I'm particularly pleased about, is that the Respect in Schools program is continuing. I was pleased to host that event along with the member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski) in Bernie Wolfe school when we announced that all staff members of all school divisions, all independent schools throughout our province, are going to be able to be trained so that they can see the kinds of symptoms that can provide clues into—that abuse may be happening—whether that's physical or sexual or psychological—and that early intervention can occur because these teachers have daily contact with these kids for the bulk of the year, and as—in that way, they provide an effective backstop to the parents.

And I also believe that we really need to equip parents. We need parents who can recognize that their child's being groomed. We need parents who can recognize that their child's being bullied or harassed or abused, and that they're willing to get the help that they need.

* (11:40)

So, once again, I thank the member for bringing forward this resolution. I thank the advocacy organizations that are represented in the gallery and that are so active in our province and our city, and I think we should all be proud—especially here in Manitoba—that Manitoba, I think, and Winnipeg, has a reputation, I believe, that is well-deserved in the world—in North America, as being at the forefront of protecting children. We do it through the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, which is headquartered in Winnipeg. We do it through things like the Joy Smith Foundation. It's from here, you know, we can lay some claim, I think, to Theo Fleury, but we don't—and Sheldon Kennedy, perhaps—but I guess they're a little bit not living here anymore. But, in any case, certainly, I think, that we should be proud of that, but we should also recognize that the work is not done and it will never be done. So let's resolve together to support these organizations, to recognize them for the good work that they do and to carry on and soldier forward.

Thank you.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): So I just want to say right off the top that, from the bottom of my heart, I sincerely appreciate the courage and the bravery of our colleague from Fort Richmond for sharing her own personal story here today. I want to thank her for that. And I also believe that being courageous, as she and our sister from St. Johns have been in sharing their own stories, helps to normalize the experience of survivors of sexual violence, which helps to make it easier for other people to begin to share and disclose their own stories, and that it also helps to advance the discussions of us as a society as a whole in trying to encourage safe spaces for victims and survivors of sexual violence and sexual misconduct to come forward and share their own stories—but, also, for us all to collaborate and work together to build a culture of consent in our society.

So, again, I do want to say that, you know, I appreciate the gesture of recognizing these organization that advocate on behalf of children. I think that they do good work, it's fantastic work that these organizations do. One of the, you know, organizations that I had a few interactions with during my time as a journalist was the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. I was often, you know, covering their announcements and, you know, the various public awareness campaigns that they launch towards helping protect children in our

society. And I found that, you know, the passion and the visibility with which they carried out their activities did very much, I think, help to put this cause further and further forward on the public's radar, and also made it a more salient issue in our public discourse.

I believe that the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, their office is actually located in the former Assiniboia residential school, which is basically just between Wellington Crescent and Academy, near Route 90. So it's, you know, quite fitting that an organization which stands today for the rights of children, for the sanctity of a childhood free of trauma, is located on the site which formerly was one in which very many children experienced trauma. Be that the trauma of being removed from their families by force or, in many cases, the more severe traumas, which—of abuse and cultural genocide which have been documented in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. And so if that, you know, significance of the location itself, may signify something greater, perhaps it is that in our society we can't turn away from the ugliness and, you know, the trauma that exists, but we can begin to retake and appropriate some of those incidents towards the purpose of telling a story which helps children in the future. So I did want to share that on the record.

Also during my time as a journalist, I remember covering what eventually became the conviction of Graham James, who was the former hockey coach and the abuser of some of the people that—our colleague from Fort Richmond cites in the resolution that we're debating here today. And, you know, I was, you know, privileged to talk to some of these, you know, hockey players over the years. And, you know, I really was struck by a few things, like, (1) Theoren Fleury, first of all, Sheldon Kennedy, these are guys whose hockey cards I had growing up and who I watched on TV when I was a little kid on the reserve and the only channel we got was, you know, CBC to watch Hockey Night in Canada, right? So to become an adult, young adult at the time, and to be able to interview these guys was a, you know, a pretty stunning moment in my life. But, you know, setting, you know, that fan-boy instinct aside, I was very much struck by each of their messages. You know, Theoren Fleury kind of, you know, explained, you know, the chance that I had, you know, to cover a bit of his story. He really did just kind of spell it out, his journey from moving, you know, from victim to survivor to victor over his childhood trauma. And for him to take ownership and to

declare himself a victor at the end of that journey so not being merely just somebody who had endured, but somebody who had overcome and came to be a champion for other young people who are in a situation like his. You know, that was a really powerful articulation of that process and really helped me to understand the journey that he had been on. And then to see everything that he's done since, you know: best-selling book, inspire award, becoming a leading advocate on these was, you know, all the more meaningful because I had that bit of insight into his experience.

And Sheldon Kennedy, you know, as one of the reporters on the steps of the Law Courts Building on the day that, you know, Graham James sort of spoke for the first time and we had the chance to talk to him there, and what I remember about that is that one of the reporters, one of the journalists asked, you know, do you believe this guy when he expresses remorse and contrition? And Sheldon Kennedy simply said, no, I don't believe him. And, you know, to me that was a moment of realness. That was a moment of reality that as much as we want to see healing and as much as we want to see the better part of human nature rise above some of the negativity that can exist in our society, that we also ought to be clear eyed about it and we also ought to be realistic that, you know, child safety has to come first, child protection has to come first.

And so I think that for all of us here as, you know, colleagues in the Legislative Assembly, that is one of those fine lines that we have to figure out how to walk. We ought to try and do what we can to keep families together. We ought to try and work to support children in communities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls on us to act in a way to counter the intergenerational impacts of residential schools.

So we have to do all these things and yet, at the same time, we have to ensure that child safety is paramount. And at the end of the day if a child is in a real threat or is in a situation of abject neglect, then, you know, there ought to be an intervention there. And so we have to keep in mind those two twin ideals for our society of compassion, but also of protection and safety and putting the interests of children first and foremost.

I know, recently, we debated a resolution here called 25not21, which I thought was an important step coming as it did from advocates who had aged out of the child-welfare system themselves,

essentially calling on the provincial government to extend extensions of care from age 21 to 25 so that we can support them with more housing supports, more educational supports and, you know, other measures to help them complete post-secondary educations.

* (11:50)

I know that we did not have the opportunity to pass that resolution at last discussion, but I would encourage everyone who is in favour of this one to take another look at the 25not21 initiative. I know that this is something that this government may return to during this particular mandate, during this Legislature. And, to me, it is an important one because it does look out for the best interests of the child. It does help to support those most vulnerable in our society, and there is, actually, a cost savings system-wide when we invest in the positive supports for young people rather than, you know, having to direct them towards the social safety net or incarceration or other forms of, you know, government interventions later on in their own lives.

So, with that short plug for one of the other priorities that does impact on children, being the 25not21 initiative, which was, of course, recommended as one of the outgoing recommendations by the previous Children's Advocate, I would just say that, again, I appreciate the member from Fort Richmond's courage in sharing her personal story and using that to advance something that I do believe is in the best interests of children generally across our society. And so, you know, I am in favour of this resolution that we're speaking to here today.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): I'd like to thank the member from Fort Richmond for bringing forward this resolution.

While we strive to provide every child with the care and attention they deserve, many fall through the cracks of our social system. There are so many young children that experience neglect and traumatic events. It falls to us to ensure that all children are well looked after and protected. However, some families cannot always be there for our children due to commitments elsewhere. These families, particularly those with vulnerable children, need the help and support of many organizations. No one knows the needs of communities better than themselves, and our communities must work together to keep Manitoba's youth safe.

The many proud organizations in Manitoba that protect our youth and provide them with a voice deserve to be honoured by everyone within our province. The hard work and dedication these organizations and their staff prove to be instrumental in protecting children from situations or people that seek to harm them while providing much-needed assistance to their families.

The passion of individuals involved in children's advocacy groups is a lesson of humanity, empathy and caring, lessons we can all strive to learn from, for no child deserves to live without happiness in their hearts, and no child in Manitoba should fear falling as victims to situations that harm. All children in our province deserve to know that we, in the Manitoba legislative, stand with them and will do our best to ensure their safety. To this goal, we pay tribute and recognize those who work directly in the field of children advocacy and protection. You serve as a shield, protecting children from harm, and you give them a channel to voice their concerns.

Many organizations also help heal those who have suffered and provide them the means to recovery. I know from recently meeting with our new Children's Advocate that neglect, apprehension and new placement can often be very traumatic on its own, and I honestly believe that our province is on the right track.

In honour of the amazing services that those protecting our children have given this province and our youth, I say miigwech and thank you. And, with the hopes of voting in favour of this resolution today, I'll end my comments there.

Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona): I'd like to thank the member from Fort Richmond for bringing forth this resolution and for her touching story. When I was listening to the story, I was thinking, well, it doesn't seem like I've read about this or heard about this. And, then, when you find out it's a very personal story—so I commend her for bringing the story forward and using that time in her life to recognize these groups that do such important work.

I do know that everybody in this House, all members in this House feel the same way. We all want to protect the children—the most vulnerable.

I thank them humbly for agreeing to pass the resolution I brought forward just a couple of weeks ago regarding copyright legislation and victims of child abuse. On that specific day, I wasn't positive—I wasn't sure that this resolution would go through.

And my concern was less about getting the resolution passed, it was much more about making sure that I speak well on this important, important issue—making sure that I speak respectfully and represent the Canadian Centre for Child Protection and all the important work they do with the best ability that I could. The fact that it got passed was almost secondary, because I learned from my previous life. I didn't know too much about child abuse. I haven't had to see that in my life, thank God, but I learned a little bit about it—I learned a lot about it, and was able to speak about it.

And then later on that day after the resolution was actually delivered to my office, I happened to be meeting with somebody, and I pulled it out of the manila envelope, and the person—I told them what it was about. And they said, thank you. I said, well, it's kind of what we do here. And she said, no, I'm a victim of child abuse. And she and I started exchanging stories about things that she's gone through and that I'd recently learned about.

So I thank people for supporting me on that. I congratulate or acknowledge the work that we all try to do for this. The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is a wonderful organization with Cybertip and Project Arachnid. And I do know that when you go into that building as the member from Fort Rouge mentioned, it's a former residential school and, like, a beautiful building. It has pictures of children, beautiful children, who represent the unimaginable.

I'm very, very happy to support the member's resolution. I'm very proud to stand up in this House that we all come together at certain times for

important things such as this and acknowledging these groups.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there any further—any other speakers? Is that—

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The question?

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

I declare the resolution carried.

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to see if there is agreement to have this recorded as unanimous.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed by the Government House Leader to have this unanimous vote on this—recorded as unanimous support on this bill—on this resolution? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Micklefield: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to see if there's leave of the House to sit on Friday morning—oh, I'm told I should not be doing this at this particular time, so sneak preview, everybody.

Then how about—let's try another leave request: I'm wondering if there's leave of the House, given that it's a few minutes before 12, to call it 12 o'clock.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call this 12 p.m.? *[Agreed]*

So it's 12 p.m., everybody rise—the hour being 12 p.m., the House is now recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

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