

Fifth Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
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ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	N.D.P.
BLAIKIE, Bill, Hon.	Elmwood	N.D.P.
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CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
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GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
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JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
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NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Carman	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
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SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
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WHITEHEAD, Frank	The Pas	N.D.P.
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	N.D.P.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.
<i>Vacant</i>	Inkster	
<i>Vacant</i>	Lac du Bonnet	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 2, 2011

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 46—The Save Lake Winnipeg Act

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Minister of Conservation): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald), that Bill 46, The Save Lake Winnipeg Act; Loi sur la protection du lac Winnipeg, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I'm rising today to introduce Bill 46, The Save Lake Winnipeg Act. The purpose of this bill is to further restore and protect one of Manitoba's most important water resources, Lake Winnipeg.

The Leavitt report that was just released this week, after five years of research, unequivocally shows the importance of taking further action now and acting fast to try and reverse the damage to Lake Winnipeg. I can't overemphasize that the lake is at the tipping point, and it is our role as government, and hopefully the whole Legislature, to take a stand to ensure that we stop and reverse this decline. That is why the government has committed to a 50 per cent reduction in nutrients as one of our biggest challenges of the next decade.

Key elements of the bill will help keep hog manure out of the lake by banning any new hog industry expansion that does not use advanced environmental practices and by enshrining in legislation a permanent ban on winter spreading, modernizing sewage treatment in Winnipeg by requiring the City of Winnipeg to replace its North End Sewage Treatment Plant with a full biological nutrient removal plant and putting in place new powers to protect Manitoba's wetlands, including a moratorium on the expansion of peat extraction.

Our government continues to work towards long-term solutions to restore the health of the lake. The Leavitt report makes clear that more action is needed. Bill 46 will be one important immediate step and tool that we can use to save Lake Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

Bill 24—The Innovation Funding Act

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade): I move, seconded by the honourable Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 24, The Innovation Funding Act; Loi sur le financement de l'innovation, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Bjornson: This bill establishes the Manitoba Commercialization Support for Business Program through which the government will provide financial support to business development, commercialization and entrepreneurship.

Under the program, the minister may enter into business support agreements to provide financial support for specific commercialization projects. The program provides support for a full range of commercialization activities across the whole development cycle of a product, especially early-stage development.

It also establishes an innovation trust account for the purpose of receiving returns of the government's investments in projects that achieve commercial success and using those returns to support other commercialization projects under the program.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

Bill 48—The Planning and Land Dedication for School Sites Act (Various Acts Amended)

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Local Government): I move, seconded by the Minister of Advanced Education and Literacy (Ms. Selby), that Bill 48, The Planning and Land Dedication for School Sites Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lemieux: The Planning and Land Dedication for School Sites Act is really to clarify and have some transparency with regard to land being looked at for school sites, and I look forward to moving this forward. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

**Bill 49—The Employment and Income Assistance
Amendment and Highway Traffic
Amendment Act**

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister for Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade (Mr. Bjornson), that Bill 49, The Employment and Income Assistance Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aide à l'emploi et au revenu et le Code de la route, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Swan: This bill is another measure to deal with Manitobans with outstanding warrants for serious offences. This bill will amend The Employment and Income Assistance Act to allow for the withholding or reduction of income assistance benefits for people who have an outstanding warrant for a serious prescribed offence. Exceptions can be made where a person or family might face significant hardship as a result of reduced benefits.

This bill also amends The Highway Traffic Act to allow the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to refuse to issue or renew a driver's licence permit or a vehicle registration for a person who has not dealt with an outstanding warrant for a serious offence.

This follows similar successful measures directed to those with outstanding support orders and unpaid fines. These measures are strengthened by further investments to support law enforcement enforcing outstanding warrants for those who pose risks to our neighbourhoods and communities.

I'm pleased to present this bill for consideration, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

**Bill 50—The Thompson Nickel Belt
Sustainability Act**

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the minister of Child and Family Services, that Bill 50, The Thompson Nickel Belt Sustainability Act; Loi sur la viabilité de la ceinture nickélfère de Thompson, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Chomiak: I'm very pleased to rise to introduce the bill to ensure that Vale makes payment in lieu of taxes in the amount of \$6.25 million in 2011 and

again in 2012 to the City of Thompson, School Division of Mystery Lake, local government district. As well, the bill will establish an economic development fund to promote and stimulate economic development and stability in the Thompson region both in the short, medium and long term. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

PETITIONS

PTH 16 and PTH 5 North—Traffic Signals

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

The junction of PTH 16 and PTH 5 north is an increasingly busy intersection which is used by motorists and pedestrians alike.

The Town of Neepawa has raised concerns with the Highway Traffic Board about safety levels at this intersection.

The Town of Neepawa has also passed a resolution requesting that Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation install traffic lights at this intersection in order to increase safety.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to consider making the installation of traffic lights at the intersection of PTH 16 and PTH 5 north a priority project in order to help protect the safety of the motorists and pedestrians who use it.

This petition is signed by S. Epp, J. Vaudry, B. Kim Ko and many, many other fine Manitobans.

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

PR 160 West and Highway 16

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for the petition:

The Department of Infrastructure and Transportation has developed a plan to close the intersection of PR 160 west of Highway 16 at Foxwarren. PR 160 would be redirected to the east to

join Highway 16 at Market Street in Foxwarren, and a new frontage road would be constructed on the south side of Highway 16.

* (13:40)

Area residents have a number of concerns about the proposed project, including safety issues due to increased traffic volumes in Foxwarren, encroachment on residential property, the loss of highly productive arable land and possible adverse impacts on the area waterway and insufficient public consultation.

Community members have developed an alternative proposal they believe would address these concerns while at the same time meeting the department's safety objectives as it relates to traffic flow in the area.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to consider the merits of the alternate plan developed by the community members, which includes a raised grade at PR 160, the removal of a gravel mound at the intersection of Highway 16 and 160 and the construction of an acceleration lane on the north side of Highway 16 west of PR 160.

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to consider additional public consultation before proceeding with the project to ensure all local concerns are heard and addressed before any work proceeds.

And this petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by B. Wotton, J. Johnston, L. Pizzey and many, many other Manitobans.

Auto Theft—Court Order Breaches

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly:

The background to this petition is as follows:

On December 11th, 2009, in Winnipeg, Zdzislaw Andrzejczak was killed when the car that he was driving collided with a stolen vehicle.

The death of Mr. Andrzejczak, a husband and a father, along with too many other deaths and injuries involving stolen vehicles, was a preventable tragedy.

Many of those accused in fatalities involving stolen vehicles were previously known to police and identified as chronic and high-risk car thieves who had court orders against them.

Chronic car thieves pose a risk to the safety of all Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request the Minister of Justice to consider ensuring that all court orders for car thieves are vigorously monitored and enforced.

And to request the Minister of Justice to consider ensuring that all breaches of court orders on car thieves are reported to police and vigorously prosecuted.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by C. Switzer, P. Leuenberger, J. Gogela and thousands of other concerned Manitobans.

Bipole III—Cost to Manitoba Families

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Manitoba Hydro has been directed by the provincial government to construct its next high voltage direct transmission line, Bipole III, down the west side of Manitoba.

This will cost each family of four in Manitoba \$11,748 more than an east-side route, which is also shorter and more reliable.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to build the Bipole III transmission line on the shorter and more reliable east side of Lake Winnipeg in order to save each Manitoba family of four \$11,748.

And this petition is signed by E. Peters, E. Peters, L. Peters and many, many more fine Manitobans.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with section 42 of The Ombudsman's Act, subsection 15(1) of The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, subsection 37(1) of The Personal Health Information Act and The Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act, I'm pleased to table the Annual Report of the Ombudsman for the year ended December 31st, 2010.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Flooding and Ice Jams Update

Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Water Stewardship): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

I would like to provide an update to the House on behalf of the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Ashton).

As the preliminary assessments of damages from this week's devastating storm come in, the picture that emerges is grim. It is a very sad day for many Manitoba families who are coming to terms with the fact that their home or treasured cottage will never be the same again. The full extent of damages has yet to be assessed, but early reports indicate damages to hundreds of homes and cottages on Lake Manitoba, Dauphin Lake, Ochre River and in many other areas. In many cases, the damage will be relatively minor but for some, their properties are left completely uninhabitable.

Provincial officials are working with local municipalities to assist in finding longer term accommodations for those who have lost their primary residence in this storm. Officials are also assisting in escorting people to their properties, where safe to do so, so they can gather their belongings. In some hard-hit areas like Twin Beaches, hydro poles are down, some roads are completely washed out and there is significant debris littering the area. These areas are unsafe, and municipal officials are asking people to stay away until the mandatory evacuation is lifted and it is deemed safe to return.

River and lake level forecasts are also being updated as a result of this rain, which is adding to flooding in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the United States. In Minot, mandatory evacuations of around 10,000 residents have taken place over the past few days due to rising Souris River levels. On our side of the border, the Souris River has crested to levels at almost a foot higher than previous crests as a result of this storm. Southwestern Manitoba is also dealing with significant overland flooding as a result of the intense rains.

The Assiniboine River has risen over one foot in Brandon over the past two days and is expected to rise even further. Lake Manitoba's peak levels and date are also being reassessed from this storm as a result of additional inflows coming from Lake Dauphin and Lake Winnipegosis through the

Waterhen River and increased flows through the Portage Diversion, which could rise back to the designed maximum capacity of 25,000 cfs.

Flows are also expected to increase significantly on the Saskatchewan River at The Pas over the next few weeks, and flood protection at Ralls Island will have to be increased. Provincial officials are evaluating the forecasts and will be working with the community to add to flood protection in that area.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): I thank the minister for the latest update on the flood situation.

Manitobans hammered by Tuesday's rain and high winds continue to assess the damage, particularly around Lake Manitoba, the Shoal lakes and places such as Dauphin Lake. Many of these people may not be able to return to their homes until this fall, which will create tremendous hardship.

Farmers in many municipalities in southwestern Manitoba are also assessing the impacts of the latest rains. The heavy rains washed out many roads just recently repaired, and many producers are concerned they won't be able to seed again this year. Should this happen, there will be ripple effects throughout communities and the provincial economy.

Rising waters on rivers such as the Turtle are forcing communities to revisit their flood protection measures. Ste. Rose du Lac in my constituency has closed its ring dike due to rising water. Unfortunately, there is a severe weather system moving through parts of southwestern Manitoba right now threatening to bring with it more heavy rain and hail.

I was in a meeting in Langruth yesterday where the effect of this year's flooding along Lake Manitoba was discussed. Nearly 300 people from around the lake, including property owners, ranchers and representatives from First Nations, attended. One of the key messages from this meeting was that there needs to be timely delivery of programs to those affected. Another message was that the provincial government needs to clearly identify how long it anticipates lake levels to remain high and what their strategy is to address it.

We look forward to further updates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (13:50)

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I ask leave to speak to the minister's statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: The information I have confirms what the minister says, that the situation is very grim on Lake Manitoba with hundreds of homes, some cottages, some permanent homes, being affected and flooded. The tragedy is large scale with much in the way of chaos and destruction, and, certainly, it will take a long time to repair and to plan for the future and to have some decisions made which need to be made in terms of the long-term situation for cottages in these areas, whether there would be the potential for dikes to be built, what will be the future or whether, you know, some people may have to move.

I think that these sorts of questions, obviously, are questions which people will be starting to ask and will be wanting some answers from in the not-too-distant future. Immediately, certainly we're looking at the emergency situations of families and farmers, and our hearts go out to those who have been affected, and certainly we hope that the bad wet weather, the difficult weather, doesn't continue and that we can get some warm weather and that, hopefully, that will start to dry out the situation. Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us, we have seven grade 11 law students from Elm Creek Collegiate. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Carman (Mr. Pedersen).

And also in the public gallery we have from Prairie View School, we have 15 grade 7 to 9 students under the direction of Mr. Patrick Bartel. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu).

And also in the public gallery we have from Kelvin High School, we have 25 grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Randy Medeiros. This school is located in constituency of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard).

On behalf of all honourable members I welcome you all here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Lake Manitoba Flooding Mitigation and Financial Compensation Plans

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): As the government is aware, hundreds of people from all walks of life yesterday gathered in Langruth and told many very heartbreaking stories about the very real and significant challenges that they're facing as a result of the rising water on Lake Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) was present. He acknowledged that the flooding on Lake Manitoba was as a result of government decisions and made promises that some action would follow.

And I want to ask the Premier if he would indicate when the government is going to move from promises to action on behalf of these people who are suffering.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): As the member knows, when it comes to Lake Manitoba, we have put a special compensation program in place. That program will apply to the people impacted around Langruth who are on Lake Manitoba, which is why the Minister of Agriculture attended that meeting to explain the resources that are available to them and will assure them that those resources, when applied for, will be rapidly turned around to benefit them.

That will include 100 per cent of the costs of engineering advice, up to \$2,000; 100 per cent of the cost of moving or raising homes and cottages, up to \$20,000; financial assistance for emergency flood protection; and if measures are taken to restore homes or cottages, they will be 100 per cent covered if measures are put in place to floodproof them better for the future.

So those resources are available, and they will be moved promptly on as we work with people affected in these communities from these terrible conditions that we've never seen before in Manitoba.

Mr. McFadyen: Many of the individuals—and there are people from all walks of life, Manitobans who represent every aspect of the fabric of our province—were there yesterday. They shared their stories. They expressed their frustration at the lack of forewarning and their concern about would lie ahead in the future.

Mr. Speaker, these are people who are dealing with the loss of homes, they're dealing with the loss

of farms and they're dealing with the loss of businesses.

And we know that the government has now acknowledged that it was their decisions that led to the flooding that's taking place, and we just want the government to be specific about when they are going to move from rhetoric and promises to real action on behalf of these Manitobans.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we do know that the people in that area are suffering from these unprecedented weather conditions that have affected the entire Assiniboine Valley and the Lake Manitoba region all the way up to Fairford, Lake St. Martin, through the Dauphin River. These areas are seeing moisture like they've never seen before in Manitoba. And as a result of the high wind conditions—gale-force wind conditions, 90 to 100 kilometres an hour—there have been some very serious impacts on people's homes, cottages and farms.

And we have put unprecedented resources in place to support those people, and those resources are available immediately. As of last week, those resources are available. And people in our various government departments, over 700 people working full time on this flood, are there to assist people to access these resources, to take the measures necessary to protect or restore their property, to provide resources to them, to look at both short-term support and long-term support.

Mr. Speaker, our commitment to work with people affected by this unprecedented moisture in Manitoba is unflinching and will remain resilient and consistent as we move forward.

And I was very glad that the Minister of Agriculture—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: And according to the paper this morning, at this meeting that was attended by hundreds of people—and the stories that were told were very heartbreaking—the paper this morning is reporting that no one from Manitoba Water Stewardship attended but that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) did, Mr. Speaker, and that is acknowledged. And the minister did say that Manitobans were taking it on the chin, which was the—which was his—were his words, as a result of decisions that were made to protect other parts of the province.

While these people are taking it on the chin, Mr. Speaker, they are also looking for concrete action and follow-through from this government, and many of them are feeling as though this government is treating them as second-class Manitobans.

Will the Premier assure them, Mr. Speaker, that he doesn't view them as second-class Manitobans? Will he treat them equally, as first-class Manitobans, which is what they deserve?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, not only was the Minister of Agriculture there on behalf of the whole government, but the Deputy Minister for Water Stewardship was there as well. The record needs to show that, because the member seems to have overlooked that in his description of what happened there.

Perhaps it wasn't indicated—perhaps he didn't read that in the *Free Press*, but let the record show that senior officials related to water policy and water programs were there along with the Minister of Agriculture. They were there to represent the whole government, to listen to the concerns of people, to understand what experiences they're having, to know what kinds of responses they need and to explain to them the extraordinary resources that we have put in place to respond to them.

We have announced a compensation and support program in record time since these events have started to occur in Manitoba. These programs are ready to roll out immediately and staff are available immediately to work with them to access these resources, to ensure that they get a timely response and get the treatment that all Manitobans deserve when they are in these difficult circumstances.

Residential Financial Compensation Plans

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

Mr. McFadyen: On a new question, Mr. Speaker.

And I have heard from families here in Winnipeg who have spent their whole lives acquiring property and building homes along the lake in various places. Many of those Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, are people who were—or have just retired and who had converted cottages into full-time retirement residences, people who had for 30 years of their lives had a dream of retiring along the lake. Now today many who are dealing with challenging circumstances in their lives are seeing that property destroyed, their retirement homes destroyed. What

they want from the government is acknowledgement that they take this as seriously as the situation deserves.

Will the Premier acknowledge today that it's not just a matter of trying to dismiss people as cottagers? These are retired Manitobans who are making a home along the lake after a lifetime of working hard, building up their opportunity to retire in comfort, Mr. Speaker. Why are they treating these Manitobans with such a cavalier attitude today?

* (14:00)

Mr. Selinger: The member opposite knows so well there's never been a program offered to cottagers before with the level of support that exists right now in Manitoba. We were the first government to acknowledge the need to address cottage owners who have received structural damage, and as they improve those cottages and protect them with permanent flood mitigation, they will get 100 per cent compensation.

With respect to homeowners, they will also get 100 per cent compensation if they protect themselves from flood damage in the future. That has never been done before in the history of Manitoba.

We never waited for the members of the opposition to wake up to this issue. We have not waited for the federal government to come through and say they will support us on this issue. We have gone out in front to offer tangible, practical support to people in a timely fashion at a time of unprecedented precipitation and moisture in this area of Manitoba like we've never seen before.

We're there with those people. We will continue to be there with those people. It won't be just a question of rhetoric. It'll be a question of practical support on a daily basis.

Mr. McFadyen: With the—[interjection] Well, I'm, you know, I'm glad they're so happy today, Mr. Speaker, but it's in stark contrast to the people who are being impacted.

And the reality is that the response just given by the Premier should demonstrate how out of touch he is with what's happening to the lives of these individuals. For him to refer to people who have converted cottages into retirement homes as cottagers, is what—that's exactly the issue they're talking about. In the majority of cases, these are people who have spent their whole lives working and saving with a dream of retiring to their permanent

residence along the lake. That's what the majority of these people are dealing with today. To dismiss them, Mr. Speaker, as cottagers, shows how out of touch this Premier is.

I want to ask the Premier if he will acknowledge that many of the people who are dealing with this hardship are retired Manitobans who spent their whole lives working and saving, looking forward to the dream of retiring to this beautiful part of Manitoba. That dream is now shattered.

Will the Premier now apologize for dismissing these people as mere cottagers?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, it always amazes me the desperate and reckless approach the member opposite makes when he likes to—he always likes to take and interpret the words of others to support his own political agenda.

We have made it very clear, Mr. Speaker. If somebody lives in a home on the lake, they can get 100 per cent compensation if they restore that home or protect that home with additional flood protection measures. We have said the same thing to cottagers. If a person lives in a home, has converted a cottage to a home, it can be considered as a home. There's no doubt about that.

The only person that is playing fast and loose with retired people is the Leader of the Opposition. We brought out the program of compensation which has for the first time in the history of the province recognized both homeowners and cottage dwellers on Lake Manitoba.

The members opposite never suggested that. They never offered that. They've always been a dollar short and a day late when it comes to promoting the people on Lake Manitoba.

Mr. McFadyen: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is today acknowledging—or seems to be claiming that they didn't see this coming, that they didn't anticipate it. He did 23 photo ops in the lead-up to this, and now he says that he's caught off guard; he's surprised by what's happening.

But that's actually slightly different from what he said in the House yesterday. Yesterday, in the House, in response to a question about Lake Manitoba, the Premier said, and I quote: "Everybody was well aware that Lake Manitoba could have very high levels of water this year. That was made clear to everybody."

In his attempt to evade responsibility for what's happening today, he says that everybody was given a warning. He said everybody was well aware. He went on to say, and I quote: "That was made clear to everybody." The people that we are talking to, and when they hear that quote, are shocked and dismayed that their Premier would stand up and say that they were given lots of warning.

Will he today apologize to Manitobans for saying they were given lots of warning and acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that they weren't and that they deserve his support and they deserve action?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed unfortunate the Leader of the Opposition, at a time when our people are going through this kind of stress, wants to play this kind of political games with the suffering that they're experiencing.

We have said from the outset that additional measures needed to be taken to protect people in the Assiniboine Valley, which is why we had Emergency Measures plans put in place for all the municipalities, which is why we were in early contact with them so they could prepare themselves for the high water that's coming. We looked at the flood event of record and built to that level plus an additional two feet.

And, you know what, Mr. Speaker? We've had a one-in-300-year event. Unprecedented water arrived in Manitoba at a very difficult time for people, and that's why we brought out, in very rapid fashion, a compensation and support program never before seen in the history of the province for the people of Lake Manitoba. That program was brought out with a record amount of deliberation and a record amount of alacrity to ensure that it was in place as soon as possible for people and ready to be delivered.

The members opposite never had one constructive suggestion in this regard. They always come in after the fact to play armchair quarterback.

Mr. Speaker, what we do is we listen to people, which is why the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) was at the meeting and responded to their concerns.

Lake Manitoba Flooding

Mitigation and Financial Compensation Plans

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, Tuesday's windstorm hammered the Interlake, causing serious problems along Manitoba-Lake

Manitoba and the Shoal lakes. Property damage was extensive. Many people had to evacuate.

Yesterday, I asked the Minister of Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick) a very direct question about this very serious situation. Since then, I've had emails and calls about why this government, and especially the Minister of Water Stewardship, had failed to explain their short- and long-term plans for Lake Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, since the water of minister stewardship won't answer my questions, I'd like to ask the Premier: What is his government's plan for going forward on the impact of the high waters on Lake Manitoba? This is a long-term problem.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member again for the—member for Lakeside again for the question because, as I indicated yesterday and I will say again today, we announced last week in our program, three program supports. One of them was long-term measures to strengthen the infrastructure for managing water in the Assiniboine River system; starting from the Shellmouth Dam, additional resources to strengthen the capacity of the Shellmouth Dam to control water at the high point in the Assiniboine Valley all the way through to additional resources in Brandon, additional resources at the Portage Diversion, and additional resources at the outlet in Fairford. All of these measures are in take—are intended to take the existing infrastructure and strengthen it in order to allow the government of Manitoba, in co-operation with municipalities, to better manage water threats which we've never seen before in the history of the province.

We will do that. That is our commitment to move forward on that. I hope the members opposite will support those measures when we bring them forward in future budgets. Historically, they have talked the talk; they have never walked the walk by actually supporting a budget which invests in flood mitigation in Manitoba.

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, I've seen photo after photo of the devastation on Lake Manitoba and Shoal lakes. Many have lost everything. These lakes continue to rise and people are at a loss at what to do next. They took every possible precaution that they could to protect their property. Our hearts go out to them.

But they need to know and deserve to know what's next. The flood fight is far from over.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier: Will this government assure those on Lake Manitoba, those on the Shoal lakes that a compensation plan will be delivered quickly, not months from now? People need to address their concerns.

*(14:10)

Mr. Selinger: Again, I thank the member from lakeshore for his question, because I know he has a sincere long-term concern for the people in that area, including constituents of his, as well as constituents represented by other people in the area.

And that's exactly where we're coming from as well. We believe that a compensation program needed to be made available which was why we announced it well over a week ago in Manitoba. We believed that program needed to go beyond the normal disaster financial assistance guidelines which were negotiated by the federal government with the provinces. We've gone beyond that. Whether or not we know the federal government will come with us remains to be seen.

But we felt that we had to go beyond that, given the unprecedented nature of the amount of water in Manitoba this year. So we've taken extraordinary measures to provide additional engineering support, additional restoration support, additional mitigation support and additional support to producers—additional support to producers—if they need to move their animals to get closer to food supplies or if they need to move food supplies closer to the animals, income support for producers, more support for homeowners, more support for cottagers and additional support to municipalities who are in the front lines fighting against this high water in Manitoba.

We want to be with them every step of the way from the start to the finish, and we will never give up our commitment to support them and not play politics like the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) consistently does in this House.

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, I cannot begin to imagine the pain and suffering being experienced by those affected by the high water levels on Lake Manitoba, the Shoal Lake and others.

These people worked so very diligently to protect their properties only to see them battered by the storm. The wind is strong again today. These lakes have not yet peaked. While we are comfortable and protected in this Chamber, affected families

around Lake Manitoba and the Shoal lakes are experiencing tremendous uncertainty.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier: Whether it's those affected by the high water levels on Lake Manitoba, the Shoal Lake, Lake St. Martin or others, will this government table before this session a comprehensive plan for compensation and a water management plan before this session ends?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the member will know that the compensation plan was tabled well over a week ago in this—by this government, in this building. It's out there; it's available to people.

The member will also know that we were able to have a very good response from the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Robinson) to the needs of the people in the Lake St. Martin-Little Saskatchewan-Fairford area. Those folks have really been heavily dislocated by all this additional water flowing through their area. Many of them are actually evacuated in Winnipeg right now. We've met with them. They know that we're working with them to provide not only short-term housing relief, but long-term housing relief.

Yes, we are going to have good programs. We do have good programs, programs that have never before been seen in the province. We will move on those programs in a timely fashion. I'm confident the federal government will see the merits of what we've done.

It's the same thing we did when we did mitigation along the Assiniboine River. We went out and spent \$25 million to build up the dikes. That program was not covered under the existing disaster financial assistance program. I'm pleased that the Prime Minister has now agreed with me that he will cost share 50 per cent of that.

We have set a precedent in Manitoba for mitigation which will apply to the whole country. I think we can do that to protect the people of Lake Manitoba and the people in the Lake St. Martin area.

I hope the members opposite will put their partisan politics aside and join with us to support these programs.

Lake Manitoba Flooding Mitigation and Financial Compensation Plans

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was in Langruth where nearly 300 people discussed the very serious problems affecting people who have homes and properties along flooded Lake

Manitoba, the common theme that with people affected by this year's devastating flooding, needs swift action from government to address the issue. They cannot wait months or years for aid to be delivered, as has been the situation with past provincial programs.

For example, ranchers and farmers in the Westlake and Interlake area have been severely impacted by weather patterns over the past three years. The government announced a number of assistance programs, but aid has been slow to flow.

Mr. Speaker, the announcements were made, the photo ops taken. When are the promises going to be kept?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we did make a timely response on additional programming never before seen in the province of Manitoba, and that programming forms a foundation for rapid response to people. And I know, for example, that the special unit we put in place to deal with the 100 per cent compensation program for the people in the Hoop and Holler program has been very actively followed up on, and we will follow up on all of the requests that we have for compensation or mitigation or restoration, and we will do that diligently with our public servants.

And I want to take this opportunity to thank our public sector in Manitoba, the people inside the government who have been working on this full time. Some of these folks have been working seven days a week since early March to do mitigation programs. Many of them have put additional hours of overtime in. Many other public servants have volunteered their time, shoulder to shoulder with local volunteers in the areas affected, and the emergency operations committees, which have been mobilized by local municipalities, have done a tremendous job on the front line to protect people as much as possible.

Manitobans respond—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Briese: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the First Minister had actually listened to the question, he might have been able to answer it.

Mr. Speaker, at Langruth yesterday, people were very concerned about short-term relief to—with the flooding. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) claimed help was on the way. I hope he recognizes the urgency of the situation. After all, Eddystone

ranchers were promised disaster financial assistance for a rainfall event in September 2009. They haven't been paid. AgriStability claims from 2009 have not been processed. Freight fee claims from 2010 have not been paid. Ranchers can't borrow any more money from financial institutions.

Mr. Speaker, why has this government failed to keep its 2009 and 2010 promises to the producers?

Mr. Selinger: I thank the member for the question. I understand the MLA who raised the question was at the meeting with the Minister of Agriculture. I think that's very productive when people from both sides of the House can work together to listen to people that have local concerns and to collaborate together to find a constructive response to that.

I know that the member that asked the question has a long-term relationship with agricultural producers in this province, as well as local municipalities, and I can assure him we will work with him on specific issues that arise in that area. If specific individuals have any kind of bottleneck in receiving the supports that they justly deserve, we will work with them to get those supports out and to get those resources out.

And, you know, Mr. Speaker, it's really interesting that the members opposite don't even have the simple courtesy to listen to their own member ask a question in the Legislature. We want to hear his question so that we can respond to it effectively. The buzz is coming from the members opposite. The interference is coming from the member opposite. Our Minister of Agriculture and this government will work with that member to respond to his constituents.

Mr. Briese: Mr. Speaker, recently this government announced a number of new assistance programs for people around Lake Manitoba and Shoal lakes and others. The government's record on fulfilling promises and actually carrying through with the program commitments in a timely fashion is abysmal.

Mr. Speaker, I ask again: When can Manitobans expect to see compensation under the new programs? Will aid flow later this month?

Mr. Selinger: Again, I thank the member for the question because, you know, when he attended the meeting yesterday he believed that the programs we had put in place had some merit. I now believe he's asking the question: These programs that have merit, when will the actual resources flow to the people that

need it? And I say to him, we will flow them as quickly as possible with a process which is streamlined, and we will see resources. We have seen programs put in place in a record period of a short time. We will see the responses flow in a record period of short time. If anybody feels that they have been mistreated, we will have an appeals commissioner available to deal with that.

But, in particular, we will work with the member who knows of specific concerns that need to be addressed. When he raises them with us, we will address those concerns, look into them and follow up on them properly. I thank the member for the question.

Violent Crime Rate Government Record

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, yesterday another three individuals were brought to hospital after being stabbed on the streets of the city of Winnipeg. Combined with a 75 per cent increase in the number of murders in Manitoba over last year and combined with the fact that Statistics Canada says that we are the violent crime capital of Canada, we see a clearer picture of what 11 years of not getting anything done under this soft-on-crime government has resulted in.

This government talks a tough talk, but they don't get any results. I want to ask this Minister of Justice why anybody should believe any announcements that he brings forward after 12 years of not getting it done and turning Winnipeg into the violent crime capital of Canada.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Well, the real question is why this member for Steinbach should have any credibility when he stands in this House. Every time he has the chance, he votes against more police officers.

With today's announcement, we've added 106 police officers in the province of Manitoba since the last election. The member opposite and all of the other Conservatives who can talk the talk but cannot walk the walk vote against those resources time after time after time. Our government has put more investments in things like the Public Safety Investigations unit, which is making our communities safer.

* (14:20)

The members opposite, who I know are very, very touchy about this, but they can't escape their voting record. They voted against every single new Crown attorney that we've added. They've stood up and said no. They've stood up and they said they would not invest those resources.

We know what works. We're going to keep doing it. And they can keep talking the talk; we'll walk the walk on this side, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Goertzen: They failed for 11 years and we voted against that failure each and every time, Mr. Speaker. I know the Attorney General thinks this is an academic discussion we can have in the Legislature, but it impacts real people.

You know, Western Financial Insurance, a company here in Winnipeg, has decided that they weren't going to move their headquarters, their operations, downtown, and their 350 employees, because they determined it wasn't safe to do so. Instead they've decided to locate outside of downtown Winnipeg because they were worried about their employees having to walk after dark in downtown Winnipeg. These are real Manitobans making real decisions that have a real impact on Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba.

I want to ask this Minister of Justice why he's failed not only this company but others in making Manitoba safer, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Swan: I'm quite glad to talk about people coming downtown because starting this fall, there's going to be 500,000 people coming downtown to watch NHL hockey at the True North centre because of our NDP government, the way we built this province, the way we've grown the economy, and we've given people confidence.

I'm quite happy to talk about the 2,000 people a day who come downtown to work in the state-of-the-art Hydro building that the Tories wanted to put out in the suburbs. We had the perseverance; we had the intelligence; we had the courage to put it downtown. We have 2,000 Manitobans who come downtown to work for Manitoba Hydro in the state-of-the-art Hydro building.

And let's talk about 500 people who work downtown at the Canadian Wheat Board. I know our Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers), our Premier (Mr. Selinger) and our government is standing up for those 500 people coming down every day.

Where's the member for Steinbach, where is his leader, where's the rest of the Conservatives on protecting the Wheat Board?

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable member for Steinbach has the floor.

Mr. Goertzen: If yelling and screaming made Winnipeg safer, we'd have the safest city in the country, you know, Mr. Speaker, but, unfortunately, you need to do more to get results.

And now we have a company that's decided not to locate in downtown Winnipeg because they see the real results. They see what other Manitobans see on TV. They see what other Manitobans read about and they see what other Manitobans hear when they're talking to their friends and neighbours. They know that we've become the violent crime capital of Canada. They know that at times it simply isn't safe and they've decided that they're not going to put their business downtown as a result, and now those economic benefits won't come to downtown Winnipeg as a result.

I want to ask this Minister of Justice: Is he comfortable with the legacy of his time as the Minister of Justice and the legacy of this NDP government being one where businesses don't want to move downtown, who are reluctant to, at it being the violent crime capital of Canada? That's his legacy. Is he happy with that?

Mr. Swan: Well, the member wants to talk about downtown and we'll keep talking about downtown.

I've already spoken about the MTS Centre that the members opposite opposed. And now, first, I've got to give credit to the member for Steinbach; he moved pretty fast two days ago to try to get on the bandwagon wearing his Jets jersey. They can do what they want.

We support economic development. We support safety for our citizens. What about CTV moving downtown? What about the development on Waterfront Drive? I wonder why the member for Steinbach—I wonder why the other members of their caucus—*[interjection]* There's housing going on downtown. The Avenue Building is being redeveloped.

I wonder why it is that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen), the member for

Steinbach and no member of that caucus have the slightest clue what's going on in the inner city of Winnipeg. They don't represent the area. They don't care about the area.

I'm proud to be part of a government that stands up for all Manitobans wherever they may happen to live, and we're going to keep building a better province, Mr. Speaker.

Violent Crime Rate

Impact on Downtown Economy (Winnipeg)

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, Western Financial Group announced last June it would be consolidating its four Winnipeg offices under one roof, and that its preference would be to have the new 72,000-square-foot office space in downtown Winnipeg. Unfortunately, or instead, they chose to locate elsewhere, citing that, and I quote: One of the main reasons was employees' and management's concern about downtown safety at night.

I wonder if the Minister of Finance could indicate for the House and for Manitobans what kind of an economic impact this will have on downtown Winnipeg?

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Finance): Well, Mr. Speaker, I—the member opposite should think about what downtown looked like in the '90s and what downtown looks like now.

Mr. Speaker, since we've taken office, we have built and been part of the construction of the MTS Centre that brings people downtown every day. The members opposite voted against. Manitoba has built their state-of-the-art building downtown which draws hundreds of people downtown to work. The members opposite forget about Red River College that has been built downtown, brings many students.

There is housing, there is business and there's a lot of activity, and I can tell the members opposite, now that we have been part of securing the NHL team to Manitoba that they lost, there's going to be a lot more economic activity downtown.

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, Mr. Speaker, after 12 long, dark years of an NDP government in this province, one fact remains, that Winnipeg is the violent crime capital of Canada, and that is not something for—to—for this government to be proud of. Yet they seem to be, and the fact of the matter is it's driving businesses out of downtown Winnipeg.

I'm asking this Minister of Finance to indicate what kind of an impact that will have on downtown Winnipeg.

Ms. Wowchuk: I wish the member opposite would admit that when the Conservatives were in government, they drove out the NHL team. They drove them out, Mr. Speaker.

This government has brought back—been part of bringing the NHL team back to Winnipeg. The members opposite may not want to recognize it, although she did put on a Jets jersey the other day. She likes parties, Mr. Speaker, she likes the Jets, so she has to admit that this will have a huge impact on downtown. It's going to bring people downtown, just as the Manitoba Hydro building is, as Red River College is, as all of the housing that's coming downtown. The University of Winnipeg has— is bringing people.

It's unfortunate that the members opposite choose to shut things down and mothball them, whether it's NHL teams or hockey or Hydro, Mr. Speaker. They mothball; we build, and that's what we're doing.

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, Mr. Speaker, after 12 long, dark years of an NDP government, the fact remains that Winnipeg is the violent crime capital of Canada, again not something for a government to be proud of. Yet, they like to take—then they can take credit for this all they want, because it's as a result of their failed policies that Winnipeg remains the violent crime capital of Canada.

And I ask this minister again: How can she honestly stand in her place and say that this is a good thing for downtown Winnipeg, when they're driving businesses out of downtown Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker?

Ms. Wowchuk: And, again, Mr. Speaker, I would ask her to look at some of the statistics. Look at some of the statistics about the economic growth in this province. Look at some of the statistics of business coming here as a result of policies that we have put in place. Look at what has happened.

Mr. Speaker, I will say to the member opposite again, despite the fact that she put on a Winnipeg Jets jersey the other day and tried to support the team, Mr. Speaker, it is the Conservatives that drove the Jets out of Winnipeg. It's the Conservatives that mothballed Manitoba Hydro.

We are building Manitoba Hydro. We're building the economy, and the NHL is back here, and that's a huge economic driver for this province.

* (14:30)

Taxation Personal Income Tax Rate

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, wasteful spending is plaguing this NDP government. While a hard-working family of four in Elmwood struggles to make ends meet, the NDP government will be taking roughly \$3,000 a year from their pockets in income taxes to pay for things like a \$38,000—a barbecue for senior bureaucrats at the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. Meanwhile, that family earning the same amount in Saskatchewan would only be paying \$725 in income taxes while their government cut wasteful spending and put more dollars into health care.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: Why is he taking so much money from families in places like Elmwood to spend on their executive bureaucrat friends?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member from River Heights for the question.

The government of Saskatchewan, when they do their affordability index for all the provinces in Canada, have ranked Manitoba No. 1 for affordability. We always position ourselves to ensure that families of all types and sizes and income levels remain in the top three.

In this budget that the member opposite voted against, we increased the property tax credit for families in Manitoba, the education property tax credit. We increased the property tax credit for seniors to an unprecedented level in this province, the first step of three that we've put in place. We've increased the personal exemption for families inside of Manitoba, and, you know what, Mr. Speaker? We're growing the economy like we've never seen before in this province.

It's grown by over 50 per cent—50 per cent. People have more disposable income. People can afford to buy tickets to support the NHL in Manitoba. The members opposite would not build the MTS Centre. They wouldn't build the Hydro building. They wouldn't build Red River College. They will—won't build water treatment facilities that will protect the water in Manitoba.

We will build those things, and we will keep Manitoba families employed, including in Elmwood.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the NDP forces a family of four in River Heights to contribute over \$4,000 to NDP wasteful spending, and yet we still have crumbling streets in our neighbourhood. This is wrong.

But in 2008 the NDP spend \$4 million on lip balm, manicures, golf balls for their executive bureaucrat friends, and yet *The Globe and Mail* reported last week that Manitoba has the longest emergency-room waits in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, why is the Premier overtaxing Manitobans when he can't even fix health care?

Mr. Selinger: I thank the member opposite.

Every single year, Mr. Speaker, we've been in office we've reduced taxes for Manitobans, and, as a result, Mr. Speaker, according to the government of Saskatchewan, when it comes to affordability there's no better place than to live in Manitoba, and that includes for the people in River Heights.

And I'm glad he's asked a question about his constituents, the first time I've ever heard a question about his constituents in all the years I've seen him in the Legislature. His constituents have gone from a \$250 property tax credit to a \$700 property tax credit. Seniors in his area are getting education property credits in a way they've never seen before. Their personal exemption has been increased. Their personal income taxes have gone down. If they run a small business in Manitoba, they have zero taxation, the largest tax-free zone for small business in the country right here in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

That's what we've done to keep Manitoba affordable, and as long as we can keep the opposition from privatizing Hydro, we'll have the lowest hydro rates in North America as well.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. The working poor in Manitoba are sick of being overtaxed when the NDP is just wasting so much of their money, and families in rural Manitoba are sick of being overtaxed when the government doesn't even provide an adequate water management system that works.

When will the Premier apologize for overtaxing Manitobans and wasting the money that's being spent?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we will keep Manitoba families among the affordable in the country. We will make sure Manitoba is one of the most affordable places to live in the country and, at the same time as we keep Manitoba affordable, we will invest in better hospitals, better personal care homes, better schools, better universities. We'll even support the MTS Centre downtown when the members opposite vote against it so that we can now have the NHL back in Manitoba after 15 dark years of them doing everything they can to thwart it.

They have done everything they can in the last 15 years—[interjection] You know, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate them applauding getting the NHL back by this government in Manitoba when, for the last 15 years, they've done everything they can to stop this province improving, to stop making improvements to quality of life. They've opposed every tax reduction we've done. They've imposed every investment we've made in education, culture, health and in sport in this province.

Manitoba is moving forward. It's on a roll. Let's keep it going that way and not let the members opposite into government.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Time for oral questions has expired.

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Speaker: I have a ruling for the House. Order.

During oral questions on May 31st, 2011, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Mrs. Taillieu) raised a point of order regarding comments she asserted were uttered by the honourable Minister for Innovation, Energy and Mines (Mr. Chomiak) from his seat, specifically, the word "liar."

The honourable Government House Leader (Ms. Howard) also spoke to the point of order.

I took the matter under advisement in order to peruse *Hansard*, and I thank both honourable members for their contributions to the point of order.

I have now had the opportunity to review *Hansard* for May 31st, 2011; however, there is no record of such comments appearing in *Hansard* prior to the point of order being raised. I would therefore respectfully rule that there is no point of order.

I would, however, like to remind the House that all members are honourable members and should be treated with respect.

As well, I would like to take this opportunity to caution all honourable members regarding their decorum during question period. This is a good example of a situation where I was called upon to make a ruling on a point of order, yet, due to the noise in the House, I could not hear the alleged comments.

I would ask all honourable members to remember the proud history and dignity of this House and to govern themselves accordingly.

* (14:40)

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Official Opposition House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, respectfully, I challenge your ruling.

Mr. Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been challenged.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in support of sustaining the ruling of the Chair, say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to sustaining the ruling of the Chair, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

* * *

Mrs. Taillieu: A recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

* (15:40)

Order. The hour provided for ringing of the bells has expired, and we will—the bells will now be turned off and we will proceed to the vote. Okay?

The question before us, before the House, is shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained.

Division

A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Allan, Altemeyer, Bjornson, Blady, Blaikie, Braun, Brick, Chomiak, Dewar, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Marcelino, Martindale, Oswald, Reid, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wowchuk.

Nays

Borotsik, Briese, Cullen, Derkach, Driedger, Eichler, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Maguire, McFadyen, Mitchelson, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 26, Nays 17.

Mr. Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Oh, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on House business?

Mrs. Taillieu: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order. Okay.

Mrs. Taillieu: Mr. Speaker, the point being decorum in the Chamber—*[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Taillieu: Mr. Speaker, well—we heard your ruling. First of all, we know the purpose of that ruling, and that the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) used the word "liar" in the Chamber, and, even though it didn't appear on *Hansard*, he knows he said it. We all heard it over here and, subsequent to that, you brought in a ruling and your ruling did say that you cautioned members about decorum in the Chamber. Subsequent to that, we called for the vote and on that, then the—our side offered to the government side the opportunity for the member of Kildonan—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The issue with the honourable member, I have—as the Speaker, I have already dealt with that issue and it has already been—the ruling has been challenged, and it seems that the conversation is turning where the—some members do not agree with the ruling I made and it was challenged. It was defeated, and if you have—members are still not satisfied with the way I conducted the ruling, the rulings of Speakers are not for debate. If members are not satisfied with the way a Speaker handles the House or conducts his role or her role as the Speaker, there is only one option, and that is to bring a non-confidence motion on the Speaker.

But Speaker's—*[interjection]* Order. Because Speaker's rulings are never up for debate, and that's where we're going right now. And I don't think members want to go there because that is totally

against the rules of any House in any Commonwealth country.

We have already dealt with this matter. If you have a new issue, then deal with that issue, but please don't bring in the old ruling that I have just made because you have already challenged it, and the ruling has been sustained, and there's only one other option left, and I explained that earlier.

Mrs. Taillieu: Mr. Speaker, may I clarify the point of order in that it is a matter of decorum with the member from Kildonan? He was offered the opportunity to apologize. He refused to apologize and instead stormed out of the Chamber saying—he stormed out of the Chamber and—saying the words, "shut up, shut up."

So, Mr. Speaker, again, I'd like to see this member called to order for uttering these words in the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): On the same point of order.

I think that we could all probably do a better job in here of maintaining decorum and civility. I don't think there's either side of this House that doesn't have moments when we wish we hadn't said something. I don't think there's anybody in here who's perfect.

There are many nights that I go home and think that I could have done a better job in here of maintaining civility, and there's many nights that I go home and I'm a bit despairing of some of the things I've heard from members on the other side of the House.

I've heard people in this House make fun of what people are wearing. I've heard people in this House make fun of people's families. I've heard people in this House reflect on people's commitment to the job that they're doing. I've heard members of this House accuse other members of this House of killing people in this Chamber.

So there is a lot for us all to do a better job of, but I don't think the way we're going to get there is if the Opposition House Leader (Mrs. Taillieu) and I take the opportunity every time somebody may get their feelings hurt to stand up on a point of order. I don't think that's the way to do the business of Manitobans in this House, which is what we're all sent here to do.

So I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that there is no point of order. The call for decorum and civility is heeded and we will do our utmost to do a better job, but it is a partnership, and we'll look for members opposite to also do their job to maintain civility and decorum in this House. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have heard from both sides and I have been Speaker here for some time, and I have to say, in my own humble opinion, at times decorum is starting to deteriorate, especially during question period.

And I would like to take this opportunity to take this under advisement, and I would like to have a meeting sometime very shortly, as soon as we can, with the House leaders and with the independent member from River Heights and have a good discussion about decorum and the high regard we should have for this institution that our constituents have sent us to. I think we need to be a little humble about that and we need to respect the dignity of this House and our rules and procedures.

And I'm going to take this under advisement, and I'm going to encourage to have a meeting with the House leaders and with the honourable—because I want all members to be involved and the parties that have party standings, your representative is your House leader.

And I think it is time that we had a little discussion because we are setting the tone, and we're being watched and monitored by the public. Every day we have school kids in here—a lot of them—and, as you know, we do have quite an audience of the viewing public when we're live on television. That I know for sure because I receive calls after. There's a lot of armchair quarterbacks.

*(15:50)

And I think this is our opportunity, because we've only got a few weeks left here, as we see it today. It could change. We could have more, but I think this would be a great opportunity for us to end on a high note and lead us into whenever the election—well, we know the election is October 4th, but to lead us on and, hopefully, we can set an example for other chambers, which—I know that they're debating in Ottawa as I speak and they are in the process of electing a Speaker, and all the candidates have indicated that they will be a lot tougher and a lot stricter on civility and decorum in the House. I don't think I need to go there because I think all members respect the institution and our

rules, and I think it's just time we had a little chat, and then, hopefully, the House leaders will encourage their members and we'll have good co-operation.

So I'm going to take this under advisement, and I want to meet with the House leaders and the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), and sooner we can meet, I think, it is better for all of us. Okay? So I'll leave it at that.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: We're going to move on to members' statements, and it's this side of the House turn today.

Samantha Squire and Alexandria Bonney

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): Mr. Speaker, all of us here in this Chamber value and recognize the important work of the legislative pages. All of our pages are exceptional, and they all deserve recognition. Since two of these—this year's pages are from my constituency, I'd like to share with you some of their accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, Samantha Squire is a grade 11 student at Sturgeon Heights Collegiate. She holds an astounding 90 per cent average that she has maintained since elementary school. Apart from being busy with school and her duties at the Legislature, Samantha also works part time at another job. She is involved in a program that provides troops overseas with knitted dolls when they are on patrol to hand out to civilian children. This, along with her many other activities, demonstrates the talent and dedication of this young leader. Samantha has been an outstanding page for the Legislative Assembly, been of great service to her community, and has continued to be a high achiever at school.

Alexandria Bonney is also a grade 11 student and attends Sturgeon Heights Collegiate. Alexandria is a proven strong student. She maintains a very high average in her studies on top of working two part-time jobs. Alexandria has worked as a youth mentor with Child and Family Services. She mentors kids that need help to establish themselves, develop life skills, enable them to live on their own and live productive lives. In addition to the CFS work, she tutors fellow students. Alexandria hopes to one day go to law school, where I'm sure she will excel.

These young women from St. James are just two examples of the fine young adults that serve both the Legislature and their communities.

To all of the legislative pages, thank you for your hard work and for being such great leaders. I wish you every success. Thank you.

HyLife Foods

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize HyLife Foods for the positive impact this company has had on the town of Neepawa.

On April 8th, HyLife held an open house event to celebrate the HyLife rebranding, joining Springhill Farms and Hytek Limited. Hytek bought the Springhill Farm plant in February of 2008.

Hytek was started by Don Janzen and Paul, Denis and Claude Vielfaure in 1994. The company grew from the ground up to the great success it is today. In February 2008, Hytek purchased the Springhill Farms plant, which at the time had a workforce of 311 employees. Today, HyLife has more than doubled its employees to 685. HyLife plant exports its products to Japan, China, Korea, Russia, Mexico and the United States.

Most employees live within one-hour radius and come from First Nations, Filipino, Korean and Ukrainian backgrounds, as well as many local people. Many people have moved to the area because of the job opportunities offered by HyLife.

All this activity has created a boom for Neepawa's economy. The plant has already spurred several spinoff businesses, including a pallet plant and a rendering plant. Neepawa's population has grown 25 per cent in the last three years to over 4,000 residents as people looking for jobs move in to town.

The influx of people from the HyLife plant has also stimulated the local economy, and businesses are also cashing in on the growth. Since HyLife moved to Neepawa, the local Safeway has undergone a million-dollar expansion. New businesses have also arrived, including Tim Hortons/Esso, a Subway, two Asian food stores and a bank.

HyLife is a great corporate citizen that supports Manitoba's hog industry; 25 per cent of the hogs processed at the plant come from producers who supplied the previous Springhill Farms plant. The other 75 per cent of the hogs are produced by HyLife. In addition, the company has been named one of Canada's 50 best managed companies for the sixth year in a row.

Over the course of the next year, HyLife plans to increase production in the Neepawa plant by 52 per cent. This means a second shift and another 250 to 300 more employees will be required.

Congratulations HyLife Foods on the good work they have done, for the positive impact they have had on the town of Neepawa and the province of Manitoba. Keep up the good work.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Nor'West Access Community Health Centre

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, as we gain a better understanding of what a healthy lifestyle looks like, we realize that often people need multiple services to address a single health concern. In this way, we can combat a problem with medical tests, but also with specialized services, counselling or community health programs.

This is why I am pleased to speak today about the new Access Nor'west Co-op Community Health Centre, which is under construction and which will serve the residents of northwest Winnipeg, including The Maples.

The existing Nor'west Co-op Community Health Centre began in 1972, and it has consistently supported a collaborative multi-service care. By turning the centre into an access site, it will become a one-stop shop for many different services, many of which were created with the specific needs of northwest Winnipeg in mind. Some of the services the new access centre will provide include nutrition counselling, foot care, diabetes education and support, family violence counselling, Aboriginal health outreach, help with organizing child care and counselling for immigrant women.

This \$4.2-million project will be Winnipeg's fourth access centre. We hope that this centre will provide relief for families that may otherwise have to travel long distances for primary care. It will act as a hub, bringing together doctors, nurse practitioners, primary care nurses, midwives, health educators, dietitians and counsellors to advise people in the community on how to best improve their quality of life.

This is a visionary project, which will weave a tighter safety net for people with complicated needs. I look forward to its opening day, which will mark another step toward a more holistic and preventive way of understanding what it means to be healthy.

Thank you.

Salvation Army Weetamah Open House

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Salvation Army is a long-standing institution in our province that has offered support for people during some of the most trying times in their lives.

I was pleased yesterday to attend the open house at the Salvation Army Weetamah, where information about the organization's programming was presented to guests. Some of the programs that were discussed at the open house included the adult literacy program known as STEP, the work readiness program known as WKRP and the Manitoba Hydro assistance program for families dealing with financial stress.

The assistance that the Salvation Army offers on a regular basis to Manitobans impacted by disaster was of particular interest. This spring, Manitobans have been faced with the impact of tremendous flooding in many parts of the province, and the Salvation Army has come to the aid of those in need. They have provided flood-provided support for flood evacuees, primarily from those First Nations communities that were directly impacted and were in need of assistance during this evacuation period.

The Salvation Army has also provided assistance to families who have lost their homes due to fire. I had the pleasure of meeting Don Bremaud and Doreen Osborne, who shared their story with me about the loss of their Maryland Street home in a fire. The Salvation Army Weetamah helped Don and Doreen get back on their feet. From vouchers, to replacing lost clothing, to locating temporary housing and finding and furnishing a new home, Weetamah has been there every step of the way to help this family start a new life. The family is now ready to move into their new home and are very grateful for the assistance that they received from the Salvation Army.

Mr. Speaker, for me, the impact of the invaluable work that the Salvation Army does represents the best of Manitoba's spirit. I'd like to say a big thank you to the Salvation Army Weetamah, not only for hosting yesterday's open house but for all that they do, day in and day out, to help Manitobans in need.

I encourage Manitobans to support the Salvation Army in any way they can, to ensure that they're able to continue their important work within our community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (16:00)

Louis Riel School Division Coaches

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health): It is my pleasure today to rise to celebrate the many, many coaches in Manitoba, who selflessly dedicate their time to the children of our province.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to the coaches in the Louis Riel School Division and commend the division for recognizing their efforts by way of the Thanks Coach! annual recognition banquet on May 18th.

Mr. Speaker, this annual banquet recognizes teachers, school staff, members, parents, former students and community members, who give a commitment of time and passion to ensure that student athletes in grades 4 to 12 have positive experiences in sports throughout the division each school year. The banquet is held at the Louis Riel Arts and Technology Centre, with splendid food prepared by the students at the centre.

Mr. Speaker, in the Louis Riel School Division alone, there are upwards of 450 individuals who last year committed to coaching our young people and activities, including the marathon club, rugby, water polo, football, volleyball, basketball, curling, track and field, soccer, badminton, hockey and many, many more.

These coaches often engage in additional training on their own time and then share their expertise and love of the game with hundreds of children. These volunteers teach so much more than athletic skills, Mr. Speaker. They instill values of fair play, determination and sportsmanship, which serve our young people well into their adult lives.

As I express my thanks to the coaches in the Louis Riel School Division and commend them for their many efforts this year, I would like to take a moment to reflect on those very special people who were my coaches, some years back, in the same school division.

Mr. Speaker, I remember Mr. Ian Kellet, a skilled coach and hilarious individual who made learning and competing a serious and joyful experience. Ms. Arpena Babaian, one of the finest teachers and humans I've ever known, taught me what it means to be tough and how important it is to be an ardent supporter of girls in athletics. Mr. Dennis Nord, a coach of world-class calibre, demonstrated to all athletes in his charge the

importance of preparation and strategy. I so loved playing on teams led by these coaches, and I know now how important those lessons were, not just for sports but for life.

I hope all members of the Legislature will join me today in extending our heartfelt thanks to the coaches in the Louis Riel School Division and, indeed, across Manitoba. Our children have been the recipients of your gift, the gift of your time, and we are indebted to you for that.

Thanks, Coach.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Andrew Swan (Acting Government House Leader): On House business.

I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations will meet on Monday, June 6, 2011, at 6 p.m., to consider the following reports: the annual reports of the Workers Compensation Board for the years ending December 31, 2007; December 31, 2008; December 31, 2009; and December 31, 2010; the annual reports of the Appeal Commission and Medical Review Panel for the years ending December 31, 2007; December 31, 2008; December 31, 2009; and December 31, 2010; and the Workers Compensation Board 2007-2011 Five-Year Plan, the 2008-2012 Five-Year Plan, the 2009-2013 Five-Year Plan, the 2010-2014 Five-Year Plan and the 2011-2015 Five-Year Plan.

Mr. Speaker: It's been announced that the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations will meet on Monday, June the 6th, 2011, at 6 p.m., to consider the following reports: annual reports of the Workers Compensation Board for the years ending March 31st, 2007; December 31st, 2008; December 31st, 2009; and December 31st, 2010; annual reports of the Appeal Commission and Medical Review Panel for the years ending December 31st, 2007; December 31st, 2008; December 31st, 2009; December 31st, 2010; and the Workers Compensation Board 2007-2011 Five-Year Plan, the 2008-2012 Five-Year Plan, the 2009-2013 Five-Year Plan, the 2010-2014 Five-Year Plan and the 2011-2015 Five-Year Plan.

That's for information of all members of the House.

The honourable Attorney General, on further House business.

Mr. Swan: Yes, House business, Mr. Speaker.

I'd ask that you will call for debate on second reading to following bills: bills 16, 18, 19, 25, 29, 31 and 37.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, we will be dealing with second readings of Bill 16, 18, 19, 25, 29, 31 and 37, in that order. Okay.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 16—The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment and Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: So now I'll call second reading of Bill 16, The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment and Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise and speak to this particular bill.

And, you know, I appreciate that this bill has done good work in the province of Manitoba. I remember when it was introduced in the late 1990s by the then-Attorney General Vic Toews in the province of Manitoba. And there was a lot of members of the NDP who chastised the bill, who believed maybe that it went too far, that it wasn't the right way to go and wasn't the sort of thing that might stand up to a court challenge, and were quite critical of the bill when it was introduced. And now, of course, they've claimed it as their own. Ten years later, 11 years later, they've tried to rewrite the history books, and the Attorney General trumpets this as one of the best things that his own—his government's ever done, except that what he doesn't realize is—and he actually does realize—is his government didn't do it. It was actually the—it was actually Vic Toews who brought forward this particular piece of legislation. And, even though the naysayers who were then in opposition, the NDP, you know, they criticized it. They said, oh, it can't be done. We shouldn't be looking at this. They had all sorts of negative things to say about the legislation.

I appreciate the fact that former government had the vision and the foresight to realize that you could push the envelope a little bit, that you could look outside the box and try to reduce crime in the community. And so, after 1999, this government, the NDP government, adopted the piece of legislation, renamed it, called it something different—not

radically different, but renamed the legislation a little bit, tweaked it here a bit and tweaked it over there. And, sure, it's done good work. It's done good service for the people of Manitoba.

But the Attorney General shouldn't be too proud. I mean, we're glad that the legislation stayed in place and that it's been enhanced in certain areas, but he has to remember—and, in fact, I think it's a good lesson for him because this is an Attorney General that's very cautious, doesn't like to try to look at innovative ways to try to fight crime in the communities. He's a very—he's very, very cautious in that particular way, Mr. Speaker. He'll take some ideas that members of the Conservative Party bring forward because he doesn't want it used as a political tool. He's sort of forced into taking different ideas that our caucus brings forward. He'll photocopy those, white-out the name of the sponsoring member, put his own name on it, and then pretend that he actually brought it forward.

And I'd give you these examples, but we don't have time. I'm only given 30 minutes, and if I had to go through all the different bills that our party has brought forward that the government has taken and claimed as their own, I'd run out of time, and so it's hardly worth starting.

But I think that the general point is worth making, and the general point is that this is a Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan) following in the path of his predecessors, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), who've been very, very reluctant to look for innovative ways to crack down on criminals.

And the best piece of legislation they can point to, the most successful one is one that not only did they not bring forward themselves—it was introduced by a former attorney general under a different government—but one that they criticized when they were in opposition, Mr. Speaker. It's, you know, they—I know that this Attorney General, the current one, wasn't in the House, but they essentially voted against this particular piece of legislation, speaking against it when they were in opposition.

* (16:10)

And so it's nice to see that the legislation has stood the test of time, that's it's proven to be the useful tool that the former Conservative government always believed that it would be, that you could be innovative, that you could look outside the box a bit.

It's been now copied by other jurisdictions almost right across Canada—I'll have to do a little bit of checking to see if every province has adopted it—but I know that virtually every province has adopted it, and we want to give credit where credit is due.

And so—and it's not all about, you know, obviously, taking credit or assigning credit; that's not what it's all about, Mr. Speaker. But it's important when this Attorney General (Mr. Swan) stands up and says what a great piece of legislation this is, that he realizes, for his own sake, that members of his caucus, who were then members of the opposition, were opposed to it, who spoke critically about it, didn't believe it was the right thing to do, had all sorts of reasons why they didn't support the legislation back then. And so I hope that he'll take the opportunity the next time he's having a discussion in his caucus about this particular act, The Safer Communities Act, that he'll turn maybe to the member of—member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) or the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) or others who were here in opposition at that time and say, why would you've opposed this particular bill? Why would you have been critical of a piece of legislation that clearly was going to make a difference?

And perhaps he'll be schooled a little bit. He'll get a bit of an education about the sort of tactics that his party took when they were in opposition and have, in some ways, in their cautious approach, their unwillingness to push the envelope to look a little bit beyond the box, that that's still the same approach that they take here today.

So, with those words, Mr. Speaker, I think we're ready to see this bill proceed on to committee and, as always, we look forward to the instruction and advice that Manitobans, who come before committee, might have to offer us at that time.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few brief comments on Bill 16, The Safer—the amendment to The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act and The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act. This is amendments to these acts which we're ready to support, look forward to these going to committee and to hearing comments from the public at this time. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 16, The Safer Communities

and Neighbourhoods Amendment and Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act.

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

Bill 18—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, the question before the House is second reading of Bill 18, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act.

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

**Bill 19—The Provincial Court Amendment Act
(Senior Judges)**

Mr. Speaker: Bill 19, The Provincial Court Amendment Act.

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 19, The Provincial Court Amendment Act.

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

**Bill 25—The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders
Amendment Act**

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Pleasure to put some words on the record at the second reading regarding this particular piece of legislation. And we know, and I think all members would probably agree with me that we've heard different concerns and frustrations from members of the public who are under different orders to try to get payments, well, in particular, domestic issues, that it can be frustrating, that it can be difficult. We know that there are sometimes jurisdictional issues.

That, of course, is what this bill speaks to, where it's difficult to try to find somebody in a different jurisdiction who is under an order to pay and, you know, and I do want to say, Mr. Speaker, I know that—I don't have the statistics, but I would gather that the vast majority of people who are under orders for support actually do pay for those support orders. So we're not talking about the majority of people here, but we all know, unfortunately, that there are some who simply don't fulfill their obligations that have been put upon them. And often, or, at least, sometimes, in the case of these individuals, they'll

look to go to other jurisdictions as a way to avoid those particular responsibilities, as a way to get away from having to fulfill the obligations that a court has placed upon them for support. And we want to do all that we can to close that loophole, if you would, to ensure that there isn't that opportunity for individuals to avoid their orders. Of course, it's not just people who leave jurisdictions trying to avoid paying the support order that they are obligated to pay. We know that there are internal problems even within the province. And I've spoken to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan) about this, both at Estimates and in other forums, about the need to ensure that we have a system in Manitoba that ensures that individuals are able to get their orders when somebody is here in Manitoba, and then it works well on both sides.

We've all heard, I think, from constituents who've called their offices and said they've had a particular problem with maintenance enforcement, for example. And sometimes it cuts both ways, where there's garnishment orders in place and that are being executed when, in fact, a person has their account up-to-speed and up-to-date and there shouldn't be that garnishment order. And yet it takes a long time, it seems, sometimes, for the word to get back to Maintenance Enforcement. And so that places an undue hardship on the individual who is under that particular support order.

And, then, of course, we hear the more traditional side where an individual should be on the receiving end of those payments and they're unable to get those payments for a variety of different reasons. And they often express frustration by the inability to contact, on a timely basis, their particular caseworker at Maintenance Enforcement. And that's no reflection of the caseworkers themselves. We know that they're under a tremendous pressure and that they have an enormous amount of cases that they deal with individually.

And I hearken back to a constituent who phoned me some time ago and told me that they were having difficulty with maintenance enforcement, and they had phoned their particular Maintenance Enforcement worker, and the worker had put on their answering machine that, due to high-call volumes, due to the fact they had so much work, that somebody—if anybody phoning should leave a message, then they would do their best to get back to them within a week, and not within the day or the next day, but within a week, Mr. Speaker. And that was a reflection of how much work that individual caseworker had.

And, of course, that was a source of frustration for my constituent, and they couldn't understand how there couldn't be enough resources to ensure that the Maintenance Enforcement Program, which is usually encouraged by lawyers to enter into so that there is separation between parties—and it's supposed to ensure the smooth transaction of these different payments that it's encouraged by the lawyers to enter into, and yet, when people actually get into the system, sometimes they find that their expectations simply aren't met and that there's a lot of frustration around it.

So, yes, we do need to ensure that we're not allowing individuals to leave a jurisdiction and not pay an order. We want to close those loopholes, make sure that it's not there to be abused, Mr. Speaker. But we also need to remember that we have an obligation here at home.

And I would encourage the government to look more closely about the things that are under their particular jurisdiction, the things that they can actually control, and to look at how it is that they can strengthen the maintenance enforcement system, provide the resources for those who are working in the system who are responsible for ensuring the timely collection of support orders and in the transfer of those collections to the individual who should be receiving it, either for themselves or for their children. And that's why it's so important, because often it is for the support of children who are looking for and who need those financial resources for care.

So we would encourage the government, and not just to look at other jurisdictions and how we can work with them and close loopholes, but also to remember that there's a lot of problems and concerns that are raised right here at home under the direct jurisdiction of this government through Maintenance Enforcement.

So, with those words, Mr. Speaker, I again look forward to seeing this bill proceed to committee and to hearing the advice of different individuals who might come forward to share their experiences and how we can improve this bill in the system overall.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Mr. Speaker, just a few brief comments on Bill 25.

This bill is—provides some clarification where there's more than one jurisdiction involved. And let us hope that it helps in such circumstances in facilitating an appropriate and reasonable resolution. We're certainly ready for this to go forward to

committee stage, and look forward to hearing presentations at that stage. Thank you.

* (16:20)

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 25, The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act.

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

Now, if I can have the co-operation of the House, I have to revert to Bill 18 and Bill 19.

Bill 18—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act
(Continued)

Mr. Speaker: When I called Bill 18, it was standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu), and I forgot to ask the House if they would waive that or if they want it to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris.

Obviously, the answer is no. If—that was denied.

Bill 19—The Provincial Court Amendment Act
(Senior Judges)
(Continued)

Mr. Speaker: And Bill 19, The Provincial Court Amendment Act, also the House denied—did the House deny for it to remain standing in the name of the member for Morris? That also was denied. Okay.

So that should take care of that.

And we have now all dealt with 25. Okay?

Bill 29—The Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act

Mr. Speaker: Now, we're going to move to Bill 29, The Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler).

What is the will of the House?

Is the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Springfield?

No? It has been denied.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I do want to speak to this bill briefly before we see it move on to committee. We certainly support the intention of this

legislation and the need to ensure that their protection order is in place specifically for individuals who might be seen as victims of either human trafficking or child sexual exploitation.

We know it also produces a new tort for the crime of human trafficking. That's an approach that we also support—we have brought forward in the past, in fact, private members' bills that deal with the issue of those who exploit children through child pornography and the talk about the need to have a specific tort perhaps for that as well, and how that could be prosecuted for those who are the unknown victims of child pornography.

That was not supported by the government, unfortunately. We think that does a disservice to children who are victimized in the most horrific way that we can imagine. We don't understand why the government didn't support that particular private member's bill. Perhaps, we'll have another time to discuss that at another sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

But this particular bill we certainly are going to support. We don't think that a bill should be held up just because they are sponsored by one particular party or another. Where there's a good idea, we're not afraid to say that there's a good idea, unlike the members opposite sometimes, I think, who feel that well, if an opposition member brings forward a bill, we need to either quash it or steal it, but we can't let it go through, because then the opposition is going to get some credit. We think that is a disservice to this House, a disservice to the Legislature and to the people that we represent. So I have no objection in terms of standing up today and saying that this is important.

I also want to, while I have the floor, Mr. Speaker, give some credit to the member of Parliament for Kildonan-St. Paul, I believe, is the jurisdiction—Joy Smith who has been a champion really of the issue of human trafficking in Canada and in more internationally.

I know when she started on her journey, some years ago, in terms of trying to raise attention to this particular issue, there were many of us, and I would include myself among them, Mr. Speaker, who didn't truly understand the issue of human trafficking and thought about it as a crime, as an activity that happened somewhere else in the world, that it happened in countries that were less advanced than Canada and less advanced than our neighbours in North America.

And I, to my own shame, Mr. Speaker, I have learned that that certainly isn't the case, that we do, in fact, here in Canada have problems in the issue of human trafficking which has sometimes been referred to as the modern-day slave trade. And I appreciate the fact that Joy Smith has brought forward and championed this particular cause and raising awareness.

I had the opportunity to attend a breakfast along with, I know the member for Elmwood—or sorry, the—yes, the member for Elmwood (Mr. Blaikie) was at the breakfast, the member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler) was at the breakfast, and the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) was at the breakfast where there was a gentleman who spoke from the RCMP, or he used to be an RCMP officer, and have—now is dedicating his life to trying to deal with the human sex trade and the trafficking of individuals who are in the sex trade.

And he—you know, after the breakfast, I had an opportunity to talk to some young people who were there and, you know, they were shocked by what they heard, that the sort of things that are happening in the world that can also happen here in Canada. I was, perhaps, less shocked because I've been exposed to some of the things that are going on, and now, in my interaction with police officers over the last number of years in the current position I hold, but they certainly were shocked, but, at the same time, they were inspired. And it's funny to sort of marry those two emotions together, being both shocked and inspired, but they were, because they were inspired to make a difference, to do something and to change the world that we live in.

And I thought that was very—and want to also—I apologize, I accidentally omitted the fact that the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) was also at the Manitoba Prayer Breakfast where this individual was speaking. And it really was a non-partisan event and it was inspirational, in its own way, to encourage all of us to recognize that there are individuals who are victimized as being in the human trafficking trade, that they're exploited for sexual means, and they're often very young, quite often very young because they're vulnerable. As a result of that vulnerability, they are easy prey, sometimes, for individuals.

And so this bill, while it's not a magic bullet and I don't think the Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan) intended it to be a magic bullet, it does bring forward some good initiatives. And it's a step to try to help in

reducing the human trafficking trade and sexual exploitation of individuals within our province and within Canada.

So I do want to say that we appreciate the fact that we have a local MP in Manitoba who's brought this to the forefront. I know now the national government, the federal Conservative government, is looking at legislation that was sponsored by the member for Kildonan-St. Paul, and they also are looking at a national strategy to deal with sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

And so there's a lot of good things that are now happening about a very bad situation, Mr. Speaker, and so we're glad that more things are happening now and more attention has been brought forward to something that we all hope can be eradicated, not just, of course, in our part of the world, in Canada, but around the world, because there are so many horrifying stories that we hear in different countries.

So, with those words, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to this bill going forward to committee and eventually passing in this House with the full support of all members.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, child sexual exploitation and human trafficking are very serious offences and very serious matters, and it is appropriate that we are considering this legislation and looking to clarify and improve the legislation which surrounds the approach to dealing with sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

I think it is important legislation which is in the best interests of children in Manitoba, but it also puts us in a global context and ensures that we are not acting to promote human trafficking from other jurisdictions. And, as such, it's a step forward which, indeed, we should be taking.

I look forward to this coming to committee. I note, for the Minister of Justice, that in the definitions where he's dealing with telecommunications, that the telecommunications includes telephone, email or fax transmissions. And it might, in view of the variety of forms of electronic communication, including, you know, Facebook and Twitter and various other approaches, that it might be worth ensuring that such a variety of communications which are similar but not identical to email would also be included in this to make sure that it includes current practice by people in Manitoba and elsewhere.

With those comments, I look forward to this bill going to committee and proceeding from there. Thank you.

* (16:30)

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House, second reading of Bill 29, The Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act.

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

Bill 31—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Now call Bill 31, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu).

What is the will of the House? Is the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, will it remain standing? *[Agreed]*

Bill 37—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Accident Reporting Requirements)

Mr. Speaker: Okay, we'll now move on to Bill 37, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Accident Reporting Requirements), standing in the name of the honourable member for Steinbach.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Yes, thank you again, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to say a few words regarding Bill 37.

I did, last summer and into the fall, have an opportunity to speak to a number of municipal police officers here in the province of Manitoba, and they did raise this issue with me about the need to change how accidents are reported. Those of us who have been in accidents before—and that would probably can take in most members of the House in some fashion or the other—and had to go and report sometimes very minor accidents, we've probably wondered why it was that we had to go and fill out a police report and maybe felt a little guilty that we're taking up the police time for something that was relatively minor and fairly inconsequential. And that's really what the police raised to me when they

brought this forward to my attention saying, well, you know, there's a lot of other things that we as police officers are required to do.

And that is certainly true, as I've had the opportunity to do ride-alongs with police officers, a number now over the last few years, and those are voluntary ride-alongs. They were set up and established by appointment, and I spent some time with the police as they did the work that they do in both in rural Manitoba and in a city environment. And I saw that, you know, sometimes it's the traditional view that police are doing only certain kinds of activities, but it's amazing, in the course of one evening, how many things you can see a police officer responsible for. They might be doing an investigation at one point of the evening, covering off a crime that they are involved with and that they've been assigned to as their particular file.

So they'll be doing some follow-up investigation on that, and then a little while later they'll be doing traffic duty where they're watching to see if there are individuals who are speeding or driving in an inappropriate way. And then sometime after that they might be at a scene of an accident where they're helping to do investigative work there or trying to prevent somebody from getting involved in that accident and in doing traffic duties there. And then we see some of the more traditional proactive police work.

And that can all take place in the course of one evening, Mr. Speaker. There's certainly a lot of diversity in the job. I think police officers would tell you that they enjoy that part of the job, but there's a tremendous amount of expectations that they are expected to be responsible for and to respond to. People want to know that the crimes that have happened against them, even if they're smaller property crimes, they're being solved.

And so with all that in mind, I mean, anything that we can do that makes it easier for our police officers to do the kind of work that they are expected to fulfill, I think is positive. This particular bill, I think, appropriately takes away some of the responsibility for reporting accidents or are of lesser dollar value where you haven't had somebody who is gravely injured, where there hasn't been a hit and run, where there hasn't been alcohol involved. All of those things that we can see the reason why there should be reporting for that because there are obviously some very significant consequences that can flow from that series of events. But where you

have a fairly minor accident, forcing police to go through the obligation of filling out a police report on behalf of an individual doesn't make a lot of sense.

There are other parts, I know, of the bill in terms of who should report things to the police. I look at section 155(15) where it indicates that if a driver or a vehicle owner fails to make a police report as required by subsections of the bill, where there are those more serious things that I spoke of earlier, that a passenger who was in the vehicle at the time of the accident must make the police report. And that raises some questions I'll probably ask the minister at committee. I'm giving him a bit of a heads up. Maybe this is our new-found civility, Mr. Speaker, in the House, but I'm giving him a bit of a heads up about the issue of how it is that a passenger would even know that the driver of a vehicle he was in, or registered owner, if they had made a police report.

I can think of situations where a passenger might not know the driver very well; they might know them, sort of, incidentally, and wouldn't know them personally enough to be able to follow up if they have made that police report. So that's a question that I'll have for the minister when we get to committee, and perhaps we can have that discussion then.

There's also provisions in this bill, and it's not the main pith and substance of the bill, but it's part of it, about reporting when you've hit an animal on the road, when you're driving on the road and you hit somebody. There's now more specific things that you have to do in terms of removing the animal from the road and then reporting the collision, or reporting the collision to a peace officer if you're unable to practically remove the animal from the road. And then you also have to report the collision to the owner of the animal, if it's a domestic animal and if there's a tag, I suppose, on the animal, or you have to advise the clerk of a local municipality.

In some ways, I mean, we're talking about things that should be sort of common sense, perhaps, to ensure that individuals know whether an animal that might be under their care has been hit or that it is removed from the road so it doesn't cause a hazard for somebody else. But I have some questions about how we can ensure that people know what their responsibility is, because, I suspect, that if somebody is involved with hitting an animal on the road somewhere in Manitoba, it could be—whether it's Winnipeg and it's a domestic animal, or in rural Manitoba and it's a non-domestic animal, they may

not know that it's their responsibility to remove the animal and make some sort of contact with somebody so that they know it needs to be removed, or to check if there's a way to identify who the owner of the animal is and then to make that notification or to call a municipal official.

So we just want to make sure that people understand what their responsibilities are, and perhaps those questions will come up at committee, Mr. Speaker, when this bill goes to committee, which, I expect, will be sometime early next week.

Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to put a few words on the record on the Bill 37.

While I'm certainly of the view that it is reasonable to end the requirement to make a police report about an accident if it's—the damage is to property of, you know, less than a certain value—and certainly raising that above \$1,000 is reasonable. But there—I would be very interested in greater discussion about thresholds here because, certainly, there should be a police report, as there would be for bodily injury or death, or it involves an unlicensed driver or unregistered vehicle, or if another driver does not exchange the required information, or stop at the place of the accident, or if the driver's informed or has reason to believe that consumption of alcohol or other intoxicating substance by another driver was the cause or contributing factor of the accident.

But I would think that, you know, you could have a very substantial amount of property damage without necessarily incurring this, and I wonder if there should be a dollar limit, in some fashion, put on this, and I will look forward to comments being made at the committee stage with respect of that. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 37, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Accident Reporting Requirements).

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

* (16:40)

House Business

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

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on further House business. I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Justice will meet on Monday, June 6th, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 16, The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment and Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act; Bill 18, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Bill 19, The Provincial Court Amendment Act (Senior Judges); Bill 25, The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act; Bill 29, The Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act; and Bill 37, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Accident Reporting Requirements).

Mr. Speaker: Okay, it's been announced that the Standing Committee on Justice will meet on Monday, June 6th, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 16, The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment and Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act; Bill 18, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Bill 19, The Provincial Court Amendment Act (Senior Judges); Bill 25, The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act; Bill 29, The Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act; and Bill 37, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Accident Reporting Requirements).

The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Ms. Howard: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on further House business.

We are—continue debate on second readings of Bill 17, 30, 35, 39, 40, 43, 36 and 41.

Bill 17—The Cooperatives Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay, we'll now call No. 17, The Cooperatives Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Carman.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): This—Bill 17, The Cooperatives Amendment Act, is a act meant to somewhat broaden the aspects of co-operatives, and it deals specifically with multi-stakeholder co-operatives and also amends some of the rules governing termination of memberships and appeal tribunals and that sort of thing in regards to membership within the multi—within the co-operatives themselves.

And, as well, there's some regulations already been made in regards to co-operatives being able to

hold simultaneous meetings in different locations, and that one has certainly been brought forward in our rural areas. Particularly in our rural areas, you have some rather large co-operatives and credit unions spread across the province. It's—this will endeavour to make it easier for members to participate in an annual meeting in a multi-location format. And, with the technology we have today, this can be done quite easily. It's far easier to drive into town to your local hall or whatnot and then participate in an annual meeting via communication.

And so we look forward to this bill moving forward. I know that I have spoken to one of the directors of Federated Co-op, and he's—was very much in favour of this bill moving forward, and we look forward to seeing them at committee when this bill makes its way there.

And so, with those comments, Mr. Speaker, we'll look forward to its speedy passage.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 17, The Cooperatives Amendment Act.

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

Bill 30—The Change of Name Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay, Bill 30, The Change of Name Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Carman.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): And this relatively simple bill, it's in regards to a change of name.

And for those who have been on the wrong side of the law, so to speak, or wanting to evade further detection, this bill is enabling the RCMP and other criminal—or police forces, pardon me, to be able to require fingerprinting of the person changing their name. And, of course, for those people who are getting married that will be changing their name, there is an exemption for that, so I guess we won't have to fingerprint all the new brides and grooms that are coming through. At least I hope that's the intention of this bill anyway.

If I may, I know everyone's certainly looking forward to getting done today, but I had some grade 11 law students in the Legislature today. And I used Bill 30 as an example of the procedure, and it was interesting to explain to them the process of introduction and the second reading and committee

and the like. And they were up in the gallery to watch introduction of bills today with yourself presiding over it, Mr Speaker.

So it was—

An Honourable Member: I hope that's all they saw.

Mr. Pedersen: The decorum was very well when they were here watching, and I'm sure I won't hear anything otherwise from them on the weekend when I see them again.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to this bill—speedy passage of this bill. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, in discussing Bill 30, The Change of Name Act—Amendment Act, it seems to me that it is reasonable under some circumstances to be fingerprinting people who are changing their names where there is some reasonable basis for having some concern, but also seems to me that it may be a little too intrusive to have everybody who's going to change their name have to have fingerprinting done and that fingerprinting, then, be part of whatever banks the fingerprints, the police service, agency, or organization designated by the regulation is ordered—authorized to take the fingerprints of people applying for a change of name.

While this act does provide for the authorized agency to put in place reasonable and sufficient safeguards to protect the confidentiality of the fingerprints of applicants and other personal information relating to applicants in its custody or under its control, it seems to me that, you know, very often in search for people who are criminals, that there is quite a significant amount of sharing of information including fingerprint information, and it would seem to me that this needs to be clarified in terms of just what kind of confidentiality and protection is to be provided.

And so I have some reservations about this bill, and I look forward to the comments being made at the committee stage and the discussion at the committee stage. While I would agree that it's reasonable to have the power to be able to fingerprint where there's justification, to be able to fingerprint whenever somebody's changing their name from Kelvin to something else that it doesn't necessarily justify being—having your fingerprints put in a bank which may or may not have as much confidentiality protection as one would like. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 30, The Change of Name Amendment Act.

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

Bill 35—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Cell Phone Contracts)

Mr. Speaker: Bill 35, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Cell Phone Contracts), standing in the name of the honourable member for Carman.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): This bill is designed to clarify the language of cellphone contracts, and we know how popular the use of cellphones are now, and there has been some issues about clarity within those contracts.

And the bill basically goes—it wants to clarify the length, in clear language, the length of the contract term, giving 60 days' notice; the minimum monthly cost of the contract, again, in clear language; a description of the services included in the minimum monthly cost because we know that what is sometimes advertised it tends to—could be a little bit higher than that, so we want to make sure that that's clear; the details and rates for additional-use charges such as additional minutes. And, again, it's just providing clarity through the whole contract, also, details about optional services, details including costs, one-time fees, and things such as system activation fees.

And, perhaps, the most important part of this clarity, if that's what the bill is designed to do, it's how a consumer may cancel the contract and, if there is a cancellation fee, how is it calculated. And, as I understand, there's supposed to be regulations written for adjusting the values of these cancellation fees, and I'm somewhat concerned about that. I think it would be better if the contract just spelled it out right out in front, and where you've leaving this into regulation, it could cause some concerns as to how the regulations are written. But we'll have more questions about that in committee as the bill goes through.

But the one other aspect is it's—as a cellphone bill user, you are—if you require a paper bill, the cellphone companies are now—would be required to supply you with a paper bill. So it's cleaning up the language of the cellphone contracts in order to make them clearer and more consumer friendly. And so,

other than the questions that I've raised here that we'll bring up in committee, the bill looks like it should move ahead.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I certainly think that there is a role for this legislation to protect consumers with respect to cellphone contracts. And, certainly, from that point of view, that the justification and the need for this bill is reasonable.

I think that there are, you know, some aspects of this that need to be scrutinized with some care. One of the things, for example, is that, with cellphone contracts, we have people in my experience increasingly who are travelling around, and they are, you know, maybe working in Manitoba but with a cellphone with an Ontario number or BC number, and vice versa.

And that, because of the ability and the fact that people are doing so much travelling, that there's some jurisdictional issues which, I think, could be looked at and should be looked quite carefully to make sure that it's very clear where this applies, how it applies and that there certainly will be examples of people who have cellphones being used in Manitoba where their contract is with an out-of-province provider. And we need to be sure whether such people are covered or not, and by this legislation, and under what conditions.

And so I think that it would be important to have that very clear and specific.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 35, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Cell Phone Contracts).

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

**Bill 39—The Grieving Families Protection Act
(Various Acts Amended)**

Mr. Speaker: Bill 39, The Grieving Families Protection Act (Various Acts Amended), standing in the name of the honourable member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler).

What is the will of the House?

Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Springfield?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. It's been denied.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Just briefly, Mr. Speaker, I know that the member for Springfield will want to put some comments on the record at committee and perhaps at the third reading when this bill returns to the House.

Members will remember that it was, in fact, the member for Springfield who brought forward a private member's bill that dealt with some of the issues contained in this bill. At that point, the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), the member responsible, got quite upset and quite agitated and put on quite a show for us here in the Legislature about how bad he thought the bill was. And now he's photocopied a good portion of it and brought it right back.

And so, I guess, he's had a bit of a change of heart, a bit of a conversion on the road to Damascus, and here we have the member for Springfield's bill back but in a different form and under a different name. So I'm sure we'll hear more from the member for Springfield regarding that at committee and at third reading.

And I certainly want to acknowledge his hard work in getting his bill before the Legislature, despite the fact that the member for St. Johns put on quite a road show when this initially came before the Legislature.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): This bill, which deals with families who are grieving and providing protection primarily under this act, in the case of pre-arranged funeral services, from what I've seen, it's certainly warranted that we're taking a careful look at pre-arranged funeral services and the contracts and so on which apply under such circumstances.

I think this is particularly important because the funeral and the events that occur around the death of a loved one are pretty important events, and it's very important that they go smoothly with dignity and that

you have things in hand in terms of the contractual arrangements well sorted out so that there are not last-minute problems at a very difficult time for many people.

And so I welcome the efforts here to have improvements in the preparation of pre-arranged funeral plans and how they would apply and so on, and I'm looking forward to the discussion that occurs at the committee stage and to seeing this bill move forward from here through other stages in this legislative process. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 39, The Grieving Families Protection Act (Various Acts Amended).

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

Bill 40—The Condominium Act and Amendments Respecting Condominium Conversions (Various Acts Amended)

Mr. Speaker: Bill 40, The Condominium Act and Amendments Respecting Condominium Conversions (Various Acts Amended), and it's standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu).

What is the will of the House?

Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Morris? *[Agreed]*

Okay. So it will remain standing.

Bill 43—The Real Property Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay, and now we'll go to Bill 43, The Real Property Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Carman.

What is the will of the House?

Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Carman? *[Agreed]*

Okay, so it will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Carman.

Bill 36—The Adult Abuse Registry Act and Amendments to The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 36, The Adult Abuse Registry Act and Amendments to The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for River East.

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): I just want to put a few comments on the record and then move this bill on to committee and hear whether there may be some public presentation. As we all know, there are Manitobans that do need to be protected; the children need to be protected, and there are vulnerable adults that need to be protected, too.

And we've seen some instances over the last few years, and I know that instances of abuse of vulnerable adults and children have occurred over the years, but there were, I think, a couple of instances that precipitated this government to bring in this piece of legislation. I've had the chance to—the opportunity to have—be briefed by the minister, and I think moving in this direction and moving slowly in phases is probably the right way to go when we look at protection.

I know that those adults that are defined under The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act will be the individuals that will be protected as the first phase of the rollout of protection of vulnerable adults. And, Mr. Speaker, I just want to indicate that I think that a good process has been followed, and look forward to hearing presentation at committee through the committee process on this piece of legislation.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, Bill 36, which deals with adult abuse registry, I think this is an important piece of legislation and one that certainly needs to be looked at with very considerable care. I think it's a piece of legislation which is certainly—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 29 minutes remaining.

The hour now being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m., on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 2, 2011

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