

**Fifth Session – Forty-Second Legislature**  
**of the**  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**Standing Committee**  
**on**  
**Legislative Affairs**

*Chairperson*  
*Mr. Josh Guenter*  
*Constituency of Borderland*

**Vol. LXXVII No. 7 - 6 p.m., Thursday, May 25, 2023**

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**Forty-Second Legislature**

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**  
**THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

**Thursday, May 25, 2023**

**TIME – 6 p.m.**

**LOCATION – Winnipeg, Manitoba**

**CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland)**

**VICE-CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland)**

**ATTENDANCE – 6 QUORUM – 4**

*Members of the committee present:*

*Hon. Messrs. Goertzen, Khan*

*Mr. Guenter, Ms. Lathlin, Messrs. Pedersen, Redhead*

**APPEARING:**

*MLA Nahanni Fontaine, MLA for St. Johns*

**PUBLIC PRESENTERS:**

*Bill 40–The Combative Sports Amendment Act  
John McDonald, Manitoba Combative Sports Commission*

*Rick Lemoine, Manitoba Sport Martial Arts Association*

*Giuseppe DeNatale, Canadian Fighting Center*

**MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION:**

*Bill 40–The Combative Sports Amendment Act*

*Bill 43–The Provincial Offences Amendment Act (2)*

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**Clerk Assistant (Ms. Katerina Tefft):** Good evening. Will the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs please come to order.

Before the committee can proceed with the business before it, it must elect a Chairperson.

Are there any nominations?

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** I nominate Mr. Guenter, MLA for Borderland.

**Clerk Assistant:** Mr. Guenter has been nominated.

Are there any other nominations?

Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Guenter, will you please take the Chair.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Our next item of business is the election of a Vice-Chairperson.

Are there any nominations? Nominations for Vice-Chair.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I would nominate Mr. Pedersen.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Pedersen has been nominated.

Are there any other nominations?

Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Pedersen is elected Vice-Chairperson.

This meeting has been called to consider the following bills: Bill 40, The Combative Sports Amendment Act; and Bill 43, the provincial offences amendment act.

I would like to inform all in attendance of the provisions in our rules regarding the hour of adjournment. A standing committee meeting to consider a bill must not sit past midnight to hear public presentations or to consider clause by clause of a bill, except by unanimous consent of the committee.

Prior to proceeding with public presentations, I would like to advise members of the public regarding the process for speaking in a committee. In accordance with our rules, a time limit of 10 minutes has been allotted for presentations, with another five minutes allowed for questions from committee members. Questions shall not exceed 30 seconds in length, with no time limit for answers. Questions may be addressed to presenters in the following rotation: first, the minister sponsoring the bill; and second, a member of the official opposition; and third, an independent member.

If a presenter is not in attendance when their name is called, they will be dropped to the bottom of the list. If the presenter is not in attendance when their name is called a second time, they will be removed from the presenters list.

The proceedings of our meetings are recorded in order to provide a verbatim transcript. Each time someone wishes to speak, whether it be an MLA or a presenter, I first have to say the person's name. This is

the signal for the Hansard recorder to turn the mics on and off.

Thank you for your patience and we will now proceed with the public presentations.

**Bill 40—The Combative Sports Amendment Act**

**Mr. Chairperson:** All right, so, for the information of the committee, we've had two walk-in presenters, Mr. Rick Lemoine as well as Giuseppe DeNatale. *[interjection]* Perfect, and we will now proceed with our first presenter, Mr. John McDonald.

Mr. McDonald, please proceed with your presentation.

**John McDonald (Manitoba Combative Sports Commission):** Thanks for the opportunity to come this evening.

I'm the executive director for the Manitoba Combative Sports Commission. We'll be the organization directly responsible for this legislation change and for implementing regulations, policies and control measures to ensure the safety of athletes competing as amateurs and the continued competition for professional athletes.

I'd like to say a big thank you to Minister Khan for spearheading this amendment. It's been something that the combative sports organizations in this province have been pursuing for a decade or longer, and I'd like to thank all members of the Legislative Assembly for their support for this bill. It's a very important component to have safety added to the bill for amateur athletes and for us to have that opportunity to regulate them.

The department has been incredibly supportive in all of this process, and I'm very proud to see Manitoba taking a very positive step forward in sport for developing amateur sport, economic development opportunity and just combative sports in general.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. McDonald.

Do members of the committee have questions for the presenter? Minister?

**Hon. Obby Khan (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** No—comments or just questions?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, Minister Khan.

**Mr. Khan:** I don't have any questions for you, John. I just want to thank you for all the work you do and that your commission does and your group does.

And this is a massive undertaking that you and your team and, as you grow in this province, are, you know, on board with and willing to take over. So I just want to acknowledge you and the work you do and the work you're going to have to do going forward to make sure this, you know, we do this in the proper way.

So it's nice to know that we have the Manitoba Combative Sports Commission on board to take the proper steps for athletes' safety in this province, and I couldn't be happier or prouder to have a guy like you running it.

So thank you for the work you do. We look forward to changing the landscape of combative sports in this province for amateurs and safety. So thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Minister, for those comments.

Mr. McDonald, would you like to respond?

**J. McDonald:** I have no response other than thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, thank you.

Does—okay, are there any further questions?

All right, seeing no further questions, we'll move to the next presenter, Mr. Rick Lemoine.

Please proceed with your presentation.

**Rick Lemoine (Manitoba Sport Martial Arts Association):** My thanks to the committee Chair for this opportunity to speak to you all this evening.

My name is Rick Lemoine. I'm a second-degree black belt and instructor at Bae's Martial Arts and a director of the Manitoba Sport Martial Arts Association. I'm extremely proud to appear before the committee this evening as a representative for our association, speaking in support of Bill 40 to amend The Combative Sports Act.

Our association's mission and vision is to promote the growth and development of open, all-inclusive martial arts and to ensure our competitions are conducted in a safe and fair environment, free of exclusivity throughout Manitoba.

The association is a not-for-profit organization incorporated in May of 2015. We are founded by five Manitoba-based martial arts schools, with over 60 senior masters, black belt instructors, certified officials, encompassing several different disciplines, including karate, tae kwon do, Muay Thai, Philippine martial arts and Chinese martial arts.

We also have 16 supporting schools across Manitoba, Saskatchewan and northwest Ontario. We promote inclusivity and actively welcome the participation of all martial arts styles in open tournaments and competitions.

\* (18:10)

At present, we have about 750 students, and we are constantly growing. Our association has historically and continues to produce provincial, Canadian and world champions, all Manitoba born, raised and trained. More important, however, than producing world champions, we help young people become more confident, more disciplined; we help to elevate their self-esteem, mental health, well-being in today's high-pressure, fast-paced society, resulting in happier youths with better grades, and with a little bit of luck some even—may even go home and start to obey their parents.

Presently, and over the last few years, Manitoba has been the lone province in Canada to prohibit point sparring in sport martial arts competitions, due to an absence of a sanctioning body. Other provinces of Canada—in Canada have sister organizations comparable to our association, who are non-PSO and who are self-governing and self-regulating.

Since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have again been running our tournaments and competitions, but comprised of traditional forms, extreme forms, weapon forms and musical forms. But something very valuable is missing, and that is the sparring competition where two trained, talented martial arts athletes square off against each other and punch and kick for points under a strict set of rules and safety precautions, all under the control of highly trained coaches and under the watchful eye of experienced black-belt-ranked referees and officials.

Now, make no mistake, sparring between lower level belt athletes ages six to 12 is the same as watching them play tag in the playground, only at our competitions they're fully protected to engage in this game of tag. The older athletes, while possibly being more powerful, are also more highly skilled, and as such, their kicks and punches are developed to land and score exclusively in the safe point-scoring areas of an opponent's body. To put it plainly, the Manitoba Sport Martial Arts Association wrote the book on safety and developed rules many years ago for open martial arts sparring in competition.

Our tournament rules are of the highest standard, meeting high-calibre national and world championship competition requirements. Our athletes wear full protective equipment including head protection, face protection, mouth guards, chest protection, hand pads, groin protection, shin guards and foot pads. Once fitted with all of this protective gear, our little warriors look more like Star Wars stormtrooper characters, as they're wearing so much armour.

To summarize, the Manitoba Sport Martial Arts Association schools have run safe sparring events for over 25 years, with no injuries. The same cannot be said for other karate and martial arts competitions, which we have personally witnessed. At our tournament, if the medical techs on site get to apply a single Band-Aid for a stubbed toe or an ice pack for a sore ankle resulting from the landing of an extreme aerial acrobatic move, it's the highlight of their day.

I always make a point of speaking to the medical techs at each of our events, just to hear how their day is going. Oftentimes the reply is, nothing yet, Rick—which is, of course, music to our ears. At a previous tournament which we attended which was not affiliated with our association, we watched a single med tech sprinting from ring to ring dealing with multiple injuries incurred during sparring competitions—again, not our association.

Manitoba stands alone as the only province presently not allowing safe sparring in open sport martial arts tournaments. We stand alone in that. Starting in 2016, our association has passionately, dutifully, diligently undertaken all of the avenues and efforts to conduct our competitions while being sanctioned via other existing PSO-based organizations, where we were unfortunately met with less-than-acceptable behaviours.

We continue to supply world champions and well-rounded, confident young people for Manitoba as recently as last weekend in Ottawa, where all seven members of Team Manitoba qualified to represent Team Canada at the upcoming world championships. The continued and unnecessary prohibition of sparring in open martial arts competitions is hurting young people and developing athletes in our province. It is difficult to own the podium, a goal promoted by Sport Manitoba, when one cannot practise and hone one's skills in higher level competition.

Bill 40, upon receiving royal assent, will serve to rectify this issue and provide the foundation for sanctioned and safe sparring at our open and inclusive

sport martial arts competitions in the province of Manitoba.

On behalf of the Manitoba Sport Martial Arts Association, its executive and directors, our athletes and our parents, I wish to thank the committee for this opportunity to speak this evening.

Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Lemoine.

Do members of the committee have questions for the presenter?

**Mr. Khan:** I want to thank you, Rick, for coming out and speaking, and your passion for the sport and for everything that it does for youth.

You are very well versed, you're a second-degree black belt, but it was nice to hear you say over and over again that safety is paramount for these kids. Safety and a safe space for them to compete to learn the skills and hone the skills of discipline, of confidence, of teamwork, of building their self-esteeming and setting goals with them.

So, you know, I want to thank the work that you're doing—and all of your team, and I see Malcolm Edwards back there as well and others in your organization. So—oh, time.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The time has expired on minister's comments.

Mr. Lemoine, do you have any comments further to what we just heard?

**R. Lemoine:** Just to echo the comments of Mr. McDonald, to thank the House and all of its members.

I've attended the first and second reading. I don't think I've been in the Legislature since I was in grade 4. It's—I'm not going to do the math. So, it was a pleasure. It was a pleasure to watch, and to get involved again in the process.

And I thank you again specifically for all of your efforts on Bill 40. Thank you again.

**MLA Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Miigwech for you presentation.

Throughout your presentation, you used language of inclusivity, but I think that you meant it in the sense of other forms of fighting or discipline or whatever it may be called.

I am curious how much—keeping in line with inclusivity, how—what's the percentage of women or

gender-diverse folks who are in your sport or your programming?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr.—[*interjection*] Sorry, Mr. Lemoine, go ahead.

**R. Lemoine:** I can answer on behalf of the Manitoba Sport Martial Arts Association and also what I see for other schools.

The combination of gender diverse, different ethnicities and women, I am going to guess is probably around 65 per cent of the total attendees at our tournaments, if I may confer momentarily with Mr. Edwards. Thank you, sir.

**MLA Fontaine:** When you say—because you kind of put all of it together, when you say gender-diverse folks, by that, what do you explicitly mean? [*interjection*]

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Lemoine, go ahead. Sorry, I just need to recognize you for Hansard. Thank you.

**R. Lemoine:** When I used the phrase gender diverse, I thought I was repeating what you had asked.

Did you use the phrase gender diverse in your question? If not, I apologize.

**MLA Fontaine:** Yes, no—yes, I did. And by that, I meant, like, you know gender-diverse folks, non-binary, trans folks, that's specifically what I was meaning. But in your response, you had said women, minorities—which I don't use that language—and gender-diverse folks. You said we're around 60, 65 per cent.

So, I guess more specifically, what would be—what would you imagine the percentage of women, let's just say, that are involved?

**R. Lemoine:** I'm going to say between 40 and 45 per cent, echoed by more of an expert, Master Edwards.

**MLA Fontaine:** And then, in respect of different communities—again, I don't use the language of minorities, it's not—

**Floor Comment:** Nor did I, I believe.

**MLA Fontaine:** Yes, you did. But just in respect of different communities that are involved, what other different communities or predominantly different communities are involved? [*interjection*]

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Lemoine, sorry. You have the floor, go ahead.

**R. Lemoine:** I apologize again for the quick draw.

\* (18:20)

In our association, a very large representation of the Winnipeg Filipino community exists through two different schools. A large percentage of that—

**Mr. Chairperson:** All right, that—time has expired.

Is there leave for Mr. Lemoine to continue with his answer? *[Agreed]*

Okay, Mr. Lemoine, go ahead.

**R. Lemoine:** I think I concluded speaking about the Filipino community. We have one kung fu-based or wushu-based school that does have a very diverse representation of athletes, some who are Chinese Canadians.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Minister—okay, Minister Khan?

**Mr. Khan:** Yes, just one follow-up question to the—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Minister, you need to ask for leave.

**Mr. Khan:** Oh. I ask for leave to ask Mr.—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Does Minister Khan have leave? *[Agreed]*

Okay, Minister Khan, go ahead.

**Mr. Khan:** I just wanted to ask one question about—you talked about the diversity and the inclusivity of your gym. Can you maybe just talk about, like, what mixed martial arts or open martial arts and what Bae's gym and the community brings to different communities and then how that's reflected in your gym and your experience in bringing especially amateur and youth together from different backgrounds?

**R. Lemoine:** Thank you, Mr. Khan.

What I—I'm going to answer that by saying what I get out of it, what I see. What I see is children developing—youth, young teenagers, developing. It brings a lot of happiness. It brings a lot of parents to the events. It brings grandparents to the events. It brings family to the events. I'm sort of focusing a little more now on answering your question. It brings fun.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Do members of the committee have further questions for the presenter?

All right. Mr. Lemoine, thank you for your presentation and for coming tonight.

I will now call on Giuseppe DeNatale, and forgive me if I mispronounced your name. Feel free to come forward.

**Giuseppe DeNatale (Canadian Fighting Center):** Hello, can you hear me?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Yes, you may proceed with your presentation. Thank you.

**G. DeNatale:** Just wanted to say thank you to everybody, to the Minister of Sport, to everyone who's in favour of building amateur combat sports here in Manitoba. The rest of Canada needs to follow suit.

The safest, most efficient commission or association to regulate amateur mixed martial arts—now, amateur mixed martial arts is the—very fast-growing sport. It's very big. If you guys watch the UFC, for instance, throw in a Brandon there.

Are you guys familiar with mixed martial arts? Five years from now, 10 years from now, Winnipeg is going to be a hub for combat sports. There's going to be athletes flying in from all over Canada. I'd like to see a national database, for sure a provincial database, of registered fighters, fully medicalled. I follow the same guidelines at my gym as Boxing Canada. I'm part of Boxing Manitoba. I'd like to see proper guidelines.

Did I plug my name yet and where I—my gym is Canadian Fighting Center. I used to promote fights way back at the Convention Centre—professional.

So, in 2013, the Criminal Code of Canada was amended, basically, outlawing any combat sports in Canada that is not regulated by a provincial body. So the work on amateur really started then, in 2013. There were so many unsanctioned shows, and what I mean by unsanctioned is cage put on the floor at the Convention Centre with no one overseeing it until 2006, when the Manitoba Combative Sports Commission brought in professional kick-boxing and professional mixed martial arts.

And in 2006, the journey started here, legally, for cage fights for mixed martial arts, for professional kick-boxing. It was going on illegally here since the late '90s, having big events unsupervised, unsanctioned, no blood work. I can go on and on and on and bore you guys about the logistics across Canada.

In 2011, professional mixed martial arts was regulated in the province of Ontario. We were regulated here by the hard work of the Manitoba—back then it was the boxing commission; it was called the Manitoba Boxing Commission. The later—the name was later changed, I think in 2011 or 2012, to the current Manitoba Combative Sports Commission.

They're the best—the best. They have the most highly trained staff, pound for pound—you know, when they talk in the fight game, pound for pound—pound for pound, Manitoba Combative Sports Commission, No. 1 in Canada. Organized. All the referees, all the officials—sorry for speaking too close—are highly trained through a certain course in the United States. Top officials here. That's all I've got to say about that.

The rest of Canada needs to follow suit. This is groundbreaking. This is instrumental. This is so big for the province here, once we start having amateur competition and we do it safely and make sure that, you know, there's a minimum age requirement to compete at a certain combat sport, like mixed martial arts. Making sure that little kids in training or in competition aren't being hit in the head, because they don't need that. Little kids don't need to be punched and kicked in the head in the name of martial arts. I've been doing martial arts since I was eight years old. I fought a little bit, but little kids don't need to get any damage to their brains at all.

So, with amateur boxing, kids can compete as young as eight years old. They go get a medical—everything's through Boxing Canada; it's an Olympic sport—you get a medical; you're allowed to spar. You're not allowed to spar unless you get a medical with Manitoba amateur boxing, a PSO here in Manitoba, which I'm part of.

Anyhow, not to bore you guys, I'm just saying in amateur boxing, at eight years old, kids can spar, get punched in the face. At 13, they can actually have a recorded bout that they get a win or a loss and they're full-out fights. Before the age of 13, they refer to it as fun box, okay? Now, this is a PSO; you guys can go and look into it. So kids are basically sparring. It's controlled sparring at eight years old. This is what's going on in our province. This is what's going on across Canada through the sport of boxing.

The sport of mixed martial arts is a lot safer for head contact, for trauma, because there's more ways to win via submission. So, the rules for amateur mixed martial arts are very different than the rules for professional mixed martial arts. There's different lengths of rounds. There's certain techniques you cannot do in amateur mixed martial arts. So, that's all I have to say about that.

This is groundbreaking news. Winnipeg is the geographical centre of Canada, and it's going to turn into a major competition zone for amateur combat sports. And I thank you all. This has been going on

since 2013, the fight to legalize. And the fight was always to have mixed martial arts, kick-boxing at the amateur level, overseen by the same commission that oversees professional. It's only logical to do it that way. There's no logic in bringing in another commission or another association.

And guess what? Other people have tried to bring in new PSOs. Other people have tried to bring in other PSOs for combat sports, and those didn't go very well. There's nobody more suited in Manitoba to oversee amateur combat sports than the Manitoba Combat Sports Commission. I've already said, they're the best trained commission.

The problem—there hasn't been an event here since 2017 when the UFC came to Winnipeg in December—December 15th, 2017, at—then it was the MTS Centre. That's the last time we had a show here. That's six years ago—six years ago. Am I speaking loud enough? Am I speaking too close to this thing? Tell me if I'm speaking too close—no? That's all I've got to say about that.

And thank you very much, and that's it. I'll shut up now.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. DeNatale, for your presentation.

Do members of the committee have questions for the presenter?

**Mr. Khan:** More of a comment than a question, I guess.

First of all, Giuseppe, thank you very much for being here, and I thank you for being a champion of the mixed martial arts community and the Manitoba combative community. And also, for the safety of youth in this province and really developing this around and spearheading the 1,700 signatures that you've done and the work you've done over the decades and decades in this province, of 'champeying' that, a safe space for athletes to compete.

\* (18:30)

And so I just wanted to give you a acknowledgement before I get into my next question.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. DeNatale, do you have any follow-up to that?

**G. DeNatale:** Thank you, that's very nice words. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Very good. Any further questions?



**MLA Fontaine:** Miigwech for your presentation. You had mentioned something about that Manitoba, or Winnipeg more specifically, could be the—a hub for other fighters to come in.

Is—in your mind, in your expertise, do you think that there's a lot of money to be made here, now, in respect of that? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. DeNatale. Sorry, I just need to recognize you for Hansard, so go ahead. The floor is yours.

**G. DeNatale:** There'll be crowds that come out, for sure. Then the whole process of becoming of—a promoter has to be that much more scrutinized.

I've been promoting in Manitoba for 20 years, so—outside promoters coming in, or some people that are doing it just for the money, right? Provided that your shows make money, because everything costs money. You'd need to rent a hall, you have to pay a sanctioning cost, you have to pay doctors, you have to pay medical staff; so there is costs to putting on a show.

And that's not the reason why—I do marital arts every day; I teach every day. I teach kids every day, I teach adults every day. I've been doing martial arts for 41 years. Manitoba needs competition for the kids. It's about the kids; it's about the future. Mixed martial arts is a huge sport. There's only four provinces that regulate amateur.

How are you going to fight professionally? What if a kid's dream is to be next GSP? You know who GSP is? The greatest MMA fighter ever to come out of Canada, pound for pound the best fighter and mixed martial arts, credited to be—from Quebec. What if a kid wants to be the next UFC champion? Because they know what—they make a lot of money; at the professional level, if you make it to the UFC, you're getting paid well. But you got to fight your way up there.

It's a legitimate combat sport sanctioned all over the world. Mixed martial arts is a legitimate combat sport sanctioned all over the world. And it costs money to put on shows; it does. But if someone's in it just to make money, you know, that's—yes. I don't know.

**Mr. Khan:** Giuseppe, have you seen and experienced that—maybe you can share one or two of your students that have come up through training, through what you've seen at an age, and what your—the sport has done for them in this province. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. DeNatale.

**G. DeNatale:** My bad. Okay. Can I—you ready? Good? Yes?

I'll tell you about this one kid; his name's Dana. He just fought at the Canada summer—or, sorry, Winter Games, for boxing, out in—it was on the east coast about three months ago.

Came up through my kids' program, started training with me when he's eight years old. He really enjoyed martial arts; he wanted to spar. We got him licensed with Manitoba Amateur Boxing. He was a converted kick-boxer. He had maybe seven, eight, nine fights locally through Manitoba Amateur Boxing. He fought—he represented Team Manitoba out in—I think it was PEI, for the summer games. I think he was actually at your office as well; the whole team came out to the office.

That's one success story. I mean, I've seen kids come through with my kids program, and I don't like training too young a kid. Eight years old, for me, is mature enough. I tell parents, when they bring their kids to train to put them in soccer first. Soccer's the world's sport, No. 1: soccer. I train kids after.

But I have multiple stories—I could sit here, and I can see I'm—got 16 seconds—that kids, they work hard, they do their homework, they do good in school, right? And the only venue here is amateur boxing. And I've seen it many times that these kids, they work hard, and they work hard in school.

**Mr. Chairperson:** All right. The time for questions has expired.

And that concludes the list of presenters I have before me. In what order does the committee—sorry, Mr. DeNatale, thank you for your presentation.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** In what order does the committee wish to proceed with the clause-by-clause consideration of these bills? *[interjection]* Yes, what order do you want the bills—to consider the bills in?

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** Numerical; 40 and then 43? Like, it's not like this will take all night.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is—yes, is it the will of the committee to proceed in a numerical—consider the bills in numerical order, 40 and then 43? *[Agreed]*

**Bill 40—The Combative Sports Amendment Act**  
(Continued)

**Mr. Chairperson:** We will now proceed with the clause by clause of Bill 40.

Does the minister responsible for Bill 40 have an opening statement?

**Hon. Obby Khan (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** Yes, I do. I'll keep my comments—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, Minister Khan. Go ahead.

**Mr. Khan:** Yes, I do. I'll keep my comments relatively brief.

I want to thank everyone for coming out tonight. I do want to start by acknowledging we are on Treaty 1 territory, the Homeland of the Red River Métis. I want to thank all the speakers that have come out and all the 1,700-plus people who have signed this petition to take this step forward.

Bill 40—and I won't read through my 10 pages of notes here in the interest of time—but Bill 40 is really all about—I know, yes—it's really about safety of these amateur athletes, and that's how I really got on board and passionate about this is that there is no regulation right now. There's no oversight for athletes to compete in this province, and we need that. It's all about safety for these kids.

They're going out of province to compete. We know these fights are happening illegally in this province at various gyms. Why not regulate it, control it, sanction it. We have—the Manitoba Combative Sports Commission is already in place to do that. They'll need some more support to beef up their operations, and we will have an amazing organization, a system, a set-up for amateur athletes.

We all know the benefits that sports, arts, various organizations can do. Bill 40 just expands on that. I am super honoured, as the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage, to bring this through, and I'm looking forward to really seeing what this can do for the landscape for amateur athletes.

And not only going on to fight in the UFC and whatnot, but really give them a safe space to train, some mentorship, some guidelines, some focus, some teamwork, discipline, exactly what Rick Lemoine had spoken about, and Giuseppe had spoken about, John McDonald and everyone, that it really harnesses for these kids.

So, in summary, it's all about the safety for the kids and I'm honoured that I could, as the minister,

bring this forward, and I hope that I have full support of everyone in here.

Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Minister, for those comments.

Does the critic from the official opposition have an opening statement?

**MLA Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Well, I want to just say miigwech to the presenters this evening who came and shared their expertise and their perspectives on Bill 40 and the need to expand the mandate.

I was just sharing with my colleague here that my question was about—in respect of, you know, the possibility for Manitoba and what this could do for Manitoba—for Manitoba businesses and—so, it seems like it's an important step forward.

And, you know, I think it's important, I think everybody around the table would agree that it's important to provide safeguards for children and youth.

And so, we, on this side of the table, are happy to support Bill 40.

**Mr. Chairperson:** All right, we thank the member for those comments.

During the consideration of a bill, the enacting clause and the title are postponed until all other clauses have been considered in their proper order.

Also, if there is agreement from the committee, the Chair will call clauses in blocks that conform to pages, with the understanding that we will stop at any particular clause or clauses where members may have comments, questions or amendments to propose.

Is that agreed? [*Agreed*]

Clauses 1 and 2—pass; clauses 3 through 6—pass; clauses 7 through 10—pass; clauses 11 and 12—pass; clauses 13 through 17—pass; clause 18—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

\* (18:40)

**Bill 43—The Provincial Offences  
Amendment Act (2)**

**Mr. Chairperson:** Does the minister responsible for Bill 43 have an opening statement?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Very briefly, because—put comments on the record at second reading and I went through the question-and-answer period at second reading.

I want to thank the various organizations who've come and spoken in favour of this bill and advocated for it over the years. I know that it's important for safety on—in First Nations communities. It'll provide an easier way for bylaws on First Nations communities to be enforced. It's optional; not every First Nations community will—might want to take this particular route, but it does provide an option for those who do.

And we certainly hope it'll be one step, although certainly not the full answer, for increasing safety on First Nations communities.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Minister, for those comments.

Does the critic from the official opposition have an opening statement?

MLA Redhead, go ahead.

**Mr. Eric Redhead (Thompson):** I'm going to be brief as well.

I think this is a very important bill, and we're very happy to support it. You know, the amendments that are made in this bill are going to be instrumental in—and keeping First Nations communities safe.

And also, you know, I want to thank MKO, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Grand Chief, their staff, for advocating, lobbying this government to make this—the amendments in this bill possible. You know, their work is commendable, and I know first-hand the amount of work that goes into lobbying and getting these very important changes done to bills. So I really want to commend them for their efforts.

And, obviously, you know, Bill 41—or sorry, Bill 43 appears to be one of the rare instances where

the PC government actually consulted with First Nations and followed through on their requests. And for that, we're grateful.

We do hope that the PCs will continue this trend and listen to First Nations' concerns on numerous issues that they've brought forward that the PC government has yet to act on.

But, with those few words, we're very happy to support Bill 43.

Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Redhead.

During the consideration of a bill, the enacting clause and the title are postponed until all other clauses have been considered in their proper order.

Also, if there is agreement from the committee, the Chair will call clauses in blocks that conform to pages, with the understanding that we will stop at any particular clause or clauses where members may have comments, questions or amendments to propose.

Is that agreed? [*Agreed*]

Clauses 1 through 3—pass; clauses 4 through 8—pass; clauses 9 through 12—pass; clauses 13 through 15—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

The hour being 6:43, what is the will of the committee?

**An Honourable Member:** Committee rise.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Committee rise.

**COMMITTEE ROSE AT:** 6:43 p.m.

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