

Second Session – Forty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

Vol. LXX No. 29A - 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 21, 2017

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): This morning we would like to ask if there's leave of the House to proceed to—

An Honourable Member: Resume debate.

Mr. Micklefield: Resume debate. Thank you. We'll get this right. Let's—let me—

An Honourable Member: On bill.

Mr. Micklefield: On bill 14–214. Thank you. Thank you.

I'd like to thank all my colleagues on all sides of the House for the assistance this morning.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to resume debate on Bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act (Silver Alert)? *[Agreed]*

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 214—The Missing Persons Amendment Act (Silver Alert)

Madam Speaker: We will then debate Bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act (Silver Alert), on second reading, standing in the name of the honourable member for Tyndall Park, who has nine minutes.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): My personal interest in this bill is always because of the experiences—the life experiences that I had with my dad and my other friends who are nearing that age,

that age where cognitive impairment is a little bit more severe. I won't say that it is something that could still be ignored. Some have said that it's a part of the normal process of aging.

And there is a fear, for some of us, that if it happened to your father or mother, you're more prone to have it, meaning dementia or Alzheimer's. And there were times when, during the life of my father, when he could not even recognize me—I was his first born. And he was a little bit on the advanced stages of—they said it was dementia, the other doctor says it's Alzheimer's. I don't know the difference and I don't think any one of us would know the difference. It's still cognitive impairment.

And the way that my mother-in-law dealt with it was that he had that—she had that thing that was dangling from her neck which was a chain that holds on to that button. It was a button that was designed to alert—that—at the company they call it the Victoria Lifeline—and she used that quite often, especially when she could not find her room. And it was amazing that the—Victoria Lifeline could be calling the contact phone. And guess whose phone it was: mine. And I would rush to the nursing home and I would be there looking for her. It's a good thing that the nursing home itself had that locking mechanism wherein you have to press four numbers—which was 1739, but I won't tell which one, which nursing home it was. But 1739, it was some odd number that people like my mother-in-law cannot remember. But I did. I remembered the number and I can get out by punching it. But some of them have been protected by those four numbers.

And the silver alert, this is a Missing Persons Amendment Act, I think, will supplement the things that we already have in the community. It's an acknowledgement that it's still a huge problem, especially when we have a slew of—or a number of missing persons that up to now have not been found. There's Thelma Krull, and it still baffles me, how can a 59-year-old disappear from the face of the earth and not be found?

And in the old country where I came from, the Philippines, there's a lot of homeless people who won't even know their first names or last names, and they won't even know how old they were. And they would usually be agitated when you ask them about:

have they eaten; where do they sleep? And most of them are homeless. And, in a way, they are fortunate because of the climate in the Philippines which is the tropics. They don't freeze to death. In this country we know that that could make a lot of difference. There are a lot of shelters, but, then, if you are cognitively impaired you won't even know where to go. You won't even know where you are. And it's not appropriate for us to even assume that, well, it's a problem for the family. No, it's not. It is a problem for all of us, because that's the way that most civilized societies act. We act and behave in the way that we are taking care of ourselves. We act and behave in a way that says we are humans, and we care for each other.

*(10:10)

And I would have said something about the minimum wage concerning this, but then it would be too irrelevant, I think, especially when the cuts to the minimum wage has become a little bit at the forefront—or the cut—the freezes to government salaries. It is—*[interjection]*

Well, the member from Gimli is piping in, and you'll get your chance.

My real point in this debate is always, we should always take care of the most vulnerable. And that should be the general thread of everything that we do. We should always take care of the poor and the most vulnerable. We cannot assume that, well, they should be able to take care of themselves. Well, for us who are here, who are so privileged to be serving here and making enough money, maybe we should care more about those who have less. Maybe we should care more for those who have none, especially those who have none.

And, for you all, my friends, including you, Madam Speaker, Siloam Mission is asking for help. And, from time to time, maybe it's best if we came face to face with those souls at the Siloam Mission. And maybe it's also good if we pop by the Salvation Army, right on Main Street—right on Martha, the Main Street Project. Maybe we should take a look so that we become a little bit more sensitized to the needs of Manitobans. We become a little bit more sensitive to the ways that, maybe, we are not doing enough. Maybe we should do more. Maybe we should do a little bit better.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Nic Curry (Kildonan): It's a pleasure to speak to this important issue, the silver alert system brought up by my good friend from Brandon East.

Now, my good friend from Tyndall Park just mentioned the most vulnerable people. I think it's a wonderful opportunity we have to talk about some of those vulnerable people. People like Ihor Michalishyn, who—his son and I went to high school together and, very shortly after I met his son in grade 10, he found out his father had a degenerative cognitive disease. He's still there—still lives up in Kildonan, not too far away. And, when I first entered politics, he was one of the first people to call me down—said, Nic, I hear you're getting involved with this.

And it's tough, though, because I remember him when he first started his road through his disease. He had a great time. He would walk over to Shooters golf course, just off Main Street. He'd play a round with the friends and, being on disability, he just got to have lots of fun playing golf and enjoying himself.

But these days, he's not enjoying himself much anymore. The disease has taken over every aspect of his life. And now his son, in almost trembling fear, when he returned from living in Australia, said: I can't live in Australia anymore, Nic; I've got to take care of my dad. And, unfortunately, his mom isn't doing too well either. And maybe those walks to Shooters golf course are going to be a little more dangerous in the growing months, and I fear for that.

I remember people like Eleonora Gervino—or, as I would call her, "Nana Narina," my wife's grandmother who, in many ways, shaped a lot of my wife's life. She'd love to walk around Garden City. She'd walk to the old Zellers in Northgate mall. And truth be told, once in a while, she'd use the cart there and back. And, as the years grew, she couldn't use the cart anymore, because she couldn't really make those walks anymore. And we spent a few years living with her and living close to her until her cognitive disability and her disease claimed her life.

And I know that many of my neighbours in Garden City love to use our streets, love to walk and go to Northgate; they love to see each other in the shops and all the lovely places. And I know that, every once in a while, someone in their families are afraid. What if they don't come home? What if they just stay out? What if it's a cold night? What if we don't see them again?

And something like the silver alert system is something specifically focused on those concerns, on those fears that family have and family like my own with my grandfather, Don Robson. We're preparing our house for a new tenant, as I like to joke, and I found a card from my grandfather right before he passed away. It said, good luck, Nic, on the election; your grandma in heaven and I are looking down for you.

Well, and my good friend from Tyndall Park mentioned about a alert necklace or an alert bracelet and, many times, I would receive that call when he had either fallen or was in distress, and every time I was very happy to know where exactly he was. He was at home and I could go see him, and sometimes I could be his ambulance ride, sometimes I could sit with him in emergency on those long, long days. But I always knew where he was because his disease was in his heart; he had heart disease. It was not in his mind. And up until 91 years old, he was very sharp. He would read the newspaper, he was very quick-witted and I was very happy for that, but I was always afraid that the man who taught me how to golf, man who taught me how to drive, man who spent many days with me while my parents were off working late nights or spending some of those summer afternoons because they both had to work, this is a man that I never wanted to have to find out that he had gone walking to the store a few steps away from his house and had just never could come back.

I was very happy that his mind was always with him. But many people in our lovely province do not have that same comfort. Many people have family members who are—want to go for walks in Garden City or go to the golf course, even if they can't play anymore. Those people and their families, they don't feel comfortable. They don't feel happy knowing that that could happen any moment, that the last time they hear about their parent is from a sometimes lost-missing person's report. And a silver alert system can expand that information.

I know, myself, when I think about what will happen to my own parents, I can only hope that in the many decades away from—if they have any disease that claims their mind, that we'll have an ability to alert our entire community that they have gone missing. And this is something where I will not rest well until we have some of these measures that can benefit not just people who are afraid in the now, but people in the future, because we know that caring for our family members as they age is one of the

most important parts of our jobs now that we are in our growing adulthood. And I'm so happy to support a silver alert system that will not just benefit Manitobans, not just benefit people in Kildonan, but benefit my family. And I'm happy to support my friend from Brandon East.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): I rise to speak to Bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act. I think it's a well-motivated, well-intentioned bill. I think that it could play a critical role in helping save a person's life or finding them before they become seriously injured or in some way harmed.

So we always have to be careful that we don't stretch our resources too thin, but we also know that we live in a society where more and more people are living longer; Alzheimer's and dementia are diseases that are on the rise in terms of the proportion of the population that suffers from them. And I think many of us may have experienced, in our own families, people that have gone wandering for well and good reasons but have got lost or disoriented and have, only by the good graces of neighbours in our communities or the police or some combination of the two—often the retail sector will bump into somebody and identify that they're disoriented and may not know where they are and have contacted either the emergency services or the police department to let them know what's going on.

But there can be people that get lost, and these people, we want to recover them; we want to make sure they're safe. So if the silver alert program can add some additional support to that in co-operation with our public broadcasting system or the private broadcasting system, including the social media, I think it's a mechanism that we can put in place that will make a difference in our communities in Manitoba.

* (10:20)

So I just briefly want to say that I think there's merit in this kind of an approach. I think there's going to probably be an increasing demand for resources to help locate missing people because of cognitive impairment—dementia, Alzheimer's, confusion, perhaps even concussion sometimes because of some accident that they've been in. And I know, for example, in my own family that's been the case on both sides of my family. And I know in my community I've run into people that have been lost and disoriented and have had to make special

arrangements to make sure that they're looked after and safely return home.

So this is something that I hope we can find a way forward on and put it in place so that we can have those additional resources ready, on a proactive way, to act quickly to identify and find people when they become lost or, in some way, missing from their families or the institutions or homes that they're living in.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I believe I'll be the last speaker for our party on this bill, and that's one of the things we can pass—pass the bill.

The Bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act, the bill amends The Missing Persons Act to permit the police to work with broadcasters and others to alert the public when a vulnerable person, or another adult with a cognitive impairment, is missing. The support for those with cognitive impairments, and other vulnerable individuals, is an important part of our commitment to those in need. We are committed to ensuring that vulnerable adults, and adults with cognitive impairments, are protected and helped when in need. We support this effort to create awareness around vulnerable adults with cognitive impairments.

We hope this government actually does the necessary to—work to make this program a reality. In addition, we would hope that this government stops undermining supports by seniors by cancelling personal care homes and other short-sighted decisions. It's a bit of a contradiction, I think, that if you—we can pass—we do, here, pass bills quite regularly to recognize a certain day, and—but the question is whether the bill is supported by actual expenditures of money to further what we're trying to promote. So we can pass all the bills we want, but, if the government doesn't follow through with financial commitments to make this a reality, then we haven't really accomplished that much.

We are certainly, on our side of the House here, concerned that looking at this government's overall plan, that that may, in fact, be the case where we're having personal care homes being cancelled just, basically, outright, that have been in planning stages for a long, long time here. Just the—people like the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) having the rug pulled out from under him in his own constituency when the government refuses to build the personal-care home.

So, with those few comments, Madam Speaker, I would like to suggest that we pass the bill and move forward.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act (Silver Alert).

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

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you please canvass the House to see if there is agreement for the record to show this bill is adopted unanimously?

Madam Speaker: Is there leave for the record to show that the second reading motion for this bill is adopted unanimously? *[Agreed]*

House Business

Mr. Micklefield: Madam Speaker, pursuant to rule 33, subsection 7, I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered next Tuesday will be one put forward by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon). The title of the resolution is Recognizing the Historic Investment in Manitoba's Agricultural Processing Capabilities.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that, pursuant to rule 33(7), the private members' resolution to be considered the next sitting Tuesday will be one put forward by the honourable member for Emerson. The title of the resolution is Recognizing the Historic Investment in Manitoba's Agricultural Processing Capabilities.

Mr. Micklefield: Madam Speaker, wondering if you could canvass the House to see if we could call it 11 o'clock.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to call it 11 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 11 a.m., the—prior to moving forward on this, I would indicate that, as it is now being considered 11 o'clock, we will see the end of the resolution debate at 11:25, which will be the one hour of debate on the resolution.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 6—Recognizing the Value of 4H Programs in Manitoba

Madam Speaker: So the resolution before us this morning is the resolution brought forward by the honourable member for Dauphin, Recognizing the Value of 4H Programs in Manitoba.

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member of Riding Mountain,

WHEREAS health, science, and agriculture are vitally important to all of Manitoba and its economy; and

WHEREAS agriculture and food production education are essential to teaching and understanding the value of agriculture and food in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS educating Manitobans on food production leads to favourable economic and social outcomes; and

WHEREAS the 4H program promotes and develops citizenship, leadership, responsibility and life skills; and

WHEREAS 4H programs in Manitoba incorporate hands-on project development for youth in areas of health, science and agriculture; and

WHEREAS 4H is a cooperative community extension and youth development program adaptable to anywhere in the province.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to continue to recognize the value of 4H programs in Manitoba by encouraging schools to establish guidelines and standards to enable educational accreditation of 4H agricultural programs.

Motion presented.

Mr. Michaleski: It gives me a great opportunity to introduce and talk about the 4-H program on this Agricultural Awareness Day here in Manitoba, which is also part of the month of March, which is Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month here in Canada. So it's very timely that we can bring this very positive and proactive agricultural education resolution to—up for debate.

Many Manitoba families, parents, grandparents, communities and businesses across Manitoba have long known and experienced the tremendous value of

4-H programs and learning and what it has on the—effect on— positive effect on Manitoba's youth. It is of great benefit to all Manitobans to recognize the value of this in our schools and to find ways to encourage, enable and increase 4-H programming throughout Manitoba.

So it does give me great pleasure to speak to this resolution. Specifically, the resolution urges the government to continue recognizing the value of 4-H by encouraging the schools to establish the guidelines and standards to enable educational accreditation of 4-H agricultural programs.

Why is this important? As legislators, we are tasked with making the decisions that are in the best interests of all Manitobans. The decision to support this resolution can have a very positive and broad economic effect across all Manitoba while positively affecting the social outcomes of our health-care system, our justice system, our social systems, our education systems and our economy.

Manitoba Education and Training already recognizes alternative ways of earning credits in things like cadets and language and arts so third-party accreditation is already permitted; so that's not a hurdle.

In the case of this resolution, accreditation of 4-H's unique agricultural education programs will provide 4-H students with valued recognition on student transcripts that's respected by employers, businesses across Manitoba and beyond.

So what is 4-H? Madam Speaker, 4-H is a highly respected and recognized international youth and volunteer organization that provides members with the resources and activities to help build confidence, communication skills and leadership skills while learning on a topic of one's choice.

Programming and clubs have changed over the years, and today there's over 60 different programs that are available through Manitoba 4-H. But youth agriculture education is their specialty, and they've been doing a great job for over a hundred years.

* (10:30)

Madam Speaker, 4-H's proven stand-alone co-operative community extension program, driven and supported by thousands of 4-H members and volunteers, community and industry stakeholders, hands-on agriculture and training is what sets 4-H apart. And, now, in the 4-H program, they basically group their educational programs under four

groupings. One of them is sustainable agriculture and food security, environmental and healthy living, science and technology and communications. All of these things play a big part in the Manitoba economy.

Public speaking development, which it looks like I might need, is a 'cornerstone'—is a cornerstone of 4-H. And it helps build our kids' confidence and valuable communications skills that they can take anywhere in their life. This is not a uniquely agriculture thing; strong communication skills is a tremendous asset for anybody throughout their entire life.

With leadership guidance, kids learn to run their own meetings, shape their club, keep track of club's money, vote on motions and plan activities. Madam Speaker, 4-H'ers learn the importance of completing a task, working as a team and taking responsibility for the decisions that they make and dealing with problems head on. These are values and life skills that shape leaders and help prepare our youth for the job market, post-secondary education, prepares them to run and operate farms, businesses and even government.

So why is agriculture knowledge important to Manitoba and Manitobans? Agriculture and food not only represents the greatest and broadest opportunity to grow our province, but educating Manitobans on 'foon' production has the potential to have the greatest social decision we can have.

Today's agriculture is very exciting, diverse and full of opportunities, a major driver of the Manitoba economy. It is significant given the role—the vital and core economic and social importance of food production to the people of this province. And we as legislators rarely, if at all, talk about the importance of teaching agriculture to our youth, because it's always there. And this is a mistake.

There is a growing and concerning education gap that needs to be filled, which we as legislatures can, and should, be filling with Manitoba students. Madam Speaker, 4-H programming fills this gap and, with accreditation, our schools can help deliver the message throughout our province; 4-H is also a very cost-effective and efficient organization, making it a practical, common sense and meaningful solution to addressing agricultural education needs across this province.

I'll focus a little more on the economics. Agricultural opportunities range across many—

across—right across Manitoba, from primary production of crops and livestock. And many production choices within these core agricultural classes exist. A lot of those markets are opening up, a lot of those—the demands for different products. So that means that the opportunities in agriculture aren't necessarily what people—they go beyond tradition, and that is an exciting opportunity for Manitoba.

Again, Manitoba has vegetables, fruits and berries, niche livestock production, and Manitoba agriculture is a huge part of the economy; and 4-H is the doorway to exploring that world.

On the social side, they say if you give a man a fish, he'll eat for a day and, if you teach him to fish, he'll feed himself for a lifetime. Madam Speaker, 4-H teaches people to fish. And, as legislators and parents, our goal should be to promote positive learning cultures like 4-H for positive outcomes that build confidence, independence and learn-by-doing.

Madam Speaker, 4-H encourages healthy and active living, which is important as we seek positive solutions to the social issues like depression, obesity, diabetes, youth crime, drug and substance abuse. When we're looking at reducing poverty and improving educational outcomes to lowering taxes, 4-H and agriculture education all play a big part in getting positive outcomes to a number of the issues that we deal with.

So the goal, Madam Speaker, and the intention of this resolution is very simple: it's to expand the awareness, knowledge and availability of agriculture and food production education to all Manitobans in an effective and meaningful way. And, if we do that, we will only encourage positive outcomes.

Also, by accrediting in the school system, the 4-H students receive that valuable credit on their graduation transcript for a valued Manitoba program that is recognized by employers, post-secondary, by a lot of Manitobans as a valuable education that provides kids with important life skills to help them.

Course accreditation also raises awareness of the program leading to the likelihood of more promotion and participation. So once we get the word out in our schools and our schools start pushing it a little bit more, start working with the 4-H program, the schools reach across Manitoba and they are a very good instrument for bringing the 4-H message forward.

So I thank you for the time for this—for speaking about this, and I encourage debate. Thank you.

Questions

Madam Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party; any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties; each independent member may ask one question; and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Could the member please tell the House what costs they believe will be added to the school budgets as a result of introducing this to the school?

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): I'd like to thank the member for the question.

Madam Speaker, 4-H program already runs effectively on its own. It's really, in my opinion, a complement to the current public school system. I think the intent of this resolution is to get the schools and the 4-H talking, and I think it really becomes a small administrative function that the schools have to play in terms of getting the accreditation on the report card, a job that they're doing already, preparing the report cards.

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye): I'd like to compliment the member from Dauphin on bringing forward this resolution because I think it is very important.

He mentions how valuable 4-H is to education across Manitoba. Can he comment on benefits for northern Manitoba?

Mr. Michaleski: Thank you for that question.

The value of 4-H education knows no limits, and in terms of northern availability of 4-H we look at the food costs that are a big part of northern living. Teaching people to grow food—and it may be thinking outside the box with green-housing or something, but it does help to alleviate some of the food costs that—potentially—food costs of northern Manitoba, and it also might lead to economic development for somebody that wants to grow vegetables for sale in the North.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the member for his private member's resolution.

I'd like to ask him: What education does he plan to provide for families regarding healthy eating and active living?

Mr. Michaleski: Well, I'd like to thank the member for the question, and it's not what am I going to do in terms of helping Manitoba families. I will certainly point them to Google or anything to do with 4-H education because 4-H already does a great job of teaching families and youth about our food and how it's being produced, and that's probably the best advice I can give them.

* (10:40)

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): The member for Dauphin mentioned increasing 4-H programming throughout Manitoba, making it more available to all Manitoba students, whether they be in the rural or cities or in the North.

Can the member suggest some ideas on how easily this can be done?

Mr. Michaleski: Sure. There's a number of opportunities across Manitoba which are non-farm; 4-H is traditionally known as a farm thing but, you know, there's a lot of small communities, a lot of towns throughout our—Manitoba that have fairgrounds, that have vacant lands that are underused. They're used once or twice a year for—to hold events. There's no reason why those things can't be—and most of them are located in the towns. There's no reason why those things can't be converted over to 4-H educational areas.

Mr. Lindsey: Could the member tell me—or tell us how many 4-H programs are presently in operation on First Nation communities?

Mr. Michaleski: To be quite honest, I don't know. I do know that the Province of Manitoba is working, through extension part of the government, training—or teaching food awareness, food preparation. That's going on right now in a lot of the First Nation regions.

The 4-H program, though, is an added benefit where it's a youth development program attached to education about food and how it's prepared and the benefits of—so it's a combination of both.

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): I, too, would like to congratulate the member on his private member's resolution.

Those of us who live in the city are very familiar with 4-H programs. There is an idea out there that

they are rural based—agricultural based. But we know that expanding 4-H programs means reaching out to our kids in the cities, so I'm wondering if the member could explain: how do we increase 4-H programming in the cities?

Mr. Michaleski: Well, that's—I thank the member for the question. And it's a very, very important question, because, right now, there's a lot of kids that are not getting the knowledge or being exposed to agriculture production as an option for a career or they're just simply not being made aware.

So, in the cities, you can run 4-H programs. It's—and I would challenge that there's a lot of great Manitobans that can find solutions to running these programs that, again, no different than the smaller communities. There's vacant lands that are available to run programs, and a lot of great people in the cities to—that want to run 4-H programming.

Mr. Lindsey: What role does the government have to play in making sure that communities throughout the province have access to healthy food?

Mr. Michaleski: Well, I thank the member for the question.

What role does the Province have? They do have a tremendous role in educating people. You can't tell people what to eat, you can't force people what to eat, but you can certainly educate them on what's—what there is to eat and the choices that are out there and the healthy choices that people can make. So I think that's the primary role of what the government can do.

So promoting the 4-H program is a perfect instrument to do that.

Mr. Smook: Can the member talk about how important 4-H was to him when he was a kid?

Mr. Michaleski: Thank the member for the question, and it goes back a little ways. But it was a lonely—a young farm boy that was introduced to 4-H. It really was important for me to get involved in a club, and it was very important for me, again, in social terms, to get involved with a club and get involved in—on a team.

We did a whole lot of activities as a group. We did—we explored a lot of different programs that the other kids were doing. It really was a very positive experience. I would say the public speaking was the hardest but it got us out of our comfort zone.

Mr. Lindsey: What—who did you consult with prior to bringing in this private member's resolution and how did you consult about helping people make healthy eating choices, particularly in northern communities where those choices are limited?

Mr. Michaleski: Madam Speaker, I've—this has been an issue that has been top of mind for a number of years for me. And so, in my consultations I talked with a lot of 4-H alumni, businesses in the community, parents, employers, the people that really see the value, know the value of 4-H programming and I think they're pretty good judges of what's good for Manitobans. And I know, when I've talked with them, they keep saying that this is so needed and such an important part of the education system and a great thing we can do for Manitoba kids.

Mr. Nesbitt: Drawing on your experience in 4-H, can you tell me what benefit the 4-H program can have for young people in our cities across Manitoba?

Mr. Michaleski: Thank you for the question.

In the cities, of course, what I want to stress is farming—or 4-H is not a farming—necessarily a farming program for farmers. I think a lot of people identify it as that but 4-H is really so much more. It's about developing leadership skills, communication skills, volunteerism, all those good life skills that are not unique to agriculture or farming; they are skills—and, again, with—through the projects, there's a number of things that kids can explore, a lot of good things for all Manitoba kids.

Madam Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate is now open.

Debate

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I am certainly not opposed to 4-H, certainly. When I was a child growing up on a farm in southern Saskatchewan, a lot of kids that I knew participated in 4-H programs. I did not. I seem to have turned out all right.

Having said that, you know there's other organizations that kids participate in, other volunteer groups that help prepare kids for the future, Madam Speaker, that we haven't introduced private members' resolutions to include them in school curriculum. And I'm left to wonder, you know, the 4-H is seen predominantly as an agricultural-based program that expands on just teaching kids about how to grow food or look after their pet cow, I'm just wondering

how other programs that help prepare kids for the future—what kind of recognition the government thinks that they should be given in the school system.

The other question that I'd asked that didn't really get a hard and fast answer to is: What cost is going to be involved for schools that are already under very tight budgetary constraints as introducing this as an accredited program. Does it take away from other things that are important? We don't know the answer to that.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Is it just extracurricular that you get credit for? Is the program the same in every community? How do you give accreditation for a program that may very well be different in every section of the province and every community?

* (10:50)

We talk a lot about healthy eating options and, certainly, we, in opposition, and we, when we were in the government, were doing things to try and make sure that healthy eating options were available for people, particularly in the North. The AFFIRM program was a very good program that required funding, obviously, to make sure that the cost of healthy foods came down to—closer to affordable levels but, certainly, not there yet.

I remember talking to a person in—I think it was Brochet, might have been Lac Brochet, that was complaining about the cost of a four-litre jug of milk that, I think, at that day that we were looking at it, was \$14. So I asked her what the cost was prior to the program coming into being. Well, it was \$18. So it did make it a little more affordable, but there was more work to do to make healthy food options affordable for everybody.

And, certainly, we, when we were in government, were about helping people grow local food. There's any number of greenhouses that are in operation in the North thanks to the previous NDP government that saw the value in teaching kids—teaching not just kids but members of communities the importance of growing healthy food, of having access to healthy food. And we, certainly, want to encourage that. If this resolution does that, then good. I'm not sure that it does do a whole lot to help people that need it the most. I mean, this is run by volunteers. They need meeting spaces to hold their meetings at the same time that this government has cut grants that would build community centres, particularly in communities that are lacking in

recreational opportunities for kids or for anybody that it—where do you go now to have this 4-H meeting when you haven't got a proper facility to have any kind of meeting?

So there's all kinds of questions and concerns that I have just with introducing this without making sure that you've done everything else possible that the government should be doing. For example, we talked about food security and what has the government done to ensure that the people of Churchill have food—have any food. They've been under a state of emergency due to weather conditions, and a trainload of food finally arrived that's been loaded for three weeks. I'm not sure what, if anything, this government did to try and help the people out. And we focus on Churchill, but there's a bunch of other communities along the rail line that probably didn't get access to any kind of fresh food for the last two or three weeks as well. So, I think, the government really needs to prioritize how it goes about making sure that all Manitobans have access to healthy food.

And, certainly, anything that encourages young people to be active members of the community, to learn responsibility is all good stuff. But, like I said earlier, there's any number of groups—volunteer groups, extracurricular things that take place in communities all over Manitoba that offer kids, young people the ability to learn about co-operation and responsibility and citizenship and all the rest of that.

I'm not sure why the 4-H program would get special consideration in our schools—to get credit for that when not all communities have 4-H programs. The member opposite wasn't really able to tell us what all communities in the North or on First Nations actually had the 4-H programs, or, really, are there ones that are planning to do that?

I mean, I believe that the government has a place to play in making sure that they invest in Manitobans, invest in young people, that young people have the ability to be productive members of society, and that comes about through having opportunity for education, for participation when your schools in—particularly northern communities sometimes are lacking in capacity, lacking in ability, that perhaps there should be more focus on making sure that programs and facilities are in place in those communities to encourage young people throughout Manitoba to be able to participate and grow and learn about involvement and all the rest that 4-H does predominantly in the south, although I know there

are some communities in the North that have 4-H programs.

So, again, I just want to really reiterate that the 4-H program itself is a fine program. There's nothing wrong with it. It's one of many programs out there that's run by volunteers that helps young people learn about responsibility and all of those things that we've talked about. But, again, it's not the only one, and I want to make sure that the—this government fully understands that there are other things that need to have focus as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

One of the things that the member who introduced the private member's resolution talked about was you can't just tell or force people what to eat, and I couldn't agree more whole-heartedly with that statement. And this government really needs to step its game up on making sure that healthy options are available not just in the south, but in all communities in this province, that you can teach people what to eat, but if it isn't there for them they cannot eat it. If the only thing that comes in on the train is junk food, then that's what they're forced to eat.

So there needs to be more focus by this government in making sure that healthy food is available for every Manitoban, not just teaching kids about healthy eating and the right values and stuff, but making sure that that food is available every day for people, which right now it is not.

Certainly, when we were in government we'd taken some really good steps to make sure that healthy food was available and affordable, and that's the other thing is making sure it's affordable. We're all in favour of having greenhouses—

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

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): I'm pleased to be able to put a few words on the record this morning on this resolution put forward by the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Michaleski) that recognizes the value of the 4-H program in Manitoba and encourages schools to adopt guidelines and standards to reward students with credits for participating.

First of all, I want to say that although I've lived in my small community of Shoal Lake for just about 50 years, I am certainly not a farmer like my friend from Dauphin. However, I know the value of agriculture.

An Honourable Member: Knows everything there is to know about potatoes.

Mr. Nesbitt: And potatoes.

My community wouldn't exist if it wasn't for agriculture. Over 62,000 Manitobans are directly employed in agriculture with many others impacted by the spinoffs. I would venture to say the spinoff from agriculture is much higher in Shoal Lake and in many rural communities represented by so many of my colleagues around the province.

In Shoal Lake we have five farm machinery dealerships, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's in a community with an urban population of 800 people. We also have a grain terminal and a veterinary clinic, all that serve a large trading area. These businesses provide jobs. Their employees live and shop in the community and their children go to school, organizations benefit, other businesses benefit. The old saying that when farmers have money everyone has money, certainly applies in rural Manitoba.

* (11:00)

Many of these employees and, indeed, owners of these small businesses took advantage of the 4-H program when they were growing up. Many have given back as 4-H leaders and as volunteers and leaders in other community groups.

The 4-H program, especially in rural areas, has traditionally been an agricultural-based organization whose goal is, simply stated, to develop citizenship, leadership, responsibility and life skills of youth through experimental learning programs and a positive youth development approach.

Starting as club members, many of these community leaders became a part of the local 4-H club, gaining valuable experience in problem solving, goal setting, public speaking, fundraising and leadership. They also got a chance to broaden their horizons by participating in exchange trips with other 4-H'ers across Canada.

Skills learned by participating hands-on in the 4-H program help our youth gain vital skills that are invaluable when entering post-secondary education and the job market. The experience of participating in 4-H has built strength and character in individuals that have stayed with them throughout their professional and personal lives.

As an example, I would like to tell the House about a good friend of mine who grew up in Hamiota, Kim McConnell, an avid 4-H'er when he

was growing up and an advocate for the program today. Kim is the founder and former CEO of AdFarm, an agricultural-focused marketing and communications firm with clients throughout Canada and the United States. AdFarm is one of the largest agricultural marketing communications firms in North America, with offices in Calgary, Guelph, Kansas City, St. Louis, Fargo and Sacramento. Over the years, Kim has led many national and international brand and marketing assignments from many respected companies, including Farm Credit Canada, Bayer, Dow, RBC Royal Bank, Agrium and Canada Beef Inc. He also played a lead role in branding the City of Calgary and the naming and international branding of Encana. In addition to numerous creative and marketing awards under Kim's leadership, AdFarm was recognized for three years as Canada's 50 best managed companies and by Canadian Business magazine as one of the best places to work in Canada.

Today, Kim is a director on a number of company boards, mentors a number of entrepreneurs and provides volunteer leadership to many organizations. Kim is a director of the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency, the credit union deposit guarantee fund, Genome Canada, the AGRI-TREND group and, most importantly to this discussion, chairman of the Canadian 4-H Foundation. Raised on a mixed farm by his parents Elgin and Ruth, Kim and his family now live on an acreage south of Calgary. Kim is passionate about Canada, agriculture, food and the entrepreneurial spirit, and definitely hasn't forgotten his rural roots.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this resolution urges our government to encourage students to establish guidelines and standards to enable educational accreditation of 4-H programs. This would not be unprecedented. The Royal Canadian Air Cadets program in my area allows participating young people to 'resue' credits towards their high school graduation. Similar to 4-H, this program teaches skills and leadership to our young people while giving them opportunities for summer travel to courses all across Canada. Many graduates of the air 'connition'—air cadet program in our area have gone on to serve in the Canadian Armed Forces while others have taken leadership roles in their communities.

At the Swan Valley regional school, the Envirothon program has been offered as a credit course for nearly 20 years. The honourable member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk) taught this course

for 19 years and speaks enthusiastically to the value of what the students learned in and out of the classroom.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the 4-H program has the ability to partner with producer groups such as the Manitoba Beef Producers, the Manitoba pork producers, and agricultural companies such as Richardson International, Cargill and the multitude of chemical companies to ensure that multiple course options are available for students.

The demand for educated agri-business students continues to grow, and these students don't have to come from just rural areas. Allowing 4-H to become an accredited course at the high school level would help students, rural and city alike, transition into agricultural studies at post-secondary institutions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the time for action is now. Passing this resolution is a step in the right direction to encourage schools across Manitoba to consider offering the 4-H program as an accredited course.

I would encourage all honourable members, many of whom have participated in 4-H themselves, to support this important resolution. Thank you.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): I'd just like to, as well, congratulate the member for Dauphin (Mr. Michaleski) for the private member's resolution recognizing the value of 4-H programs in Manitoba.

Just to put on record here, 4-H is an international youth and volunteer organization that provides young people with leadership skills, communication skills and self-confidence. With 4-H, young people can travel across Canada to make friends, share ideas and learn ways to achieve their goals together. There's also opportunities to travel internationally to work on community development projects. These local programs help our youth develop leadership skills in communications, technology and sustainable agriculture.

In Manitoba, many people who are involved in 4-H learn how to be active and engaged community members. They work on projects that help them gain valuable skills and create lifelong friendships.

So, with that, it's an honour to share that we do have a very, very active 4-H program in The Pas. In fact, in—every September, they recruit members every year at the parade of programs, and up to 30 lucky individuals are selected and participate in this group all year long. And, in fact, Cheryl Antonio is the co-ordinator for the 4-H program within The Pas,

and they participate and co-ordinate programs such as Community Clean Up; they have sewing classes, cooking classes.

And, in fact, last year, with my family, we attended the agricultural day, in The Pas. It was a very exciting day—rainy day, but there were still a lot of our folks still out there to participate. It was adorable to see my young ones. They had goats—little goats out there. That was cute to see my young ones. And they also had horses and cows out there. And they also had—they were selling fresh corn and fresh potatoes for sale for our community members. And also, too, we had the opportunity to tour a local family's farm in The Pas. So that was pretty exciting.

And I also want to put on record, too, that the 4-H you spread the pride with Proud to Bee a 4-H'er video contest. 4-H Canada was pleased to announce the national winners of the Proud to Bee a 4-H'er. And 4-H'ers from across Canada were asked to create a short video, either as a club or as individuals, demonstrating their pride in being part of the 4-H program and reflecting the wide variety of Canadian 4-H clubs, projects, communities and age groups. Approximately 3,800 votes were cast during the online public voting period. The winning entry received a GoPro HERO5 camera. The first and second runner-up entries each received an Apple iPad mini too. And the remaining top 10 entries received a selfie stick. Each of the top 10 entries also received 4-H Canada-branded items to continue displaying their 4-H pride in their communities.

So it's my honour, and I'm proud to share that The Pas placed first out of the 4-H Manitoba—The Pas Helping Hands. So, with—that's some great news to share here within the House.

And also, too, I just wanted to share, too, that when I attended the Keystone Ag banquet a couple of months ago, I believe, I had the pleasure of sitting with one of our—I believe he was the 4-H Manitoba president. So I was happy to share with him all the activities that our 4-H club in The Pas conducts, and also shared with him that the co-ordinator, Cheryl Antonio, with her volunteer efforts, received The Pas—the Citizen of the Year Award in The Pas.

* (11:10)

So I just also wanted to put on record, as well, while campaigning, I came across—in chicken coops, also, too, with the—in Cross Lake. And that's part of the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative. So maybe, perhaps, these two programs can partner up and

expand these programs into our First Nations communities, something I'm pretty sure the member for 'Keewakinook' would greatly appreciate, as well.

And so the reason why these families—I think it was—I think it's a great family project for these chicken coops—is to, basically, grow their own healthy food, their own protein to find the epidemic against diabetes.

And also, too, I just wanted to share, as well, maybe this program—you know, like I said, can be expanded into First Nation communities. For example, it can coincide with the Cross Lake cadet program, a program that my late father was very, very proud of. And there, too, that program promotes leadership skills and self confidence. Last summer, I attended the graduation for the Cross Lake cadet program. It's a—I just admired the skills and the confidence that every young woman and young man demonstrated.

So with that—I just wanted to share that and put on record about the activities that happen with the 4-H program, and my goal is, too, is to get there in September and get my children on to the 4-H program as well.

Thank you.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I would like to thank the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin) for those encouraging words. I know we're diligently trying to spread the work of Aki Energy in Garden Hill First Nation where they actually have chickens and they are actually growing a crop of food this upcoming season. And so it's very exciting to bring that farming back up into the northern community.

Growing up, my dad did work on the two acres of potatoes that was grown in our community, and it was—and the knowledge has long been lost since the missionary—the primary missionary that was there, Father Dutil, passed away and, unfortunately, took that knowledge with him. And so that plot of acre—that plot of land hasn't been tilled ever since he passed away. But keeping those potatoes in storage over the harsh winter kept the community literally alive because there was occasions—as you see, what's happening in Churchill—where you can't get food and you can't get—you can't leave your own homes to go forage for food or look for—go out on your regular hunting due to the blizzard conditions or the weather conditions. And so I—those—when we used to have those farms or those back-ups in place, you know,

we were able—the community members were able to sustain themselves.

I would also like to acknowledge 4-H. It's been a long-standing, invaluable member in many communities among—throughout Manitoba—and, indeed, Canada. The seeds of knowledge are planted among the youth and are encouraged to grow. The 4-H program has inspired many of our youth, including my own daughters, to take up projects that transfer leadership and communication skills. My daughters were lucky to go through—well, we live in Steinbach so they're able to join that club—and they were able to learn a lot and be part of a larger group of girls, and it was just an amazing experience for them.

So their philosophy is one of true integrity: learn to do by doing, a hands-on approach which is really recognizable when you're such a young person. It doesn't help to listen or read a whole bunch of books. It always is better depending on what kind of learner you are. So that kind of philosophy matches with a lot of First Nations teachings and we really appreciate that kind of learning.

There is also—the relationships that are built in those days carries them throughout adulthood—and I know many members in my own high school in certain areas like Teulon, you know, they were always talking about this club which was something I had never heard of. And you hear of their mothers being in 4-H together and you're just wondering what this club is all about. And I never had the chance, specifically, to do that, but I've seen my own daughters flourish under it.

I also wanted to talk about the recent generation of schoolkids, the student learners going through our systems today in the south. They're finally learning of the Indian residential school systems and the '60s scoop, and so those kids, I believe, are going to be so much more enlightened than our own generations could ever hope to be.

So my hope is that the 4-H program expands into more remote First Nations and other remote communities because it is a great program and I truly believe that, to give credit where credit is due, there's a lot of organization that has to take place in making these programs work, and so I hope that it does go into more communities.

I know those enlightened youth will be our leaders of tomorrow and my hope is that those enlightened youth will not neglect the North.

Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Well, thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker—*[interjection]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Oh, Elmwood, the honourable member from Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I am very pleased to speak today to the private member's resolution sponsored by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Michaleski).

And the resolution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, urges the provincial government to continue to recognize the value of 4-H programs in Manitoba and to do that by encouraging schools to establish guidelines and standards to enable the educational accreditation of 4-H agricultural programs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we support this resolution and, as a result, will be passing it before the hour is up today. We support the programs that help young Manitobans build communities and learn new skills and develop self-confidence. Investing in our youth and creating opportunities for them to succeed has always been important to our NDP team.

But, this Premier (Mr. Pallister)—this Premier's only focused on cuts and is really out of touch with what Manitobans really need. His vision for Manitobans—Manitoba will hurt young people, drive them out of our province. He's demanding cuts from Health and Education, cutting funding for community-led programs that help young people enter and succeed in our workforce and, in effect, actually working against the goals and ideals of the 4-H program.

You know, on a macro level, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to reflect on the effect of free trade deals and how they've affected agriculture. You know, ever since the free trade deals came into place—the US-Canada and then US-Canada-Mexico deal came in place, what we've seen increasingly is a concentration of agricultural product—now take, for example, the tomato crops or the tomato farmers—little tomato farmers in Mexico that have been operating their little farms for centuries. And, because of these free trade deals, those tomato farmers were essentially wiped out as tomato growing concentrated on farms like in California.

So, when you have these huge, huge megafarms developing in one area, then what happens is that they tend to wipe out the little farmers all over the place. And then you end up trucking the product from—all the way from California to places like Manitoba, and that, you know, doesn't make any sense at all. I mean, the free traders will argue that, you know, the free market is best and it's survival of the fittest and all this stuff that they talk about. But, at the end of the day, what we are, fortunately, what we're seeing, is a reversal of that trend now, with people developing their own little farms in small areas—in their own little areas, and that's something that we should be working and promoting, right. We do not want to see a situation where we wipe out all our little farmers and have to truck product for thousands of miles from the United States.

And then that works fine for a little while, until the price of gas shoots through the roof and all of a sudden your tomatoes are all costing double and triple and now you've lost your production, your producers in your home jurisdiction.

* (11:20)

So I'm really pleased to see that those trends are sort of changing a little bit and people are looking at developing growing foods in their own areas. I'm very supportive of the beekeeping initiative, you know, at some cities. Some city jurisdictions have those to allow people keeping bees. I look forward to the—a future Elmwood beekeepers' association, and I do think it would be certainly appropriate to have—allow chickens. If you look in—just 500 miles south of here, in Minnesota, they have a number of people that keep—quite a number, actually, thousands of people that register and are allowed to keep half a dozen chickens in their backyard. I understand there's no roosters allowed, because they wake people up really early in the morning, but you're allowed to keep, I think, it's a dozen chickens—and that.

These trends are starting to move into other areas. And I know our city hall has been talking about this for some time now, and I don't see any

resolution close at hand. But, at least, things are developing.

Also agriculture in the North, I mean, there's no reason why we couldn't have had—been way further along than we are right now. But, at least, better late—better late—than never. And so I, certainly, want to encourage—I realize our time is getting short now, so I want to encourage the government to promote not only the 4-H programs but also take the broader view, including in their trade negotiations, to try to promote more local agricultural wherever possible.

So thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there any other speakers?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will now put the question to the House.

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

I agree that the—and so ordered. I declare the resolution carried.

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Mr. Deputy Speaker, would you please canvass the House to see if there is agreement for the record to show this bill—or sorry, this resolution is adopted unanimously.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it—to the House that—agree that the resolution be adopted unanimously? *[Agreed]*

So be—for the record.

Mr. Micklefield: Mr. Deputy Speaker, could you please canvass the House to see if we could call it 12 o'clock?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Agreed to the House, then call it 12 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

So, the hour being 12 p.m., the House is now recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

CONTENTS

ORDERS OF THE DAY		Questions	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS		Lindsey	835
Debate on Second Readings– Public Bills		Michaleski	835
Bill 214–The Missing Persons Amendment Act (Silver Alert)		Smook	835
T. Marcelino	829	Maloway	835
Curry	830	Nesbitt	835
Selinger	831	Isleifson	835
Maloway	832	Debate	
Resolutions		Lindsey	836
Res. 6–Recognizing the Value of 4H Programs in Manitoba		Nesbitt	838
Michaleski	833	Lathlin	839
		Klassen	840
		Maloway	841

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