

**Second Session – Forty-First Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**Official Report**  
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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

| <b>Member</b>             | <b>Constituency</b>  | <b>Political Affiliation</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| ALLUM, James              | Fort Garry-Riverview | NDP                          |
| ALTEMEYER, Rob            | Wolseley             | NDP                          |
| BINDLE, Kelly             | Thompson             | PC                           |
| CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.      | Agassiz              | PC                           |
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| CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.       | Spruce Woods         | PC                           |
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| LAMOUREUX, Cindy          | Burrows              | Lib.                         |
| LATHLIN, Amanda           | The Pas              | NDP                          |
| LINDSEY, Tom              | Flin Flon            | NDP                          |
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| MARCELINO, Flor           | Logan                | NDP                          |
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| SARAN, Mohinder           | The Maples           | Ind.                         |
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| <i>Vacant</i>             | Point Douglas        |                              |

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 25, 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

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader):** Madam Speaker, on House business, I would ask for leave of the House to start with report stage amendments regarding Bill 221, plus report stage and third reading—concurrence and third reading, yes. *[interjection]*

Second reading, Madam Speaker, second reading of 221—oh, sorry—and then when we're concluded with that, we want to proceed to the second reading of Bill 224. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker, so I'm once again asking for leave to begin with report stage amendment on Bill 221. Then we want to immediately do third reading on Bill 221, and when that's concluded we want to go with—to second reading on Bill 224.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to consider report stage amendments on Bill 221, The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Honouring and Awareness Day Act? *[Agreed]*

Is there leave, then, to consider concurrence and third reading of Bill 221? *[Agreed]*

Immediately following the report stage amendments? So agreed and so ordered.

And then, is there leave to consider second reading of Bill 224? *[Agreed]*

REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS—  
PUBLIC BILLS**Bill 221—The Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls  
Honouring and Awareness Day Act**

**Madam Speaker:** We will start then with a report stage amendment on Bill 221, The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Honouring and Awareness Day Act.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I move, seconded by the member from The Pas,

*THAT Bill 221 be amended in Clause 1 by adding "Honouring and" before "Awareness Day" in the section heading and in the section.*

**Madam Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable member for St. Johns, seconded by the honourable member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin),

*THAT the—Bill 221 be amended in Clause 1 by adding Honouring and—and those were in brackets, before—in brackets—Awareness Day in the section heading and in the section.*

Pardon me, I will repeat that.

*THAT Bill 221 be amended in Clause 1 by adding "Honouring and" before "Awareness Day" in the section heading and in the section.*

**Ms. Fontaine:** I just want to take only a couple of minutes to put a couple of words on the record.

So, first and foremost, I just want to say miigwech to each and every member of this House for supporting this bill. And, as I said—and as I've shared with many people, including the media—I'm forever grateful. More than anything, I'm just grateful to every one of my colleagues in this House. And so, from the bottom of my heart, I say miigwech to everyone.

We had a committee on this bill, and we had some presenters who noted that there were some concerns in respect of legislating victimhood of indigenous women.

And so I want to just put on the record that, actually, the bill comes from—first and foremost—the request of actually many MMIWG family members from Manitoba. But, actually, in the years that I've

been doing this work, actually from many families across the country who have wanted to see a national day of awareness and honouring for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

So I do want to put on the record that, you know, my first and foremost concern is always for the families. And, as I've said in this House that, actually, we don't have an accurate record of how many missing and murdered indigenous women and girls are in Manitoba because those numbers fluctuate. We've even seen in the last month, since we've been in session, you know, many indigenous women who have lost their lives. Right? So those numbers always fluctuate.

They also fluctuate because we actually don't have, you know, all the information that we need when we have these files so that, perhaps, policing institutions haven't recorded them as indigenous women because maybe sometimes the families don't identify their loved one as indigenous. There's a whole variety of reasons why in Manitoba we don't have accurate numbers. And, certainly, we don't have accurate numbers across Canada.

\* (10:10)

I will say that I've had the pleasure of working with Dr. Maryanne Pearce who released in December of 2013 her research—her Ph.D. research that had done—had gathered as much information as she could across the country on the numbers of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. Because, actually, up until December of 2013 when Dr. Maryanne Pearce actually released her Ph.D. research, the number that was still floating around there was 600 across the country, but we knew that that wasn't right.

And so, in December of 2013, she had released her research where she had said—and I can't remember the exact number—but 886 missing and murdered indigenous women and girls across the country. But even she acknowledged that that number wasn't accurate because she doesn't have access to all the different policing institutions' files across the country.

But in that original research she had identified about 168 in Manitoba, but we know that those numbers have gone up. So for lack of a better word, I—or number—always say that we have upwards of 200 missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Manitoba. This bill is dedicated to their families and, you know, families want to know that,

you know, the loved ones that they gave birth to and that were here are recognized and honoured, and so I just want to put that on the record.

I also do want to say, I—and I want to say miigwech to each of the standing committee members that were there a couple of weeks ago that helped and all agreed to change the title of the bill. I really, really do appreciate that. And so I just want to say, again, miigwech to everyone and that's it. Miigwech.

**Madam Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

**Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook):** Madam Speaker, I just wanted to thank the member for St. Johns once again. I truly am glad that we're adding honouring to this Bill 221.

My aunt, Lillian Pascal, named her daughter Precious because that's how treasured she was. She was completely precious to us. Precious Pascal was my daughter's childhood friend. She was murdered in her teenage years, and so I will always honour Precious, and I will always be grateful for the friendship and for all the joy and laughter she gave to my first-born. And so I thank the member for bringing this forward and I'm glad to stand by with her again today to support this.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment? Agreed? *[Agreed]*

#### CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS— AMENDED BILLS

##### Bill 221—The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Honouring and Awareness Day Act

**Madam Speaker:** As agreed, we will now move into concurrence and third reading of Bill 221, The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Honouring and Awareness Day Act, as amended, with the title.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin), that Bill 221, The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Honouring and Awareness Day Act, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Private Bills and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

***Motion presented.***

**Ms. Fontaine:** Madam Speaker, I think that I previously spoke to it and, again, I just want to say miigwech to everyone and it's a good day for this House. Miigwech.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 221, The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Honouring and Awareness Day Act, as amended.

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

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I'm wondering if we could seek leave to have this as recorded—sorry, recorded as unanimous.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to record this as unanimously supported? *[Agreed]*

**SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS****Bill 224—The Family Law Reform Act  
(Putting Children First)**

**Madam Speaker:** As agreed, we will now move to second reading of Bill 224, The Family Law Reform Act (Putting Children First).

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine), that Bill 224, The Family Law Reform Act (Putting Children First); Loi sur la réforme du droit de la famille (mesures pour le mieux-être des enfants), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

***Motion presented.***

**Mr. Swan:** Madam Speaker, as legislators we each bring with us our own experience and our own backgrounds to this Chamber and many times I learn something new, something I didn't know before from somebody else speaking about their own experience, whether it was their job, places they've been, things they've done.

As you know, Madam Speaker, I practised law for 14 years. That makes me the only member of this Legislature at the current time ever called to the bar to practise law in Manitoba, and most of that time I spent practising family law which is the area of law

when relationships end and when families break down.

Unlike many other types of litigation, where often two parties might be involved in an accident or a contract that goes bad or some other situation and go on their separate ways, family law is very, very different. And in many cases when a family falls apart, the effects and the relationships go on for a very long time, especially when there are children of the relationship.

And it's an unhappy truth that many Manitobans spend much energy, much time and much money when they can't agree on arrangements often, especially when children are involved.

Of course, the children never appear in the courtroom, which, we think, is a good thing. Children rarely appear in lawyers' offices. They are names on a paper, but never directly have their views heard by the court which, again, is not unreasonable, but also demonstrates that—the challenge of trying to get the law right.

It's also a fact that Manitoba families have changed. People, families are now using different means to start their families and have children, and, frankly, Madam Speaker, the law has not kept up with the reality of what Manitoba families are doing.

Madam Speaker, Bill 224 is a substantive rewrite and modernization of family law in Manitoba as it deals with custody and access and support. At 124 pages, I believe it's probably the longest private member's bill in Manitoba, which makes it difficult to cover in the eight minutes I have remaining.

The key provisions of the bill are as follows:

First of all, a new provision would require the court to ensure that proceedings are conducted with as little delay and formality as possible and in a way that minimizes conflict and protects children and parties from domestic violence.

Manitoba, I'm pleased to say, is already a leader in helping families resolve disputes short of a contested trial when a judge will make the decision on where a child should live, the division of time and what support's payable. But I think we can now take it to the next step and make a much clearer signal that court should be a last resort and that everybody involved in the court system should ensure the cases proceed in a way that's expected to cause the least damage to children whose parents have ended their relationship.

The For the Sake of the Children program is excellent. It's a free parenting program which is now mandated for all families who have a dispute where children are involved. It's six hours of information and parties who complete that program can then move on to free mediation services provided by Family Conciliation Services.

And, at mediation, parties can try and resolve some or, in many cases, all of their issues by agreement. It is not mandatory. It is often successful at resolving some or all of the issues, and every time I have seen a review of that program people will say that it is worthwhile and it's worthwhile for a number of reasons—because people don't like spending more money on lawyers—but, more importantly, when there's a child people have to work together until the children are 18 and, in many cases, well beyond that and they have to find a common place that they can agree upon and work together to make things better for their children.

\*(10:20)

And this would be a direction to the judges but, more importantly, a direction to parents that they need to consider all measures out there short of going to a contested trial to try to make things better for their children.

The second important piece is that there will be new provisions to set up a comprehensive scheme to determine what should happen when one parent wants to leave Manitoba with the children. People are much more mobile now than they were a generation ago. Often, people are transferred by their employers. People may seek out new employment opportunities outside of the province of Manitoba. They may have roots outside of the province of Manitoba and believe that they have more support from family, from friends, from communities elsewhere. They may also enter into new relationships, and it is a fact that more people, due to social media, due to various sites, have more ability to find people outside of the province of Manitoba.

I want you to know, Madam Speaker, that these are likely the most difficult and troubling cases that family lawyers take on. For more than 20 years, the Supreme Court of Canada has signalled it's really not interested in hearing appeals of these cases and it's up to judges and parties to figure this out on their own. The rules aren't clear. This bill would put in a solid framework for helping to resolve those matters

and hopefully result in fewer of them having to go to a trial.

I'm very proud of the way things work in Manitoba. We have an excellent Manitoba Bar Association with a family law subsection that put a lot of work and a lot of effort into trying to come up with rules. It wasn't just lawyers sitting around a room. They also had experts, child development experts, to give their insight. They also contacted two of the leading family law academic scholars in the country, Nick Bala and Rollie Thompson, who gave their advice and their direction on what this should look like.

And contained in Bill 224 are some presumptions and some guidelines to make it much clearer for parties when cases like this arise. I believe it will help with difficult cases. It will reduce the number of cases that have to go to very long and difficult trials, and it will make it easier for people when relocations occur.

The next important part of the bill will reflect that Manitoba families wanting children are using reproductive technology to start their families. And they are doing it; the law has not kept up. It will refine who lawful parents are. There will be provisions dealing with surrogacy when parents actually have another person who carries the baby through to birth. There will be provisions dealing with that situation, which, frankly, is already happening in the province of Manitoba and elsewhere.

It will deal with situations where a child is conceived after a parent has passed away because now genetic material can be frozen, it can be saved, and there can still be children born even though one parent may have passed away. It also considers the possibility of the—of a child having more than two parents when there's genetic material from another parent and the wish of everybody is for that to be recognized. This already takes place next door in Saskatchewan, who is ahead of us on this front.

There would be clear rules in all these situations. It would still require parties to apply for court—for an order to clarify that. It would also allow same-sex couples to parent without the need to go to court at all. And my wife and I know several couples who've started their families where one partner gave birth and obviously there had to be a different means for that to happen.

Those parents, at the present time, then have to go through a court proceeding and a legal fiction of actually putting their newborn up for adoption just to allow the other parent to be recognized as the parent of the child. This would include my friends Tara and Jennifer. Jennifer, you would know, is the former member for Fort Rouge. And it's 2017; we need to stop requiring people to jump through a legal hoop to be recognized as the parent.

Madam Speaker, this bill, in the two minutes I have left, will also create a family division hearing officers, which will allow the court to have additional legal officers who can take on certain matters, matters that may be by consent, non-contested or procedural. The goal of this is to free up judges to do the work that they do best, which is in many cases conducting case conferences, trying to resolve these issues, and also free up judges to work at trials if it is necessary for cases to go there. That just makes sense to free up judges to do what they are best at doing.

A fifth major result would be moving sections to allow those applying for guardianship and those grandparents and others who are invested in the children's lives to be able to make an application under the family law act. There are provisions at the current time that are contained—I always found strange—over in The Child and Family Services Act. Instead, Madam Speaker, we will bring those sections into the family law act to reflect the fact that grandparents and others can play a very, very important role. Sometimes grandparents are shut out for reasons that we cannot fully understand.

So there will be great improvements in that area, as well. And there'll be other language in this bill that will change other issues and improve issues that may arise from time to time.

So, is this a complete overhaul of family law? Not quite. There's still more work to be done in property law—marital property and joint property—but this will improve things for children in the province of Manitoba: the way they come into the world, but also how we treat them when their parents' relationship breaks down.

I hope we can work together to make court proceedings easier for parents and, most importantly, easier for children. So I look forward to having the debate on this bill, and I look forward to improving children's lives in the province of Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

## Questions

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

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** I do thank the member for Minto for bringing this forward.

Just out of curiosity, what stakeholders has the member met with in respect of this bill?

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I only have 45 seconds to answer the member's question.

Bar Association, including the family law subsection in the province of Manitoba. I've had a number of formal and informal meetings with the judges of the Court of Queen's Bench, who are the judges who hear the majority of family cases. As well, I did have a chance to have a good conversation face to face with Professor Nick Bala, who is the expert I talked about, at Queen's University. I also had a number of conversations with Family Conciliation services, who work in the Department of Families who provide those mediation services, as well as a number of rank-and-file lawyers who've expressed to me their concerns, as well as parents—including parents of the type I spoke about that just want to be able to have the law reflect their own families.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I just want to acknowledge and say miigwech to my colleague for bringing forward this really important Bill 224.

How well do current family laws reflect the diversity of Manitoba families?

**Mr. Swan:** Yes, well the law has not kept up with the reality of Manitoba's families. And I spoke a little bit about right now a legal fiction, effectively, that same-sex parents have to go through.

The realities of Manitoba families is that they are mobile. The law doesn't really reflect that, and, unfortunately, the Supreme Court of Canada hasn't really helped with that. As well, we note that parents who want to have children are going to find ways for that to happen. And it's quite clear that developments in recent years as parents use surrogates, as they use reproductive technology—that is not reflected in the

current law, and it's time for us to move ahead and modernize this bill.

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** I thank the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) for bringing forward the bill.

Do you feel that the tools are put in place right now within the justice system for these changes to take effect smoothly?

**Mr. Swan:** Yes. If this bill was to go to committee and pass, which I expect would not happen until October or November, the bill provides that it will come into force at a time that the government thinks is appropriate.

If this bill was to come into effect, there would be the need for judges and for lawyers to then be made aware of the changes so they can give their clients a firm date on which it would come into effect. I expect it would be some period of information and education—it'd be entirely reasonable for the government to hold off on formally proclaiming this bill into force for some time.

It's a very good question.

**Mrs. Colleen Mayer (St. Vital):** I want to thank the member for his preamble and discussing—I can tell the emotion, and so I have appreciation for that.

Can you explain to the House why the previous government didn't enact this legislation back when it was initially brought forward?

\*(10:30)

**Mr. Swan:** Sure. Well, we made a lot of changes in the law. We changed the law to allow same-sex couples to marry. I'm very pleased, actually: it was two of my constituents who were the first ones in Manitoba, a story that was just told in *The Metro* just a couple of days ago. We made parent education. They talked about mandatory expanded use for the sake of the children. We brought in the First Choice program. We created a Grandparent Advisor position. We created the Child Support Recalculation Service.

I am sorry that it wasn't possible to get a bill similar to this passed. The next best thing now is getting this bill passed in this session and moving ahead for Manitoba—children in Manitoba families.

**Ms. Fontaine:** And I do want to acknowledge all of the hard work that the member himself put in respect of many of the laws that we have here in Manitoba

but, not the least, laws that have to deal with these family law here.

I would ask the member: how would this law have an impact on same-sex parent families and mixed families?

**Mr. Swan:** Yes, well, it would—as I've said, it would prevent the legal fiction of having to apply for an adoption order just to be recognized as a parent. But for same-sex families, like other Manitoba families who use reproductive technology, again, the law has not kept up with the reality for people. And I think it's very, very important that we make sure that there are all the safeguards in place and also very clear rules.

I think the ability to have more than two parents listed on your birth certificate—which might seem, at first glance, strange—if that is what all of the individuals involved with the birth of a child want, is something that can be very positive. And, again, the Province of Saskatchewan already allows for that to happen.

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, and I certainly thank the member for this substantive proposed legislation, a very interesting topic.

I'm wondering, he's already alluded to Saskatchewan, but please could he reference any other jurisdictions in Canada, possibly other places, I'm not sure, that have this kind of legislation?

**Mr. Swan:** I thank the member for the question. The Province of British Columbia undertook a major revision of their family law about four years ago—three or four years ago, I believe. They made a number of changes. The advice I have from Manitoba lawyers is that they made it better, but they could've made it a lot better. And I had a look at what they did in British Columbia and those—we've incorporated in this bill a lot of things that the advice I received could be done better.

Nova Scotia, just about three years ago, did a major review of its family law as well, and I do know that Ontario has very recently moved with legislation to avoid the very thing I spoke about, about same-sex parents having to apply to court just to be a named parent.

**Ms. Fontaine:** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague: How does this bill minimize the overall conflict in family law proceedings?



**Mr. Swan:** Well, it's a great question. Some people ask me, you know, what's it like being in Legislature? It seems like a crazy place.

And I say, well, you know, after doing 14 years of family law, the Legislature is a very, very calm and organized place to carry on business.

We know that there are cases that wind up going to a full-blown trial that should not, that there's never been an opportunity for parties to have a sober second thought, if we can call that. Maybe they don't have the relative or the friend or a community that says you need to stop and think about the impact this is having on children. And we know that expanding the availability of mediation is a good thing. More direction for that to take place would be a good thing for Manitoba.

**Mrs. Mayer:** Can the member explain what impacts this bill might have on proceedings already before the court?

**Mr. Swan:** Yes, generally speaking, it would only be prospective, meaning that it would only affect separations which occur after whatever date was chosen by the government for the proclamation date of the bill.

However, when there are matters involving children, the court always considers itself able to go in and act in the children's best interests. So if it was people that had separated but they wanted to change the arrangements, these new laws would take effect on whatever day the government chose, even though the separation had happened a long time before. So it would modernize the rules for all future situations involving children.

**Ms. Fontaine:** How does this bill better enforce child-care support collection?

**Mr. Swan:** Well, and see, that's one of the challenges. As a private member, I cannot bring in any provisions which actually require the spending of money. So this bill will look somewhat familiar to a bill that some members have seen before. On the advice of legislative council, the provisions which would have improved that circumstance have actually been—have been removed by the bill.

I'd be very supportive if the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) moved amendments or a separate bill to bring those provisions back in, because the collection of child support is very, very important for Manitoba families and children.

**Mr. Smith:** And, again, I ask the member from Minto, I know Bill 33 was a similar legislation that was introduced in 2015, and I'm just curious, it obviously did not proceed past introduction. Just wondering what the mechanisms of the reasons were behind that not becoming full law, because I know it did receive support from the then-Progressive Conservative opposition.

**Mr. Swan:** Yes, actually, Bill 33 did pass second reading and went to committee hearings in, I believe, the spring of 2016, and actually this bill takes into account some of the comments that were made by presenters at committee. I know that Lawrence Pinsky, a family lawyer in Manitoba, came down and spoke. I believe that Mr.—Professor Bala had provided a letter, and there were a couple of other witnesses. There were some changes made, I can't recall whether at that committee or as report stage amendment, which have been incorporated into this bill.

So I'm hoping that we can take that knowledge and go forward and have an even better bill for Manitoba.

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

### Debate

**Madam Speaker:** Debate is open.

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** I'm pleased to rise in the Legislature to speak on behalf of Bill 224. I thank again the member from Minto for taking the time to introduce this, and I know it's something that he is passionate about, you can tell in his preamble to the introductions of second reading.

I know—I thank, of course, you know, this is our—coming up to our last week here in the Legislative Assembly before we break for summer. And it's, you know, it's quite a time where we have to get a lot of legislation passed and debated, and probably have some late nights between now and June 1st. So I do commend all members here for taking—*[interjection]* Okay, well, I guess apparently some late, late, late nights. But I do commend all the members for taking the time to serve our constituents.

You know, it's a very important role that we've taken on. You know, the role is often much more important than the person who occupies it, and I am thrilled and still honoured to be here. Sometimes it

feels surreal to walk into the Legislative Assembly and know that I'm an MLA, and I know a lot of my colleagues on all sides of the House that are brand new feel that same way that we are just honoured to be able to represent our constituents to the best of our abilities and talents.

We all certainly bring our own talents and experiences to the table when we come here to the Legislative Assembly, and whether you're a lawyer or people who have, you know, have a background in business, veterinarian, whatever it is that we had in our previous lives, we do bring a certain perspective to the Legislative Assembly. And it's really I think what makes our democracy so strong is that diversity of thoughts and diversity of backgrounds coming together working as a team.

I know often we have differences on both sides of the House, with regard to perhaps belief in how the province should be run. But at the end of the day we do have a very common theme of wanting to make sure that our—the province is—the people of the province are served to the best of our ability.

And I know that that certainly is the case on this side of the House, and I would totally assume that our colleagues on the other side of the House have the exact same thought process when it comes to representing their constituents.

I know family law is a very touchy situation and I know I've got a lot of friends who've been impacted it—by it, whether it's here in Manitoba or in other provinces. I had friends in Nova Scotia. I lived there for a number of years and they were touched by perhaps what would be considered inadequate—or loopholes in the laws that couldn't necessarily accommodate all the proceedings coming forward from a divorce, and it's—they'd spent years and years and years in court. It did take a lot of time, for not only the court, but it's—it was expensive for both parties involved, and it certainly did impact children at any age.

And so I think that anything that legislators want to do to improve that, I mean, of course, we do have to be cautious as to how we proceed, but I do understand that family law isn't always perfect. But then again no law is perfect in this province, and we all certainly understand that laws are typically written at a very high level of 30,000 feet to make sure that they're as broad as possible without being too specific. But then again, that does lead for loopholes and certain issues that may arise later on as

a result of a changing demographic environment or whatever it is that might impact that particular piece of legislation.

\* (10:40)

I know that the member has introduced Bill 224 here, and he's clearly passionate about it. And, you know, I do commend anyone who brings forward legislation in this Chamber. It's a privilege of a private member to do so. I—and I always encourage members to bring forward whatever legislation, especially something that they have a background in or a expertise in that certainly does bring that extra, I guess, without being redundant, expertise to the table here in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

It's, you know, thinking and reflecting on my own time in my community door knocking and, you know, you always get a number of people telling you different issues that are affecting them, right? And you think, well, you know what? That would be a good private member's resolution. That would be a good private member's bill. This would—could be something that the government could do.

So, you know, it's just the door knocking itself in my riding where I went through about three or four times. So, I mean, at 9,000 homes each there you get quite a—quite a diverse group of—or a diverse group of ideas that come to you, and, of course, then it's up to each individual member to decide what they're going to pursue.

And so, again, thank the member. I just presented a private member's resolution the other day. It was passed. We know the member from St. Johns had her private member's bill passed. So a lot of times it's nice to see the—both sides of the House working together, especially when it serves the ultimate purpose of serving our constituents, serving Manitobans and making sure that not only we make a stronger Manitoba now, but also a stronger Manitoba for the future.

Our government on this side of the House has been very clear. We want to make Manitoba the most improved province in the country and I think we're well on our way to doing that, to fixing the finances, repairing the services and, of course, rebuilding the economy. That's been very clear right from the get-go when we got elected. We formed a government just a little over a year ago now and it's been quite impressive to see the number of changes that come to the province.

And, you know, in—out in the community, you know, you're always interesting what people to say. But quite often people are quite thankful for the changes that we've made in terms of taking to Manitoba into a new direction, modernizing the way government works, changing the way things work to fit a modern society. Not only that, but also to make it more efficient and serve the constituents better, you know, getting more for their money in that sense.

But, with respect to Bill 224, again, I know that the member from Minto is—and he's a lawyer by trade, and I'll be honest, I am not, so I can't speak too much into detail with respect to his proposed legislation. But I—like I said, I've seen a number of friends of mine get caught up in the legal system, and not only in family law but in other aspects of the legal system and, you know, it's always good to see ideas come forward that may improve the system. But, again, I wouldn't—won't get into too much detail on the member from Minto's—or sorry, resolution—but private member's bill at this point because, again, I wouldn't—without the legal expertise myself, I wouldn't be able to comment on too much detail on that.

But, you know, with respect to serving the people of this great province, I—like I said, I am very pleased and very honoured to be able to do that and I know that all of our colleagues across the way, whether they've been here for 17 years, five years or just little over one year, it's something that we've all been very honoured to do. And I think that without hesitation I'd say it's probably one of the most fulfilling positions I've had to date with respect to serving the public, right? That's ultimately what our roles here are to do and serving constituents.

And, you know, it's not always just sit in the Legislative Assembly here. That's really only a small portion of this job, but actually being able to go out in the community and, you know, making a difference. There's sometimes you can make that small difference in someone's life and that in itself, at the end of the day, you know, that's why I'm here. I'm here to help my constituents. I'm here to help somebody who actually had no—without our intervention may not have been able to resolve their issue.

So I think that's the most satisfying part of this position here is to be able to actually just get out there and, you know, make that small difference.

And you make enough small differences in enough people's lives, you know, at the end of the day when you do decide to leave politics for whatever reason, you know you've made a difference and you know you've actually made a positive impact in your community.

So I do look forward to the rising of the House on June 1st when we get a chance to go out to the community and do just that. I think that's the best way, we find, that you get feedback from the community is door-knocking or attending events, and, you know, that's the time when people can, hey, Andrew, you know what; I'm glad you're here, by the way—and I think that's where most of my—the issues that have come to my office came through my contact with people at events. They just said, hey, you know what, Andrew; I've got this issue with whatever it is that they might be dealing with, and I had no problem saying, hey, you know what; come to my office, let's have a meeting. I think that's the best outreach that—personally, it works for me anyways, and I know that, I'm sure, members opposite who are a little more seasoned than I would maybe reflect on that as well, but for me that seems to be the best method of outreach.

And, of course, I look forward to doing that—just that throughout the summer months and into the early fall. I know those are some of the best times, especially with the fall dinners that come up around September, October; it's a great outreach opportunity. You know, it might maybe make the waistline a little bit heavier but quite honestly I don't mind that.

It's a great way to experience and meet a whole range of new people that I never would otherwise have done. Prior to getting into politics, I had—I was in business development, and, you know, I thought that being in business and in sales ends of things that would be a great way to meet a lot of people, but in politics, I mean, it takes you a step above, say, what would be in business. You have a very certain segment of population you meet, where in politics, you meet all segments of the population and so that's what I love about this job, and it's just a great opportunity and a great honour to serve as the MLA for Southdale.

So, again, I want to thank the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) for introducing this bill today. I know that he's very passionate and he's been very clear on—

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

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Just want to put a few very short words on record about Bill 224, The Family Law Reform Act that was brought forward by the member from Minto.

Bill 224 is essentially an updated version of Bill 33 that was brought forward back in June of 2015 by former Attorney General Gord Mackintosh. Unfortunately, the bill did not pass at this time. With that said, the changes that have been proposed are good and long-overdue changes. That is why our caucus is happy to support Bill 224.

The bill emphasizes that the focus must be on what is in the best interests of the child. It highlights mediation as a form of action to resolve issues rather than all cases having to go through the court system. It's important that supports to mediation services are improved alongside this bill, and we are giving our justice system the tools that they need rather than just throwing new legislation at them, and this is completely doable, Madam Speaker.

This bill also updates the legislation to proper language in today's society. The bill is—will read that parents or guardians, rather than man or woman, father or mother, being applicable to same-sex parents and mixed families.

Again, I'd like to thank the member from Minto for bringing this bill forward. Thank you.

**Mrs. Colleen Mayer (St. Vital):** I rise today to talk about Bill 224, The Family Law Reform Act, brought forward by the member for Minto (Mr. Swan).

As a mother of two sons, I recognize the importance of protecting our children. It is emotional any time you're talking about families and the love of your families. And as a Legislature, when you stand here and you think about the children you're working for, doesn't matter what party you are sitting in these chairs representing, it is an emotional thing because we are doing our best to protect those children. And as a mother of two sons I recognize that importance, as I stated. Their best interests always come first in decisions we make through life, through work, and we move forward day by day.

Even if you're not a parent, Madam Speaker, it's important for all of us to consider their future because they are our legacy and it's what we're building and leaving them.

I can tell you that the—my two boys have worked very hard to be good citizens. I've done—my husband

and I have done our best to instill citizenship and manners and all the things that parents put together to create a good environment for them and to—and I can't imagine families who have gone through difficulties, like that are talked in this bill. It hasn't affected my immediate family with my husband and my boys, but it has 'fected' many families around us and our friends.

\* (10:50)

So, as I was reviewing Bill 224, I did some background research and the same old stories that the previous government had brought up in bill thirty-thrwo'—33, sorry, had come through, and it was bothersome that, as passionate as the member for Minto speaks about this—and today I struggle with that—as the former minister of Justice, he wasn't able to make this a priority to push through, to address the act and clean things up and make it better for families. That was hard to grapple with and that's why I think we asked some of those questions, so we could understand.

While in opposition, I understand from my research that PC caucus tried to work with the previous government to make updates to that Bill 33. I want to thank them for that work that they had done. They were holding the NDP's feet to the fire. And many of my colleagues that are here today, some who are not with us today, and I haven't had the good fortune to work with them, but I want to say thank you to all of them for working to try and get that former bill through.

But, back to Bill 224, Madam Speaker, as I said, they wanted—my former—or my colleagues here, the ones in former opposition, wanted to work with the NDP. They even put partisanship aside to update the act in attempting to make it easier for the bill to pass. But that didn't happen. The final vote never came through.

It was a tough time for the previous government, I understand that, many colleagues around this table or around this Legislature understand that and I know the member for Minto understands that all too well. For months the former government placed their own interest and their own partisan politics ahead of the priorities for Manitobans and I have to wonder, Madam Speaker, was the member for Minto thinking about families at the time when he formed a rebellion against his leader? He wasn't thinking about families. He wasn't thinking about this legislation of Bill 224, The Family Law Reform Act, at that time.

That bill, Bill 33, would have made significant changes to the act, but here we are today—and it would have, you know, it's too bad because it would have been in line with other provinces which—every day we strive—*[interjection]* I know the members are making comments opposite here, they're making comments to us. I take this seriously, Madam Speaker. It's not a joke. So, you know, members opposite can heckle all they want, but it is emotional for a lot of people.

What Bill 224 lacks is the broader reform that would help children today. Bill 33 would have put some teeth into things and made it better for families. The amendments included in this bill have zero impact on family law reform and the outcomes for children.

As I read through the bill and I did more work on it, I did reflect back to my own family. You know, as I've mentioned to you previous, Madam Speaker, that I am a product of two young adults, you know, 18 and 19, my parents were very young. We all grew up together. We worked through many things. We grew up together, is what my mom would say, saw the ups and downs just like many families do.

But one day, when I was 21, Madam Speaker, my parents decided that, you know, the hard times overtook and they couldn't continue to continue on as being the family unit we were. Now, I was a grown woman at that time. I was 21. I could observe very well what was going on in their lives. I knew the realities of what went on. But I do also have a sister who's 15 years younger than I. It's just the two of us and she was six at that time. And so as I observed what was going on—observing my parents and how they reacted to this, I also saw a little girl who was devastated and didn't understand. And I struggled because it was—I don't know what was harder, a little girl with her world being destroyed or a 21-year-old knowing absolutely everything that is going on and why it's going on.

But we got through that, and I am happy to say that there were programs that my parents took part in. I can't recall if it was For the Sake of the Children, but I do remember my mom talking about it, and I'm fortunate. Not all families can do this, Madam Speaker, but I'm—my family has stayed intact. We are a blended family. All parents are remarried. There were difficult times because you have different opinions. You got eight people who are trying to make decisions for what's best for all

the kids, but we got through it and we are stronger for it today. I wish that we hadn't have gone through those hard times, but we did, and maybe that's partially what makes me strong enough to stand here before you and say those words.

Our government believes in consultation and working with Manitobans to ensure that their voices are heard, and I know that the members opposite make—mock at that statement that, you know, we believe in consultation. But I'm standing here as an MLA in this Legislature saying that that is one of the most fundamental things that we can do as legislatures, is listen to our constituents, is listen to Manitobans, make sure that we hear their voices and do our best to take those voices through, and those voices are families. Those voices are people who work in this community. So I—it shouldn't be for partisan purposes, but we are in politics, Madam Speaker, and sometimes that does cross ways.

And I hear that that's my signal that I should be wrapping up soon, and I'm just going to take a drink of water to allow those bells to stop ringing.

Our government has made—I'll get back to some of my notes here, Madam Speaker—our government has made several changes to our courts and strengthening our justice system. Our courts need to be functioning efficiently, and the minister has tasked the department to provide recommendations to make improvements in the court case backlog. And I thank the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) for doing that.

We're working to improve public safety and the justice system in an important part of the steps—which are important part of steps that we are taking to repair the services of Manitobans—that Manitobans count on.

We want to make Manitoba safer and stronger for each individual, and that includes communities and our families, young and old, Madam Speaker. We know that good government makes difficult decisions, and it's necessary to ensure the protection of suitable quality services for their citizens, and that is what our government is here to do. We're here to clean up the mess left by the NDP, we're here to work hard for Manitobans and we're here to make a difference.

So our government is setting a course for Manitoba to be the most improved province, and on behalf of my family and, most importantly, my two

sons, who I cherish deeply, I'm grateful to be part of this Legislature. Thank you.

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** It is an honour to be able to make some remarks on Bill 224, The Family Law Reform Act.

And I would like to indicate to the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), my sincere respect for the work, obviously, a substantive bill, and my intrigue, I think, with the topics that it touches. Obviously, we're facing questions today which others have not faced, and I think we all recognize that we need to think about them with some measure of care and some measure of reality, and as laws and times evolve, we are wise to acknowledge that.

There are a few things in the bill which I have questions about, and I mean that sincerely. They're questions. They're not foregone conclusions for me, but I would, you know—one that, as I flipped through the bill, I believe there's a provision for spouses to be required to testify against each other. And that leaves me with—

\* (11:00)

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member will have nine minutes remaining.

### Speaker's Statement

**Madam Speaker:** I have a statement for the House.

I am advising the House that I have received a letter from the Government House Leader (Mr. Micklefield) indicating that the government caucus has identified Bill 222, The Planning Amendment Act, as the second of their three selected bills for this session.

As a reminder to the House, rule 24 permits each recognized party to select up to three private members' bills per session to proceed to a second reading vote and requires the House leader to provide written notice as to the date and time of the vote.

The Government House Leader has therefore advised that the question will be put on second

reading of Bill 222 today, May 25th, 2017, at 11:55 a.m.

### RESOLUTIONS

#### **Res. 17—Mental Health Promotion Tools and Recovery Oriented Framework for Mental Health**

**Madam Speaker:** The hour's now 11 a.m. and the time for private member's resolution.

The resolution is Mental Health Promotion Tools and Recovery Oriented Framework for Mental Health, brought forward by the honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I move, seconded by my friend and colleague from The Pas, that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to develop a model to include a—start over, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by my friend and colleague from The Pas,

*WHEREAS mental illness is the single largest category of disease and leading cause of disability in Canada with approximately 25% of Manitobans receiving care for mental illnesses; and*

*WHEREAS nearly 198 Manitobans are among the 4,000 Canadians who die by suicide each year, an average of almost one suicide every two days; and*

*WHEREAS the bio-medical system emphasis on pharmacological treatment for mental illnesses has dominated the mental health system as the only widely publicly funded treatment and has created a greater likelihood for people to rely on prescribed drugs to improve their mental health; and*

*WHEREAS without a balanced approach to mental health treatment, pharmacological treatment alone has concerning physical and mental side effects that can lead people to misuse their medications, develop negative coping mechanisms and trigger addictive behaviors; and*

*WHEREAS recent literature has emphasized the need for a recovery-based model to address social inequities and evolving systems of mental health services and supports; and*

*WHEREAS a recovery-based system is built on values of self-determination and self-management for people living with mental illness and is focused on helping persons with mental illness to function as full citizens in society; and*

*WHEREAS mental health promotion education is seen as one of the most effective recovery oriented methods to improve mental health, prevent suicide and increase the likelihood of Manitobans seeking out the mental health services that are right for them; and*

*WHEREAS mental health promotion tools provide Manitobans with effective, low cost, everyday strategies, which support capacity building and resilience, and includes targeted prevention activities for at risk groups; and*

*WHEREAS these tools are especially important as an early intervention method for youth to prevent severe and persistent mental illnesses from occurring later on in life and to prevent a youth from having to rely on prescription drugs for mental health treatment; and*

*WHEREAS primary care physicians are often the first point of contact with the mental health system, and must be adequately trained to understand and identify both the biomedical and recovery oriented services and tools that are available to their patients, so that they can better find a path to recovery that is right for each patient.*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to develop a model to include a recovery-oriented framework and mental health promotion tools in mental health care so that mental health literacy can be improved for Manitobans and for the doctors that serve as the first point of contact for Manitobans entering the mental health system.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum), seconded by the honourable member for The Pas (Ms. Lathlin),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to develop a model to include a recovery-oriented framework and mental health promotion tools in mental health care so that mental health literacy can be approved-improved for Manitobans and for the doctors that serve as the first point of contact for Manitobans entering the mental health system.

**Mr. Allum:** I'm honoured and privileged to get up and put this motion forward, seconded not only by my friend from The Pas, but all members of our caucus, and we do so in the knowledge, Madam Speaker, that mental health issues and mental illness

has a profound and devastating impact on our families, on our loved ones, on youth, on adults, on seniors, on-across the full spectrum of individuals that constitute our society.

*Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

And we do so in the knowledge that no one remains detached or unaffected by the impact of mental illness and mental health issues and how important it is that we work together collaboratively, co-operatively to ensure that there are sufficient tools available across the spectrum of mental health supports to ensure that everybody, every one of us, every member of this House, everyone connected with us, those families that we represent, those folks all across the province and indeed the country and the globe, have access to the kinds of tools that they need in order to live health, happy and productive lives.

I always say that to my own kids, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the goal of a life well lived is not based on wealth or fame, but is actually based and more deeply rooted in living healthy, productive and satisfying lives. And yet we find ourselves engaged-involved in a society, at the second decade of the 21st century that, by its very nature, promotes mental unhealth for the simple fact that we are overwhelmed by any number of global and societal issues that cause enormous stress on individuals. And then within ourselves we also find it difficult to find that well-being of strength and the ability to cope in a world that obviously often comes with enormous stress, enormous pressure in-also, the difficulty of making ourselves feel whole in an increasingly complicated world.

So this resolution, in one sense, pays tribute to the progress that has been made both on the biomedical side, on the pharmaceutical side in addressing mental health. It wants to pay tribute to that because we have made significant steps in that regard. The resolution also wants to pay tribute to the growing awareness that we see across our neighbourhoods and across our communities of the importance of mental health as part of a full and complete and protective life.

And then the-finally, the resolution tries to pay tribute to those non-medicinal, non-pharmaceutical, non-biomedical treatments that can be utilized in order to promote mental health and mental well-being in a way that doesn't promote other adverse effects or by-products of those effects.

And so, when we talk about mental—the promotion of mental health tools, we're really talking about the ability to develop initiatives and activities that strengthen mental health by encouraging those in that circumstance to take control of their mental health, enhance protective factors and increase resiliency.

We—in promoting mental health we want to 'incorp' simple, evidence-based strategies into our everyday lives. And mental health promotion, of course, gives Manitobans, especially young people, the tools to cope with everyday mental illnesses like depression or anxiety.

And I'll have a chance to speak to it maybe in the Q & A, but there are any number of strategies that have been developed that can provide non-pharmaceutical, non-biomedical supports to individuals to help them to build that coping and that resiliency: creating a vision for oneself, helping each and every one of us to identify what's important to them in setting and achieving goals; identifying three good things that happen to us each and every day—and sometimes members in the House will have a hard time identifying one good thing that happened to them but, as a coping mechanism, to identify those things around us—three simple good things that happened to us in the course of a day—as a reminder that there's reason for hope and reason to continue on.

We need to encourage a sense of belonging in our community and we talk about that every day in our caucus and in our politics: about making sure that everyone matters and that everybody belongs. Finding those outlets for that sense of belonging to ensure that you know that you are part of a larger group—a larger society of which you play—one plays an important part. Connecting with others, of course, is in the same circumstance.

That—to reduce our sense of isolation, and then practical things like something as simple as nasal breathing, something as going out for a workout. I don't get to the gym as much as I might like, but I know how important it is. I know that riding home—when I ride home from work, I pedal home really hard because that helps me to get my—as I say to my wife—get the 'ya-yas' out from the day so that I can be a normal human being when I get home.

\* (11:10)

And then setting other kinds of measures in terms of self-monitoring so that we know where we

are in our—in the sense of who we are at any point in a given day and then to rely on other kind of coping mechanisms to do that. A three-minute breathing, just a simple exercise to provide, again, a coping strategy and something as elementary as a progressive muscle 'relaxion', tensing and relaxing ourselves so that we can remain—have a sense of wholeness about ourselves.

The other part of the resolution calls for recovery-based strategies, and I think that this is an equally important part of what the resolution speaks to, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because a recovery-based system is based on the belief that people suffering from mental illnesses can and do recover. It need not, or doesn't always have to be a downward spiral toward hopelessness and isolation and impairment and the other—disempowerment and disability and disadvantage. Mental illness—there can be recovery, and there is a—we need to accept that as part of the process of mental health well-being to ensure that one has control in their own life and input into their treatment and being able, as I said earlier, to live a meaningful, satisfying life.

In conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I simply want to say that this is a soft resolution. I don't think any of us can escape the reality of mental well-being and mental health. It's in our families; it's in our schools, our neighbourhoods all across our communities, and as a result it's a soft resolution that encourages all members of the House to work together to promote mental well-being in our communities, and so all of us, each and every one of us, can live happy, healthy and productive lives.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

### Questions

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** A question period 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. Shannon Martin (Morris):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank my colleague for that resolution. I listened intently to the member's comments. He talked about having access, Manitobans having access to the services they need in their community. I recall in December 2014, actually, I brought an issue



of a constituent from Niverville who had—was receiving mental health services locally, and she received correspondence from Southern Health that, and I quote: Due to provincial funding reduction, your services are no longer available locally. End quote.

So I'm wondering if the member opposite can circle that square for me, the resolution he's putting forward today and his comments today, about the necessity of those services being offered locally and his own government's record of taking away those services from a constituent of mine in Niverville back in December 2014.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the member really should take the high road when it comes to a 'resalation'—resolution of this kind. This resolution is, as I said earlier, a soft resolution designed to provide those kind of supports to individuals that are outside the normal realm of how we understand treatment.

We want—the resolution is not really about funding; it's about promoting those kind of strategies that are in balance with biomedical treatments and they are the kind of coping mechanisms one can utilize that don't cost anything but nevertheless strengthen our inner being and our inner selves.

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** It's an absolute honour to put a few words on record and participate in this process. I just want to thank the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) for bringing forward this very important resolution as I've shared within the House my personal experiences with dealing with mental health with myself and with my daughters, and the current situation that happened in my constituency in Cross Lake affected me as well.

I just want to ask the member for Fort Garry-Riverview if he can share with us how can a recovery-orientated mental health system better meet the needs of Manitobans.

**Mr. Allum:** Well, I thank my sister from The Pas for that question. I also want to acknowledge the very brilliant people who brought this issue to my attention. They are very progressive and very thoughtful individuals and I am nothing other than the voice of a collaborative effort in this regard.

But recovery-based system is based on the belief, as I said earlier, that people suffering from mental illnesses can and do recover. In either the presence or absence of symptoms, recovery is about

having control in your own life and input into your own treatment and being able to live a meaningful, satisfying life, and in relation to recovery there are any number of strategies that we can utilize in order to help with that process, but the—

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

**Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River):** This government has the courage to do the right things and make the tough decisions in order to provide better health care in Manitoba. This includes the development of a comprehensive, evidence-based, multi-year mental health and addictions strategy, focused on improving access to mental health services.

Can the member for Fort Garry-Riverview explain why the members opposite put their own political interests in front of the needs of Manitobans with mental health issues?

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it doesn't surprise me that the member for Morris (Mr. Martin) should want to take this Q & A in that direction and I'm disappointed in the member from Seine River. I know that she, as well as so many others in our community, are affected by mental health issues that are directly impacted to our families and our neighbours and our communities.

The resolution simply calls on all of us to work together in this regard to develop other, additional strategies.

If you want to take this resolution and incorporate it into the work that the government's doing it on mental health, that's great. The objective here is not to be partisan or hyper-partisan, but to work on something so absolutely critical to the well-being of our community.

**Ms. Lathlin:** How can mental health promotion tools help improve the mental health and well-being of Manitobans?

**Mr. Allum:** At the essence of the thing is to provide individuals with that sense of take self-control, of taking control of their mental health and enhancing those protective factors in increasing resiliency. Mental health can be improved by incorporating simple evidence-based strategies, as I outlined just a few minutes ago, into our everyday lives in order to help us to cope, on the one hand, and also at the same time not to overrely on pharmaceuticals and

biomedical treatments that may have other, profound consequences for individuals.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Yes, I thank the member for bringing forward this important resolution.

I think it's very important that we think of all the components that can be used to help people, from nutrition to exercise to sunlight to various other things. There are many physicians who incorporate such a role and I think that the member is not excluding medical approaches, which include the broad range of approaches to try to improve mental health care. Is that correct?

**Mr. Allum:** Well, I thank my friend for River Heights for that great question and, of course, his expertise in these areas would exceed mine in every regard. Of course, what we're after here is a balance between the good work that the medical community does—they're often the first point of contact for those suffering with mental health issues—and what we're seeking here is a balance between those things.

And also, the resolution, if you read the WHEREASes, very clearly will indicate that medical professionals, doctors, nurse practitioners are also looking for additional training and additional tools to help them to provide the kind of help and support and assistance to their patients in order to ensure that they can live good, satisfying, productive lives.

**Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson):** I note that the resolution talks about how the first point of contact for some mental—some with mental health issues is doctors, but, sadly, that first point of contact is often more a waiting room where they would show up at hospital emergency rooms and wait six, eight, 10 hours.

And I think we can both agree that this is an issue that should be addressed in a non-partisan way. And I want to use the words that the member talked about, that that issue and the issue of mental health should be non-partisan.

\* (11:20)

So I ask the member: Will he get on board with the non-partisan recommendations, the expert recommendations that our government's following to improve wait times in Winnipeg's ERs?

**Mr. Allum:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, again, I have to say that the hyper-partisan character of the questions coming from the government side are out of context here today.

We did, of course, develop the mental health crisis centre. It has been an important tool in regard to that. If you're—want to talk about wait times, I don't believe closing facilities to eliminate the wait line is the way in which you improve access to mental—to health services.

At the end of the day what we're looking for here is some kind of sense of collaboration and understanding among members of this House that this is an issue that affects all of us in every way, either directly or indirectly, and the resolution simply asks for a—for using an approach—

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

**Ms. Lathlin:** How do mental health promotion tools serve as an effective early intervention method for youth?

**Mr. Allum:** Well, that's an excellent question.

As minister of Education, of course—and I know the Minister of Education were here—were he to be able to speak on this issue, too, would say that every school you go to the first thing that gets identified to you is not about we need more chalk or more blackboards or anything like that; it's about the mental well-being and the mental health of each and every student.

So the idea here is to build in resiliency and coping mechanisms and strategies to help the student, the individual, the youth themselves, but also to provide teachers and other educators with those same tools so that they can work together so that student can be the most productive and successful student they can be.

**Mr. Martin:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member talked about doctor and nurse practitioners having the training to deliver appropriate mental health services.

Unfortunately, I didn't get an answer to my first question as how does he circle the square when a constituent of mine, December 2014, went to their own local community to receive those services that the minister—or the member opposite suggests should be made available, and was told that due to funding reductions under his NDP government they were no longer available.

So, again, I ask the member to please circle that square then, when he's talking about enhancing the training for nurse practitioners and doctors so they can offer those services locally, that they

weren't made locally to my constituent and instead in December 2014 I received what he calls a hyper-partisan response from his then-minister of Health.

**Mr. Allum:** Well, you know, I'd don't know why the member from Morris wants to talk about something that happened in another era in another context for which we have to take his word for what actually happened or went down when we don't know.

What we're asking here is to focus on a positive action we can take as legislators in this House in order to address something so critical that affects each and every one of us directly or indirectly.

I would hope that the member for Morris as well as all government members get onside with this resolution in order to show the people of Manitoba we care about them, we're working together and we want every Manitoban to live happy, healthy and productive lives.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Time for question period is expired.

#### Debate

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Debate is open. Any speakers?

**Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris):** Unfortunately, despite two efforts in posing the question to the presenter of this resolution, I failed to receive that response. In fact, the member opposite talked about, you know, that was another era. So, apparently, December 2014 which is all of, you know, three years ago, is a—quote, unquote—another era.

It's passing strange that the member doesn't want to look as a—or—and his party as a whole—their mantra now is that we're only looking forward, not backwards. And yet I do distinctly remember actually one media did an accounting during a particular legislative session—I think it was the 2000, might even be the 2014 or 2015 legislative session—and I think in the short three-month session the Selinger government made mention of the Filmon government and the Filmon era, it was close to 183 times, I believe, in that span.

So it's always interesting that the member opposite talks about, you know, another era and we need to look forward and move on. When he talks about hyper-partisanship—this is the same member that went out in the media just days before the election was called in the last general election and he told every single civil servant, he told every teacher,

he told every social worker, he told every nurse, he told every conservation worker, he told everyone and anyone—every probation officer and every administrative assistant that worked for government that, should the Pallister government be elected that they would find themselves immediately fired—I think is the exact words—or terminated and let go literally 10 minutes after the election. It would be a wasteland. It was his very apocalyptic message that he would—that he constantly actually delivered not only as a minister of the Selinger government but as a member in opposition.

He continues to bring forward that apocalyptic message. So, you know, it's interesting he talks about how, you know, we need to come together. We need to, you know, put aside the hyper-partisanship and show Manitobans that those days are gone. And yet his own government revelled in hyper-partisanship, revelled in fear mongering. In fact, going back just to the last election again, I remember an article in *The Globe and Mail* and it noted—the columnist noted that if there is one thing that the last provincial election would be remembered for it would be the hyper-partisanship and the desperate tactics of the Selinger government as they bid to hold on to government, and I do recall many of those hyper-partisanship attacks.

It's always my hope, too, when I listen to the member opposite that he'll use this opportunity, and I'm still waiting, and hopefully one day I won't have to wait any longer. But I'm always waiting for that, you know, that apology to my predecessor, Ms. Taillieu, who left to take care of her dying husband as he struggled with cancer and ultimately lost that battle. And, instead, members opposite used that decision, a very personal decision, and a decision really along the idea of mental health. This was an individual who was obviously in a very stressful situation this individual found themselves in.

I can't imagine the stress that any one of us would be under when our spouse was diagnosed with the—with a terminal illness or terminal cancer, in this case. But for members opposite, for the NDP government, for the Selinger government to use that decision, a very personal decision, to take care of themselves, mentally to take care of their spouse at home, to be there during those end times to spend that last bit of quality time, that instead of lifting that individual up that they used it as an opportunity actually to tear that same individual down. And

every day there would be the constant heckling of where's Mavis; every day, where's Mavis, where's Mavis? And members opposite would heckle it day in and day out.

So, you know, it's unfortunate that so again an individual who's taking care of their mental health, taking care of their spouse in that situation that they are dismissed by members opposite for doing what they're suggesting in their own resolution the importance of dealing with mental illness, about mental health treatment, and about the physical and mental side effects that can impact people, because no doubt that there was side effects as to, you know, my predecessor is dealing with her husband's cancer diagnosis, and it was an incredible strain on her and her family.

And I know it saddened her to know that the NDP were using that—again, that very personal decision that I would argue that every one of us would make in terms of, you know, your own personal mental health and your own individual and your own partner and spouse's physical health, that they would use that again as political fodder to score some cheap points and suggest that somehow that she had quit her post.

And, again, so it's always passing every day when the member gets up and he forgoes that opportunity to put on the public record an apology, an acknowledgement of the hurt that he placed on my predecessor and his dismissal of that very—again, that very personal decision to take care of it. Because, you know, the member talks about self-determination, talks about self-management of people, and that is one of those things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be with an individual during a very, very stressful time.

\* (11:30)

And it is a decision that each of us in our own way may face as we have parents that are aging, as our children may unfortunately end up being ill or loved ones or family members may find themselves ill; each of us will have to make that decision. And the illness sometimes may be physical, as in the case of my predecessor. Sometimes the illness may be a mental health issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And whereas, you know, the member opposite makes note about, you know—and I did; I listened very carefully and talked about—and I'm quoting him, he talked about taking time for oneself.

And again, I mean, that's what my predecessor did. I mean, she took time for herself and time for her spouse during those end days. And they decided, again, to use it as political fodder in their hyper-partisan attacks that they are very, very well known for.

So, you know, the member—and I'm quoting the member again, he goes: and none of us can escape the reality, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that's the reality. The reality is that those comments are part of the public record on multiple occasions. The former premier, the member for St. Boniface actually even singled her out in a debate in Brandon at a Brandon chamber event, and used her decision that somehow she quit and—as opposed to, you know, that she resigned.

And I don't know if it's a misogynistic viewpoint that women quit and that men don't because, you know, my former colleague, Stu Briese, also left actually during that time frame, but they never actually made mention it. They were never heckling, you know, where's Stu or anything like that. It was always where's Mavis, where's Mavis?

And again, I don't want to suggest—I know the member is—previously had apologized for misogynistic comments that he's made in this House and actions that he's made towards my colleagues, which I have no doubt added to the stress of being an MLA. He talks about, you know, getting on his bicycle and biking away from here as fast as he can. And I have no doubt that he does that very often in order to escape the many factions that exist amongst the NDP, as he flees like a bandit in the night, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But—[interjection]—well, you know what—my colleague, the member for Agriculture, is absolutely right. You know, the safety mechanisms in terms of bike safety and making sure you're wearing the appropriate gear, including a bike helmet, to protect your head. Because I mean there are instances where, you know, God forbid, the member involved in some sort of accident on the streets and, without the proper safety, may end up hitting his head. And it—and that is—may be the result of—lead to whether it's physical health issues or mental health issues.

So, I mean, there are ways that we can actually, you know, in there—in small ways making sure that we're taking care of ourselves, as he noted—as my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler),

noted. That may be one small way, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So, you know, I agree with many points that the member opposite is making in his resolution. I agree that, in many instances, mental health can be recoverable. Not in all instances. I know in my own personal circumstances, my own mother was institutionalized twice during the course of her life and, unfortunately, she never recovered from the mental health issues that ultimately took her life, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I do know that it was a very stressful situation on the entire family, and I agree that taking care of oneself is paramount for all of us.

So, with those few comments, I thank you, Mr. Deputy—

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

**Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface):** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this motion today, the member's resolution.

I think it's an important resolution. It's become very clear from comments from members of the Legislature that many of our families have experienced mental health issues, and we all have personal experience of what that's like. And it's not something that anybody ever wishes for a family member—or for themselves—to have to experience that. But it does create within us an awareness and an empathy towards the need to address this issue within our society. And I think that this motion that's put forward today would help us move in the right direction.

It's got many worthwhile components in it. It does say that there is a role for biomedical interventions to help people with mental health issues, but it also says that we have to go beyond that to have a model that encourages recovery. And the government can play a role in partnership with families and communities to help people recover and continue to make a contribution to their families, to their communities, to the wider society of their province and their country and be productive human beings throughout their lives. So I think this is a very worthwhile motion today.

I do want to say that, because of our experiences, all of us can bring a certain sensitivity to this motion that I think will serve us well as legislators in this building and as policy makers. And members of the government—whoever the government is, of the day—

the current government can take support from this motion for their initiatives. They're doing a mental health review, and there has been a commitment made to bring forward a new, a more robust mental health strategy.

Some of that will build on initiatives taken during our term in office. Some of that will build on the experiences of other members to this Legislature that have contributed good ideas, and, of course, the most important thing that we do in any of these initiatives is focus on wellness, focus on prevention, focus on the ability for people to cope with the very difficult and changing conditions that they experience in their lives.

We live in a world right now, in a society right now, where change is accelerating at every level. The social media, the digital world is accelerating dramatically the stresses that people experience. Changes in our economy are putting tremendous stress on people and individuals. The precarious work that young people are experiencing and millennials and people after them where they have to move from job to job, where they have an overabundance of choices, and yet not many choices, to get the kind of jobs that they wish they could have that'll give them secure employment.

Relationship issues, issues of discrimination, issues that are human rights issues that we see occurring on a regular basis within our society can have a tremendous impact on people's mental health. We saw the unanimity of the Legislature this morning to pass the member from St. Johns' bill on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. That is a very positive gesture on behalf of all members of this Legislature to put that issue in the forefront by having a special day set aside to honour the families and victims of missing and murdered 'indishous' women and girls.

So I do want to say that this motion, I think, will be helpful. I look forward to all of us supporting it because I think it will do the kinds of things that allow people to recover.

And what are those things that help people recover? It's been laid out within this report that even though 25 per cent of Manitobans can suffer from various forms of mental health issues, whether it's anxiety, whether it's stress, whether it's more severe mental health issues such as schizophrenia, all of those things could be helped by working with people in a fashion that allows them to have their full

autonomy and recognizes that they can create a vision for themselves that allows them to set goals, that they can have positive affirmations of who they are.

They can have a sense of belonging, whether it's in a community or a cultural group or their indigenous group or an affinity group that brings them together for whatever they do, in a positive way, whether it's connecting with others on a personal level. And even the smallest human connections on a daily basis can make a gigantic difference in people's sense of well-being.

I noted recently, a neighbour of mine, who's a senior citizen, came by and was telling me that he had a tough year because his wife had just died and he had just been recently diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, and he was having a tough time with all the loss that he was experiencing, and then a smile came to his face. He said, I have the support of my family and the people I live with in dealing with these issues right now. And you could tell he had a sense of gratitude for the kinds of social connectedness in the sense of relationships that were allowing him to cope with a difficult stage of life.

Very simple exercises like mindfulness can make a difference, and techniques to help people deal with stress reduction and calmness can make a huge difference, and we're starting to see those techniques being taught in schools, we're seeing those techniques being taught in the workplace. And we've had comments here about physical activity. That can make a big difference in managing stress. And I note that even members of this Legislature take the opportunity during their breaks to get out for a walk. I've even seen the Deputy Speaker out there for a walk at noon hour on some days. And there's no doubt that after sitting in here for a couple of hours, that we need that break. And, of course, self-awareness and self-monitoring can make a huge difference, and new technologies are supporting that.

All of those things will make a difference, but as we go through the ability to set budgets and provide legislation, we can recognize that the people we train in the social services, the people we train in the medical profession, the people that we train in the education field, can have an additional component added to their training which will allow them to identify, at an earlier stage, issues with respect to mental health.

And a lot of times those mental health issues co-occur with other issues, perhaps a learning issue,

perhaps an addiction issue, perhaps a physical issue. All of those issues can combine together to put people in a very difficult situation with respect to their mental health.

\* (11:40)

So the early training that we provide to all of our front-line service providers in education and health and social services can make a gigantic difference.

Now, one of the things that I heard a question on earlier on was access to mental health crisis response. And I'm proud to say that we did set up the Mental Health Crisis Response Centre at the Health Sciences Centre which allowed people to go directly to see a physician in an ER situation, which allowed them to have support from psychologists, social workers, nurse practitioners and nurses, and have a comprehensive response to their crisis.

That was a first of its kind on Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and took a lot of pressure off of other ERs in Manitoba. It provided a set of skilled, trained people to provide that service and I think it made a big difference.

The program for assertiveness—for assertive community treatment, commonly known as PACT, provides intervention right in the community.

Work that we've done that allows people to go to a mental health court where there's a link between the judiciary, the legal system and the mental health system, including the Health Sciences Centre, has allowed greater compassion and understanding in dealing with mental health issues that wind up in the justice system, and that is a big issue. And I note there's a discussion across the country these days on solitary confinement and the impact that that can have on people that are incarcerated and that's something we need to pay attention to.

Investments in the community in places like Artbeat, in programs that are led by students—one of the things I've been very impressed by is how student leadership in this province at the high-school level has provided a lot of peer support among young people to be supportive of each other as they go through negative experiences which can affect their mental health. And I do think that our antibullying legislation was a big step forward in that regard because it built an awareness of how students treat each other and how they can do it better in terms of respect and dignity regardless of their background,

regardless of their orientation, regardless of their gender expression.

All of those things can make a difference. And the PAX program at the very earliest stage that was provided to teachers so that they can work with students to provide them the tools to deal with stress has made a huge difference.

And housing, I do want to say that housing, I think, is very important because people that live in a housing situation where they have stability are then able to access other services. I know, for example, that some of the social housing that we've built in my constituency, Sara Riel was brought—was initiated by a sister of the Grey Nuns.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

The conversations are getting—starting to get a little loud here. I can't listen—I can't hear the speaker, so if everybody can quiet down a bit.

**Mr. Selinger:** Some of these housing projects such as Sara Riel which are an integrated housing project with people with mental health issues who want to live in the community and other citizens who want to live in housing, have provided an integrated opportunity for people to live in the community, have those supports and normalize their lifestyle.

We've seen that with other housing projects such as though Eden health services and we've seen that through the Clubhouse project which is being built in the Wolseley area. All of these housing projects make a big difference—and I do want to mention Friends Housing which was created in the late 1980s in the St. James area close to the Grace Hospital provided a real sense of community.

My brother lived in that facility and he had long-lasting, deep relationships with the people in that house and provided him daily sense of affirmation, a daily sense of community, a daily sense of social support which made a big difference in his life and the lives of many others.

And, of course, things that we've done on youth suicide prevention—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Honourable member's time is up.

**Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River):** Good morning, Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to put a few words on the record with regard to the Mental Health Promotion Tools Recovery Oriented Framework for Mental Health.

I have had the opportunity to work in the social services field. Through the many years I worked in the social services field, I saw the impact of mental health and addictions. A person struggling with mental health and/or an addiction can impact their personal well-being and their family members and close friends. Mental health and addictions take a huge toll on the emotional security of our youth, adults and seniors.

The struggle to deal with the stigma associated with a mental health illness and having an addiction go to further create a barrier which can hinder the individual from seeking the necessary supports to help them deal with their illness.

Individuals who are sometimes struggling with one illness as a result of the other and may not have been aware that they were coping with a mental health illness through alcohol and/or drugs or that the use of alcohol and drugs has led to a mental illness. If the mental illness is not diagnosed and the person chooses to find their own means to cope with their mental health, it could lead to a resilience on what is easily accessible, alcohol or drugs. This confusion could lead to a person not receiving the appropriate medical attention that is needed.

Mental health and addictions are two areas of health care that are often closely linked, but their support systems are separate. Our government is looking at different ways to address this gap and to assist those individuals who are in need of medical support.

Understanding that the two could be co-existing as a result of the other is critical in providing services to the individuals that suffer from a mental health illness or an addiction. It is important to have these two areas of the health-care system working together. The mental health and addiction strategy will ensure that experts look at how the two systems can align.

Deputy Speaker, our future is reliant on the health of our youth and the adults and the caregivers who are guiding our children. Our government is committed to providing better services to Manitobans needing mental health and addiction services. To achieve this, an RFP was issued to develop a multi-year mental health and addiction strategic plan.

Through this RFP process, the government has selected Virgo Planning and Evaluation incorporated to assist the Province in developing a provincial

mental health and addiction strategy to support long-term health and better quality of life for Manitobans. This will ensure that all Manitobans are able to receive the support they need to ensure that their health is taken care of. A plan will also remove the stigma that is associated with an illness that is not as easily identifiable as a physical sickness. Supports and the necessary resources will offer guidance for individuals and their families.

The mental health and addiction strategy will look at the needs of children, youth, and adults for both mental health and addiction services. The mental health and addiction strategy will be recovery oriented and will emphasize patient and family choice in getting the supports needed to help Manitobans experiencing difficult circumstances.

The success of the program and the ability for an individual to be able to remain healthy is highly dependent on the supports that are put in place after the initial medical assistance has been offered. Proper supports for the family and individual will ensure that the initial steps are not only maintained, but also further implemented.

The individual who struggles will most often be returning to the environment in which they became addicted or were struggling with a mental health concern. Being able to identify the areas that are triggers and to have a plan in place will ensure the person is not only successful, but also equipped with necessary tools to face other roadblocks, triggers and situations.

Deputy Speaker, there are already good programs in place which offer necessary supports and resources for individuals who are seeking medical assistance for a mental illness or addiction. Some of the options available to support mental health include mobile crisis unit, crisis help lines, community mental health programs such as Sara Riel and CSU and Seneca House.

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living funds a system of mental health services and supports for both adults and youth across the province. The broad-reaching supports will ensure that all populations are able to access the necessary health-care supports they need. Being mentally, physically and emotionally healthy is important at all ages, and no one person should be unable to access medical supports they need.

A range of services are provided in both hospital and community settings. The Health Sciences Centre offers an outpatient and in-hospital treatment option for individuals who are struggling with a mental health or addiction issue. Regional health authorities' grant-funded, not-for-profit, mental health agencies and the Selkirk Mental Health Centre further support medical needs of individuals who live in rural areas of the province.

Deputy Speaker, I can't stress enough how this government is looking at the needs of our citizens and wanting to ensure their health is a priority and everyone is taken care of. The new health initiative will see more beds opening up for those needing mental health supports.

The government has made progress towards meeting several commitments to address the opioid crisis in Manitoba, including naloxone distribution and additional funding from other departments or systems which support children and youth with mental health problems and illnesses.

\* (11:50)

Child and Family Services, Education and Justice are working together to strengthen supports and to ensure that all youths are able to benefit from a solid and supportive program which ensures their future successes. This government is being inclusive and transparent and wants all Manitobans to be able to access all health supports offered. Deputy Speaker, under this government, all areas of health are being reviewed and all Manitobans will be able to get the health services they need.

Under the previous government, Manitobans had the longest emergency room wait times in the country, turned hallway medicine into highway medicine, as many individuals would travel elsewhere to seek the much needed medical attention they needed. The number of doctors being recruited declined. Personal-care home beds were not built to accommodate the growing number of seniors in our province. Manitobans paid the highest in ambulance fees and, according to the Canadian health policy's 2015 report, Manitobans were the least funded when it came to the cost of coverage for new medication in Canada.

Manitobans under the previous government had been waiting too long for the health care they needed. Our government will invest in health care that is going to support the needs of all who need to access medical supports and resources.



Deputy Speaker, I would like to quote our Health Minister, the Honourable Kelvin Goertzen: by investing—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order.

I just want to remind the member that—not—to use member's constituency or their minister title.

**Ms. Morley-Lecomte:** Thank you. By investing in this strategy, we are investing in long-term health and better quality of life for all Manitobans.

Deputy Speaker, people need to know they will be heard and have their health concerns met. I am proud to be a part of a government which is working hard to give back to Manitobans, but they should have not had to have gone without in the first place.

Thank you.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I agree that we need to include a recovery-oriented framework as part of our approach to brain and mental health in Manitoba.

Liberals have produced a lengthy report on brain health in Manitoba with many recommendations, and we see the importance of emphasizing that people with brain and mental health issues can show improvement, resilience, and can overcome many obstacles.

We see the importance of including areas like nutrition, housing, exercise, employment, life goals, sunlight, vitamin D, many other components in a thorough strategy, particularly, interestingly enough, in nutrition, long-chain omega-3 fatty acids like DHA and EPA, which are essential brain components.

We're very disappointed in the current government waiting more than a year to appoint somebody to even start developing a strategy for them on brain and mental health.

Apparently, they forgot to develop such a strategy in their 17 years in opposition, and—so that they had to start, but they took the slow road and they won't have that strategy ready until the end of this year, and that's about halfway through their mandate before they even have it presented to them to even have a look at. So they should have been much quicker.

They have been very slow to negotiate to receive federal funding, inexplicably so. Given the

importance of this, it should have been a top priority but it hasn't.

They have cut a number of programs which are critical in terms of promoting mental health. For example, the provincial funding for mental health support for Metis people—completely axed under this government, and very sadly so.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of programs in a comprehensive look at what needs to be done in the government which need to be addressed and changes need to be made in areas like social assistance, workers compensation, MPI, and the Public Trustee.

For example, in social assistance, people with disabilities and mental health disabilities aren't often considered to have disabilities and when they are, they are still funded at less than 75 per cent of the poverty level. People with workers compensation with a brain injury often are not adequately looked at and understood. People under Manitoba Public Insurance—had an individual with a concussion, not adequately understood; the impact, not adequately compensated for the missing results of having been in an accident and had a concussion.

Public Trustee not adequately understanding that if you're going to recover, you need to have a way—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for River Heights has seven minutes remaining.

#### DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

##### Bill 222—The Planning Amendment Act

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** In accordance to rule 24, as previously announced, I am now interrupting the debate and put a question on the second selection bill for this section for—from the government caucus, Bill 222.

The question before the House is the second reading of Bill 222, The Planning Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I hear a no.

**Voice Vote**

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion please say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion, the Yeas have it. I declare—

**Recorded Vote**

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I request a recorded vote.

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

The question before the House is the second reading of Bill 222, The Planning Amendment Act.

**Division**

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

**Yeas**

*Bindle, Cox, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Gerrard, Graydon, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Klassen, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Lamoureux, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Reyes,*

*Schuler, Smith, Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.*

**Nays**

*Allum, Fontaine, Lathlin, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Selinger, Swan, Wiebe.*

\* (12:00)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I just want to announce that a member is in their seat, they have to either say yea—vote yea or nay. So, what—

**Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples):** I am neutral in this—on this—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** You have to vote one way or the other.

**An Honourable Member:** I'm abstain.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** You—if you're in your seat, you can't abstain from voting, the honourable member from The Maples.

The honourable member from The Maples, you have to either vote yea or nay and—if you're in your seat.

**An Honourable Member:** Okay, I am going to vacate my seat.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** If you wait—vacate your seat, then you don't have to vote.

**Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 36, Nays 9.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

The hour being past 12 noon, the House is recessed, and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 25, 2017

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