

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

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
AL TOMARE, Nello	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma	Union Station	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian	Keewatinook	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy	Kildonan-River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Roblin	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GORDON, Audrey, Hon.	Southdale	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah, Hon.	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek, Hon.	Interlake-Gimli	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
KHAN, Obby, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLEIN, Kevin E., Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya	Notre Dame	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	McPhillips	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice, Hon.	Seine River	PC
MOSES, Jamie	St. Vital	NDP
NAYLOR, Lisa	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg, Hon.	Riding Mountain	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
REYES, Jon, Hon.	Waverley	PC
SALA, Adrien	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SMITH, Andrew, Hon.	Lagimodière	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Vérendrye	PC
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WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Morden-Winkler	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 1, 2023

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.

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Good morning, everybody. Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MLA Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Would you call from 10 to 10:30, Bill 208, The Protecting Youth in Sports Act, for second reading debate; and from 10:30 to 11, Bill 224, the transportation and infrastructure amendment act, for second reading debate.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will consider second reading of Bill 208 from 10 to 10:30, and second reading of Bill 224 from 10:30 to 11 a.m.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 208—The Protecting Youth in Sports Act

Madam Speaker: I will now call second reading, then, of Bill 208, The Protecting Youth in Sports Act.

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Sandhu), that Bill 208, The Protecting Youth in Sports Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Moses: I want to begin my remarks with respect to Bill 208, just by beginning and noting that I'm wearing this handkerchief today. It's just been special to me because it was gifted to me by my father. My father's not been of the best health recently, so I just wanted to mention that as a way to honour him and show that I appreciate him.

Father's Day is coming up in a couple of weeks. So, my thoughts are with him and I also want to show gratitude for everything that he's done to instill the values in my life, and I know I wouldn't be here without him in my life. And one of the values that he did instill in me was a value to, you know, participate in activities, and particularly a love of sports, and a love of being athletic, and a love of engaging in competition and engaging with people in our community.

And so, that's why I gravitated as a young age into being an athlete and being in sports and participated right from a young age in soccer and basketball, football and, you know, you name it; you threw a sport in front of me and I was—jumped right into it.

And so, out of that love and out of that passion of sports, you know, now as an adult, I look back and I want to make sure that the good experiences that I had as an athlete can continue to exist in our province and make sure that we take the proper steps to ensure that young athletes are protected in sports.

And that's exactly what Bill 208 aims to do. It aims to increase the protection for young athletes who are participating in sports. It takes a couple of concrete steps, given the recent, over the past—just over a year in Winnipeg specifically, we can think of very specific case where greater protection was needed for youth in sport.

But we can also think more broadly of cases around this province, around this country, in a variety of sports and around the globe as well. And so, we are pushing for Bill 208 so that we can take a proactive step in ensuring that Manitobans, young Manitobans who are participating in sports can be protected.

This bill aims to prevent young athletes from entering the homes of their coaches without previous permission, written permission from their parents. It takes the step of encouraging and outlining training

that would—training for coaches, that would talk about appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

But it goes beyond that, because we know some of that training exists right now, and it's taking place in Manitoba. But it goes beyond that to actually encourage parents to take training to make sure that they're aware of what inappropriate and appropriate behaviour that they should be seeing from coaches of their kids.

And it also goes into, you know, it goes to talk about what grooming looks like so that parents can be aware of what some of these precursor actions that might seem on the face of it okay, but really are a step in the process of potentially their child being groomed by a predator.

And so, we want to take the steps to keep youth safe in sports, so they can enjoy the sports for what it is, get the positive benefits of leadership, of hard work, of teamwork, of being passionate about something and learning how to push yourself through adversity to accomplish a goal.

And, you know, in addition to training being available for parents, training is also, through this bill, set out for the athletes themselves, so that they can be most aware of how to protect themselves if they feel like they're in a situation that is inappropriate or be aware of what is good and what is bad, and what is—you know, they should expect from the coaches and the people in leadership positions as they interact with people through sports.

And so, we are presenting this bill, Bill 208, to make a positive step in that regard. We want Manitobans to be protected. We want young athletes to be protected.

We want people to enjoy sports for the incredible things that they are, the incredible benefits that we all get from them. And this is a way that we can protect youth in sports and ensure they have an opportunity to enjoy sports.

So, I thank you for the time to speak to Bill 208. I look forward to a discussion as we debate this bill today. And I also just want to lift up all the athletes who are out there, who are participating in sports, now and throughout the rest of the summer, that you—I hope you are safe. I hope you are able to, you know, participate and enjoy the sport as safely as possible.

And if you are self-experiencing some difficulties, some danger, some inappropriate behaviour by anyone involved, I encourage you to seek help, seek

assistance and get the services that you need to make sure that you're going to be okay.

* (10:10)

And if you witness something like that, I encourage you all, as well, to speak out, speak up, because we want to take these things very seriously, and I think this bill goes to do just that.

Thank you.

Questions

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

Mr. Shannon Martin (McPhillips): I want to thank my colleague across the way for bringing in, obviously, this important discussion this morning as to how we protect young people in sports.

I'm wondering if the member can share his perspective on how we, not only as legislators, but as Manitobans, can work together to help reduce the stigma around abuse that these individuals may be facing so that we can help them start their journey to healing.

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): I think one of the great ways we can do that is by ensuring that victims aren't stigmatized when they come forward, that they—that their voices are listened to and that we actually listen to those voices and act on what they say.

I think one of the best ways to prevent stigma is by actually following through on what we've listened to, what we've heard and by acting to take steps to prevent future cases of this—of those sort of things happening. And of course, I think this is a way to actually prevent future cases of this happening by passing Bill 208.

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): I would like to thank the member from St. Vital also bringing this bill forward. This is a very important bill.

My question is: Why might you be hesitant to come forward and report that they have been sexually abused?

Mr. Moses: You know, sometimes there does—there's fear. There's potential shame involved. We want to

make sure that there's avenues for young people to come forward and feel like their comments and thoughts would be listened to and be welcomed, without any judgment on it.

You have to understand that the person who is perpetrating is doing so and that it's not your fault if something happens to you. And so, we want to create a system where we can not only prevent these sort of things, but also make sure that the supports—those—for those people who have might've been abused in any way through sports.

Mr. Martin: The member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses), in his opening 'commaints'—comments made reference to his father being an inspiration in part for proposing this legislation.

I'd like to give the member an opportunity to flesh that out and share a little more about his perspective on the need for this legislation as a legacy.

Mr. Moses: I'd like to just take the opportunity to talk a little bit about some of the people who we consulted with the crafting this bill.

As you know, my colleague, the member for St. James (Mr. Sala) did—and I did a lot of work to craft this bill in terms of speaking with parents, speaking with experts in the field, speaking with students themselves and talking about how we can put forward some positive steps to make the system better.

And I think this is the sort of bill that would actually have a lasting effect in terms of the athletes who are participating today, but the legacy of that would impact the athletes who are still coming up over the next generations to ensure that they are going in a system that would actually protect them through sports.

Mr. Sandhu: How will this bill prevent abuse?

Mr. Moses: You know, when I was an athlete, I—it was difficult for me. I wasn't aware of what grooming looked like. I was—never had any issues, but I wasn't even aware of what that would've looked like or felt.

And so, I know that there's many athletes who might be experiencing that same thing today. And we want them to be aware of what that looks like, in case something does happen. That they are aware and how to stop it, and what to do if it happens, who to call, how to protect themselves and how to protect your teammates as well, so that all Manitobans can be safe when they participate in sports.

Mr. Martin: Obviously, one of the roles and one of the actions that we often undertake as MLAs when we bring forward ideas like this, is we consult with other organizations. Obviously, there's a number of organizations here in Manitoba dedicated to youth sport.

Wondering if the member can share his conversations with them. Importantly, as to how they see this legislation being of value and necessity in partnering or mirroring their own mandates in terms of protecting youth in sports.

Mr. Moses: Yes, so we spoke with many organizations with respect to this bill, including Sport Manitoba, Football Manitoba, Winnipeg high school football. As you know, there was a recent case last year in—with respect to a football coach.

We also respect with—you know, other youth services that provide abusive—services for youth who have been abused, and so we wanted to do a broad consultation and talk with not only experts and people in this field of sports and protecting youth, but also parents who've had kids who have been, sadly, a victim of this type of abuse.

And so, through that consultation we listened to what they had to say and put forward a bill that will address several points in—as ways to protect youth in sport.

Mr. Sandhu: I want to ask my friend, the member from St. Vital: What more can we do to encourage young people to speak out when they see or experience something isn't right?

Mr. Moses: Yes, I think that's really important.

We want people who maybe aren't experiencing, but they're maybe seeing it around them and say, you know, that doesn't look right. We want to do a couple of things: we first we want to make sure that they have the wherewithal, the knowledge, to identify that that's not an appropriate behaviour. Then we want to make sure that they have an avenue, they know what to do next: a number to call, a person to talk to, those sort of things.

We want to have the information out, but we also want to make sure that those people actually feel comfortable to take that step, take the next step, make sure that they won't be shamed, won't be looked on poorly, won't be made fun of.

And so, that's all part of a process, to actually encourage people to take that step, to speak out when they see inappropriate behaviour.

Mr. Martin: The member mentioned, obviously, the role that teachers and coaches play in the introduction of sports, and obviously in protecting children and young people in sports.

I'm wondering if the member can expand on how this legislation will provide supports to ensure that our coaches and teachers have the training necessary to help individuals and to spot individuals that may be preyed upon.

Mr. Moses: So, this bill speaks directly to that. It does put forward training that would be needed and required for coaches who are participating in sports, right, all coaches.

And it, you know, also speaks to training for parents so they know what inappropriate and appropriate behaviour looks like, as well as for athletes themselves, right; parents aren't always around necessarily, and so we want to make sure athletes themselves know what appropriate and inappropriate behaviour are.

I think through that we are—get a more fulsome approach to education on safe sports.

Mr. Sandhu: What are the effects on youth of being sexually abused by a coach or a person of trust?

Mr. Moses: That's a really important question, right? You know, there's long-lasting impacts of people who are victims of abuse.

You know, and those are sort of things that we want to have services. You know, unfortunately could not be captured in this bill because it is a private member's bill, but we would like to see more robust services for people who are victims of abuse in sports, so they can get the counselling, their families can get the counselling, so that they have a better chance of being made whole as their life continues.

And it's a shame when those things happen because, you know, you enter into sports to get enjoyment, and if something like this happens, it really takes that and strips that away from you.

Mr. Martin: I understand, Madam Speaker, that Sport Manitoba has established a 24-7 hotline for people to call for help, and has recently held actually a safe sports summit, approximately a month ago, in relation to this issue.

Does the member see the need, or has he spoken to Sport Manitoba about the need for additional summits as a means to further educate coaches, parents and young people about this issue and about

the need to be able to identify this issue in order to protect themselves and their futures?

Mr. Moses: We—yes, we did speak with Sport Manitoba, myself and my colleague from St. James, who did a lot of work to put forward this bill. Yes, we spoke with them and I think it's important to note that they do really good work, including putting forward the 1-800 number, access for kids who are looking for safety in sports.

* (10:20)

We also want to do more to ensure that coaches can't just invite kids into their home without parents' permission, that there's training for parents, for students and for coaches. A more fulsome approach to protecting youth in sport.

Mr. Sandhu: Once again, thank you for bringing this bill forward.

Is there anything that you might have missed that you want to put on the record?

Mr. Moses: Thanks, I really appreciate that question from my colleague, member for The Maples (Mr. Sandhu).

And I just want to just end by saying that I really appreciate us being able to voice these concerns by—because by just talking about this issue, it's going to make more young people in Manitoba more willing and feeling able to come forward and raise issues if they see them happening.

So, I want to again thank my colleague from St. James for all the hard work he's done. I want to thank all the athletes in the room who have advocated and pushed for this bill to be moved forward.

And I want to just again say to all young people out there that if you're experiencing any problems, please call the 1-800 number. Please protect yourself. Please protect anyone who's involved and make sure that all Manitobans stay safe when they're in sports.

Madam Speaker: The time for this question period has expired.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: But prior to moving through, I would like to say hello to the Miami School grade 7 students. There are 22 of them here with teacher Mr. Strange, and they are here from the Midland constituency.

So, we welcome here to you—welcome you here to the Manitoba Legislature.

Debate

Madam Speaker: The floor is open for debate.

Hon. Wayne Ewasko (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): Thank you, Madam Speaker, and good morning.

And I just wanted to give a quick shout-out to all the students from Miami for joining us there this morning on this very important debate. Unfortunately, they're unable to stick around for the entire debate.

And, you know what, I would like to thank the member from St. Vital for bringing forward this piece of legislation, Bill 208, on the very last day of session, Madam Speaker.

Protecting youth in sports is a very important topic. And we on this side of the House, the Progressive Conservative government, has been working hard to be doing just that, Madam Speaker.

And it's a little shocking and disheartening to a certain point, Madam Speaker, that the member from St. Vital, who I know had had and continues to participate in various sports. And he had a illustrious high school and post-secondary career, as well, in sports and I commend him for that. And I know that I think the work that he has done on this topic is commendable.

It's unfortunate, Madam Speaker, that the member was unable to convince his colleagues to maybe make this a little more of a priority for the NDP caucus over there because they're bringing it on the very last day and even with that, they're bringing it forward on a day where they've split their one hour for private member's bill debate. So, it really is, again, disheartening to see that this really isn't a priority for them.

And I've got many examples as why this is not a priority for them. And that's what I want to make sure, that the public—parents, guardians, coaches, teachers, everyone out there—is understanding the process in this Manitoba Legislature. To make sure that they are aware that this is—this bill coming forward today on the last day of session is disingenuous. It totally is disingenuous.

Now, what is moving things forward and making sure that we are protecting youth—not only in sport but throughout schools, school sports, school community—is what we've done on this side, Madam Speaker.

Matter of fact, the member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses) and the member for St. James (Mr. Sala),

the MLA for Lagimodière, who's the Minister of Municipal Relations (Mr. Smith) now but he was minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage, and we worked quite closely with many stakeholders in regards to protecting youth in sport.

And it was us who actually invited the member for St. Vital, St. James and actually the member for Transcona (Mr. Altomare), as well, to be part of—to have those conversations, actually in my office, the Minister of Education's office over a year ago, Madam Speaker.

And so, what have we done? So, you know, the member brings forward Bill 208, protecting youth in sports. But not once did he say that the good work that we have done in regards to bipartisan—we, you know, making sure that we're working together.

Matter of fact, the member from St. Vital and St. James started working on things sort of behind the scenes, I guess, and even behind the scenes of their own caucus, Madam Speaker. They failed to invite and have the member for Transcona participate with them on this.

I mean, the member for Transcona, like myself, an educator by profession, plus the member for Transcona was an administrator within the River East Transcona School Division for 33-plus years.

And the member for St. James and St. Vital, the members didn't even think about inviting him to the table in their own caucus to have those conversations. So, it actually was us—it was actually us who invited the three of them in to have these conversations to make sure that we were moving forward in a positive direction.

Under the NDP, Madam Speaker, there was crickets. Silence, complete silence on this. We know that there were things happening in sports prior to—all the way back to the early 2000s.

And then, when we formed government and the initiatives that we started bringing forward to ensure the safety of children and youth, not only in sports but just in general in this great province of ours, that's when a lot of these complaints were starting to come out about issues that had happened in the past in regards to coaches' totally inappropriate behaviour.

And so, that's why I truly believe that partnering with the many great organizations, not only just in Manitoba, but across the country, making sure that we're putting things in place into schools, and also

working with Sport Manitoba to ensure the safety of students.

That's why, May 11th of 2022, I sent a—as the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, sent a letter to all school divisions to ensure that they were strengthening their policies. And it wasn't just school divisions. We're talking funded independent schools, First Nations schools with directives related to enhancing the protection for students, including requirements for all school personnel to complete the Respect in School training or to the Commit to Kids training as an alternative. Either one would do.

All coaches in the K-to-12 school system to complete the respected sport training. All school divisions and schools to have policies in place respecting professional boundaries regarding interactions between students and school staff.

Lot of this we have initiated, because we know, on this side of the House, it's very important. That's why we enacted all of these actions, partnering with various different organizations throughout the province to make sure this happens.

We did not bring a bill on the very last day of the session—and matter of fact, Madam Speaker, only give it a half hour of debate where the member himself—he actually knows that his caucus didn't prioritize this. That's why he's bringing it forward today.

He knows that our government has done a lot of things to continue moving in the direction of ensuring and enhancing the protections for students in this province of ours. Is there more work to do, Madam Speaker? Absolutely. There's always more work to do, and we can never just stop doing that work.

So, some of the other things with the directive that I had sent to school divisions was to make sure that all staff, all school staff, were trained in Respect in School or Commit to Kids by February of 2023. So, that directive went out.

Now what is this—what is the respect—

* (10:30)

Madam Speaker: When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have two minutes remaining.

Bill 224—The Transportation Infrastructure Amendment Act

Madam Speaker: As was determined earlier, we will now move to second reading of Bill 224, The Transportation Infrastructure Amendment Act.

MLA Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I move, seconded by the member from Thompson, that Bill 224, The Transportation Infrastructure Amendment Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

MLA Lindsey: It's really a sad commentary on things when bills like this one have to be brought before this House multiple times, when the right thing would have been to pass it the first time it came before this House. But so far this government refuses to recognize the importance of making sure that our highways are kept in safe condition.

We know that we're so short of snowplow operators—or equipment operators, if you will—because they do more than just drive snowplows; they also maintain the roads in the summertime. We know that there was, like, a 50 per cent vacancy rate in the northern region for those operators. We've heard from the Minister of Infrastructure earlier that he's hired back a few retirees in an attempt to fill the positions.

We also know what the problem is: that this government won't properly compensate people, particularly in the North, to recognize the increased expenses that people have in the North. The starting wage for these operators is so low that it's no wonder the minister can't actually attract people to those positions, because as soon as they do show up in the North, they can go to work at a different outfit and get paid substantially more money.

We hear this with snowplow operators. We hear this with the ambulances, that we're short of ambulance attendants, as well, because as soon as they get trained, they go somewhere else because they can make substantially more money. And that's all directly a response of this government and the way they've treated workers in this province for the last seven years.

I'd be remiss in not mentioning our colleague Danielle Adams who died as a direct result of the lack of snow clearing in this province. I can also tell the minister—*[interjection]* I hear him saying that it's because of weather conditions. And he's absolutely right. It snows in the North; therefore, we need to have snowplow operators who will plow the roads in a timely fashion.

And I can tell you, Madam Speaker, from my own experiences, even this winter, when I was travelling in the constituency, going to Leaf Rapids and Lynn Lake, a single lane of traffic is all that was

plowed. And it was that way for days and days because there isn't enough people to maintain those stretches of road.

Now, the really sad part about that or the really scary part about that is, this was during a time when the winter roads going north from Lynn Lake just opened up. Now, you can imagine the number of heavy trucks that are transporting goods to those northern communities in the short period of time they have.

And they don't want to get out of that plowed lane because they'll land up in the ditch, which then leaves people in their own personal cars and light vehicles having to pull off into snow that's piled a foot, two feet high, where the plow has gone through once, to try and get out of the way of these semis.

That, Madam Speaker, is unacceptable. There isn't a road in this province that should be left in that condition for days and days at a time. People in the North deserve better, but they don't get it from this government.

We know that there was a group that presented a petition with so many signatures on it to this government, demanding better conditions on Highway 6, passing lanes, proper snow clearing and all the rest of it, and that only addressed Highway 6. It doesn't address Highway 391. It doesn't address Highway 394, that, for over a year now, we've been trying to get the ministry to do something to maintain—well, not even maintain—to put the road back together so that people who use that road to transport their fish to market can actually do so in a safe manner.

I've seen pictures of it, that I'm sure the minister has, as well, where there's parts of the road that are completely missing; culverts that are torn up; that it's so completely unsafe. I spoke to the director of northern road maintenance a year ago. He was well aware of it then.

And yet, to this day, that road has not been fixed, has not been made safe for people in northern communities to use for business, to use for personal—in the winter, the winter road is open for such a short period of time that we need those roads maintained properly.

We need to make sure that people can get where they need to go in a safe manner, and yet that's not what we get from this government.

We've heard my colleague from The Pas-Kameesak talk about her own experiences on Highway 60, where

she's afraid to let her daughter drive on that road, particularly in the winter, because it's not maintained properly. It's not maintained properly in the summer either, but in the winter it becomes that much worse, because again, those trucks don't know where the edge of the pavement is. The edges of the pavement are all broke up, so they tend to stick to the middle of the road.

Because the road isn't properly plowed, they don't know where the edges are, which then makes it unsafe for everyone else. It's unsafe for all those trucks that are trying to do business; that are trying to deliver goods and services to people in the North; that are used as part of logging operations to get product where it needs to go.

And yet, what's this government's response been to date? Well, there hasn't been one. They haven't done anything to improve the situation on northern roads, to make sure that they're properly maintained 12 months of the year.

I've been on these roads myself, and I hear people say, that don't know, because they don't have to travel those roads, that, well, you should just stay home if the road is bad. People wait months, months and months, to get medical appointments, and now because this government won't maintain the road, they're being told, just stay home; wait a few more months to get your medical appointment. That's not right. It's a denial of service for people in the North.

We know that people need to travel. We know that people can't afford to fly because those costs have gone up dramatically. We know that the government has decimated the northern patient transportation system so more people are forced to drive. We know that the government has destroyed health care in most of those northern communities to the point where any medical attention you need, you have to drive on the road in the winter, on the road that's not properly maintained because this government has failed miserably to attract sufficient number of people to maintain the roads properly.

The VEMA garage, the vehicle maintenance garage in Thompson; it used to be a main hub for maintaining government vehicles such as snow plows. There's nobody left working there for the government any more. Doesn't exist. So now, if one of your trucks breaks down, it has to go, maybe to The Pas, because they do have a small garage there, but chances are it's got to go to Winnipeg, which takes it out of service that much longer.

We know that there's more ambulances on the road now in the North than ever before, because there's no health care left. And the minister is quite proud of himself. He says that's thanks to us—because they've cut health care so badly in the North that that minister is proud of the fact that more people have to be on the road, on the road that that minister won't maintain. He should be ashamed of himself. Everybody over there should be ashamed of themselves. *[interjection]*

* (10:40)

I hear another member saying stick to the facts. That is the fact. That is the fact that you cannot get diagnostic tests in Flin Flon. You have to go on the road to The Pas. You cannot get a CT scan. You cannot get anything. You have to get transported to The Pas sometimes by ambulances. Sometimes because we don't have enough of them either, you've got to drive yourself there.

So, this bill that I've presented multiple times that this government refuses to let pass doesn't go far enough. It needs to be more, but with the constraints of a private member's bill this is the most that can be put forward. It's sad that we have to keep standing in this Chamber, begging the Minister of Infrastructure, begging the Premier of Manitoba (Mrs. Stefanson) to treat northern Manitobans with respect.

Shame on them.

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.

Questions? Any questions?

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): The member is a member of a party, the NDP, that for 17 years underspent the infrastructure budget by \$1 billion.

Why is it that now he's suddenly apparently had a change of heart and cares about infrastructure and snow clearing?

MLA Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Well, I thank the member from Borderland for that question because we know that since 2016 when this government came to power, they talked big numbers about what they were

going to spend on infrastructure. And year over year over year they've underspent that budget.

We know that for the 17 glorious years that the NDP was in power, there was snowplows operating on those roads. There was people that could drive snowplows. We know since 2016, that's no longer the case that there—is not enough people to operate snowplowing equipment to keep roads safe.

And that—member should talk to all his members and say, we've got to do better. But they don't have to worry, because they may not be here much longer.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): I was—I thank the member for Flin Flon for bringing this forward.

I was just wondering if he could talk about the fact that municipal funding was frozen for seven years under this government, or expand on how that's affected infrastructure in the North.

Madam Speaker: The honourable minister of—the honourable member for Flin Flon.

MLA Lindsey: Soon, Madam Speaker. Soon.

Madam Speaker: Careful, now.

MLA Lindsey: That's a good question. We know that because this government has frozen municipal funding for so many years, now all of a sudden that there's an election coming, they're running around like Johnny Appleseed throwing money out, or pretending to throw money out.

But communities have been unable to maintain their streets and roads they're responsible for properly. We know that because of cuts in the government's infrastructure budget that some of those things—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

MLA Lindsey: —have been offloaded onto municipalities, things like grass cutting, that now the ditches have to be maintained by the municipality that already doesn't have enough money because of the funding freezes.

So, we know that everything that they've cut has made things so much worse in the North.

Mr. Eric Redhead (Thompson): I'd like to thank my—the member for Flin Flon (MLA Lindsey) for bringing this life-saving bill forward.

I guess my question is, Ontario's experience with contracting out snow clearing has been devastating for

that province. If snow clearing was fully privatized, what would be the potential consequences—be for Manitobans?

MLA Lindsey: Thank the member for Thompson for that very important question. And looking at the experience in Ontario, we know that they pay more and get less, which is the case most times that government services are contracted out. It costs the province more money and you get less service.

So, we know from the Ontario experience that as more of those highway maintenance, highway snow-plowing jobs are privatized, that the jobs aren't being done properly. They're not being done in a timely fashion. And Ontario roads aren't being maintained in a safe condition.

And we already see from this government that they're not maintaining our northern roads in a safe condition. Contracting those jobs out to the private sector will just make that problem so much worse.

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): I guess, just to the member who's talking out of both sides of his mouth right at the moment, a question on how he sees the difference—and I will table an article, Madam Speaker, from 2013 when they were in power. And it states: the department of infrastructure and transportation made a bad decision to cut the night shift of snow clearing on major highways from its budget to save money.

So, my question is: Would he expect those people to go out after a storm if it happens in the middle of the night, when they cut that?

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Just a caution to the member that words like, speaking out of both sides of his mouth is—a caution—not to be used in the House.

MLA Lindsey: Yes, the decision was made 10 years ago that in order to keep snowplow operators safe, they shouldn't be going out after dark. Now, in the last 10 years, there has been improvements in things like lighting. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

MLA Lindsey: And the other thing that the member opposite fails to recognize is, when I said that roads hadn't been plowed, it wasn't a matter of hours; it was days. It was days that the roads hadn't been plowed.

So, the member opposite maybe should listen better rather than just trying to score points.

The whole problem is, we do not—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Redhead: My question for the member for Flin Flon (MLA Lindsey) is, how has this government failed Manitobans by privatizing infrastructure?

MLA Lindsey: That's a really good question, and it really speaks to what this government's whole mantra is around privatizing services. And it doesn't matter whether it's privatizing health-care services, whether it was privatizing Lifeflight services, whether it's trying to privatize snowplow operations, whether it's privatizing highway maintenance, you get less, but it costs the Province more every time things like that take place.

We know that. We know from looking at other jurisdictions that are further down the rabbit hole of privatization that the outcomes are not good for Manitobans. We know that the outcomes will not be good if the privatization mantra of this government—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Guenter: The question period here has been very interesting and enlightening because we've learned, from the member for Thompson's question to the member for Flin Flon that the real concern here is not snow clearing, it's not about providing—setting better standards for snow clearing, it's not about safety. It's about growing the government payroll and it's about their opposition to privatization.

What—can the member for Flin Flon confirm that he could—he cares about snow clearing or is this about privatization?

MLA Lindsey: Madam Speaker, such a poor question—such a poor question.

Really, what this entire bill is about, what everything I've spoken about is maintaining roads in a safe condition. What we've learned is doing it with privatization, like this government likes, provides less service, less safe roads.

So, while the member's trying to spin things around in his mind to make some sense, what he's failing to grasp is the fact that experience in other jurisdictions and in our own has proven, time and time again, that privatizing those services leads—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Redhead: I'd like to ask the member for Flin Flon how this bill will keep Manitobans safe on our highways.

MLA Lindsey: I thank the member from Thompson.

This bill would be one step along the way to providing safer roads for Manitobans, because it clearly sets out the standards of how long a road has to be before it gets plowed.

* (10:50)

Now, I wish that I could've added more stuff into this bill to make sure that we have sufficient snow-plow operators; to make sure that we have sufficient equipment; to make sure that things were done properly and safely. Unfortunately, in the world we live in where a private member is not allowed to introduce a bill that costs money, this is the most that we could get done, but even at that—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Guenter: Madam Speaker, I'd like the member opposite to clarify in his comments, because I am very concerned at this point, about how he thinks his legislation would be applied to private contractors who might be carrying out snow clearing, as well as the municipalities who have partnered with our provincial government in the area of snow clearing and road maintenance.

How would this legislation impact them?

MLA Lindsey: Well, thank you and I thank the member for the question.

The impact would be that there's clearly defined minimum—and keep in mind it's minimum standards for how soon roads have to be cleared—would be encapsulated in the act.

But by privatizing some of these services, we need to then find people to go and check and make sure that they've been kept up. Because we know from the Ontario experience that when they studied the privatization, that the contractors weren't keeping up with the minimum standards.

But the first step has to be to establish the minimum standards in the act, so that there's something to hold people to, whether it's government workers or private workers—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

And the time for question period has expired.

Debate

Madam Speaker: Debate is open.

Hon. Doyle Pivniuk (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I just want to, again, address

this amendment to this bill about—that when it comes to snow clearing, I don't know if the member knows this, but, you know, the standards that we've had, have been around for many, many years, during—even during the NDP days.

And the thing is, these standards are set by the—by federal standards; in fact, the national transportation and review board. And these rules were done—every province actually follows them. So, for the person—the member to come up and talk about changing the whole concept of how we do our—clear our roads is ludicrous because they had 17 years if they wanted to change it. And they never.

And meanwhile, we—my colleague who tabled an article from 2013, they reduced the hours of operations of a snow clearing, so I'm not quite sure why the member even—Thompson—I mean, Flin Flon even brought this up, Madam Speaker.

And so, what I want to say here—and how dare he talk about our road conditions when it came to his colleague? It was a weather condition, based on a news article, that caused the accident. And to put our staff, who are out there, clearing snow on—and they were there during that. They're one of the first ones that came to the scene, Madam Speaker. But to put them responsible for the death of a colleague of ours is outrageous. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Okay, order.

Mr. Pivniuk: That's very low. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pivniuk: And you know what? I actually had discussion—he even apologized to me after my very first question period, Madam Speaker, about the question he had for me about the responsibility of the death of his colleague. And he put the responsibility on our staff. Shame on him. I thought he was supposed to be looking out for labour. Instead, he put them under the bus. Or in this case, under the snow-clearing machine.

So, this member here, I don't know, especially when it comes to—when it came to snow clearing, we have rules that we follow here. And when it comes to snow—when it comes to the closing of our highways, Madam Speaker, it's the responsibility of the RCMP. And when it comes to the RCMP making that call, based on their own safety out there, seeing the safety—again, they're out there for the safety of citizens, safety of drivers.

So, they will make the decision to close the roads and that notifies our department to make sure that if there's any gates that we can close, we'll get them closed, and we even passed a bill, when it comes to closures of highways and being charged if you're on a closed road, Madam Speaker. We are making sure that our highways are safe. We are investing in our highways. We've—*are going to be spending about \$4.2 billion on infrastructure that they neglected.*

The last seven years of them being in government, they underspent by a billion dollars. A billion dollars; they could have had every single light on the Perimeter Highway at an interchange if they would have spent their money on infrastructure. How much safer, how many more less accidents we would have had on the Perimeter Highway, Madam Speaker.

And the thing is, we could have had even the divided highway going into the Ontario border by—if they would have spent their money on the billion dollars that they underspent. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Piwniuk: And we could have had a safer highway where that individual and his son were killed, Madam Speaker. That could have been eliminated, but if they would have invested that money. Our government, instead, on the only year that they actually overspent on highways was the year before the election, in 2015. They raid, raid from the department, and then they had a big parade before the election.

And they didn't even fix the roads. All they did was paint the roads with a thin layer of pavement. A very thin layer of pavement. But where we're going to be doing—so when the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) basically said about Highway 75, and then also mentioned Highway 3 between Pilot Mound and Crystal City, he needs to get out of the city and not have perimeteritis, Madam Speaker.

Because right now on Highway 75, we're detouring the traffic onto two lanes now so that we can start construction of over 60-some million dollars to repair—to rebuild 75, not paint it like they did in 2015. We're investing and rebuilding our highways that they neglected in the last seven years of their being in government, Madam Speaker. We are going to get the job done.

When it comes to Pilot Mound, all winter they've been hauling gravel. There's big piles there to make sure that the Highway 3 between Crystal City and Pilot Mound are going to be rebuilt. There is turning lanes. We are investing our highways, and we're

investing in our highways when it comes to—we're going to be—we were actually going to be investing in our trade and commerce grids. We're going to criss-cross—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Piwniuk: For many years in Arthur-Virden, when I used to represent that area, represented 90-some per cent of oil that's actually produced in Manitoba, was in that area, Madam Speaker. They failed to even invest a single dollar in that area. Meanwhile, they took billions of dollars from that area during their time in government and not invest anything back into that area.

And we are investing back into our trade and commerce grid all across this province, and our Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) wants to see economic development at every corner of this 'prozit'—even the North. We are investing over \$100 million in the next five years to Highway 6. And you know what, when we get to Nelson House First Nation, we are actually—went—I went there last June to do a tour, and after 10 months after, we are going to get the job done.

For over 20 years they were asking this government, back in the days of the—dark days of the NDP, about doing that highway. Madam Speaker, we are going to do that this summer, 10-kilometre stretch. And there could have been elimination of three young boys who died on that highway, with the—when they were on their bicycles and because of washboard condition of the road, rolled the truck and these three boys had been killed.

Madam Speaker, if they would have invested the billion dollars, those three boys would still be alive. Shame on them. So, we are going to invest in our highways—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Piwniuk: Madam Speaker, you know—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. *[interjection]* I'm going to call the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie) to order.

Mr. Piwniuk: Like I said, when it comes to our snow clearing, Madam Speaker, we are following the rules here. And I also have to say, when we had a snowstorm just in Virden last spring, this past spring, our snowplows not only did the Trans-Canada Highway, they were doing all the service roads, even before the town of Virden even got onto their clearing of their snow until after the weekend.

Our staff are dedicated all across this province, and I want to thank my staff for all the work they have done to making sure that our highways are safe, are open, to make sure economic flow of traffic when it comes to our supply chains. We are focused on that. And Madam Speaker, we actually hired 40 new people from retirement to be on standby, to actually come and help the snow-clear our snow, because we know the importance of making sure that we make movement of traffic.

And we want to make sure—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

* (11:00)

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have two minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 19—Calling Upon the Legislative Assembly to Support the Acknowledgement of the Outstanding Achievements and Contributions of Reggie Leach

Madam Speaker: The House is now 11 a.m. and time for private member's resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on Calling Upon the Legislative Assembly to Support the Acknowledgement of the Outstanding Achievements and Contributions of Reggie Leach, being brought forward by the honourable member for Keewatinook.

Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook): I move, seconded by the member from Flin Flon,

WHEREAS Reggie Leach, a Member of Berens River First Nation, has made significant contributions to the sport of ice hockey and has been an exemplary ambassador for both his community and the province of Manitoba; and

WHEREAS Reggie Leach demonstrated exceptional talent, dedication, and sportsmanship throughout his career, leaving an indelible mark on the game of hockey as an inductee of the Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame and gaining the everlasting moniker of "the Riverton Rifle"; and

WHEREAS Reggie Leach achieved numerous milestones during his professional career, including winning the Stanley Cup with the Philadelphia Flyers in 1975, being the only non-goaltender on a losing team to be awarded the Conn Smythe Trophy as the Most Valuable Player in 1976, and setting a record for most goals scored in a single playoff season; and

WHEREAS Reggie Leach has been an inspiration and role model for countless young hockey players in Manitoba and across Canada, exemplifying the values of hard work, perseverance, and determination; and

WHEREAS Reggie Leach has provided a positive role model for aspiring Indigenous athletes, inspiring growth and change in the face of adversity; and

WHEREAS Reggie Leach has been actively involved in various charitable endeavors, giving back to his community and using his platform to make a positive difference in the lives of others; and

WHEREAS Reggie Leach has become a Manitoban cultural symbol, being recognized in songs by Manitoban artists such as John K. Samson, and inspiring the groundbreaking novel and film "Indian Horse" by Richard Wagamese; and

WHEREAS the achievements and contributions of Reggie Leach deserve formal recognition and appreciation from the government and the people of Manitoba.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly acknowledges and commends the outstanding achievements and contributions of Reggie Leach to the sport of ice hockey as well as his significant impact on the community and the province of Manitoba and commend him as a worthy candidate for induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Keewatinook, seconded by the honourable member for Flin Flon (MLA Lindsey),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly acknowledges and commends the outstanding achievements and contributions of Reggie Leach to the sport of ice hockey as well as his significant impact on the community and the province of Manitoba and commend him as a worthy candidate for induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Mr. Bushie: Playing ability, sportsmanship, character and contributions to his or her team or teams and to the game of hockey in general, must not have played professional or international hockey during any of the three-year playing seasons prior to the election: that is the basis and the basic criteria for induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame here in Canada.

So, when we talk about Reggie Leach, and perhaps, and from time to time, we'll speak as the Riverton Rifle. So, Reggie Leach is a member of the Berens River First Nation, which is my constituency. Grew up, played hockey in Riverton, Manitoba, which

is in the Interlake, and is a role model for all Indigenous athletes and athletes in general.

Mr. Andrew Mickelfield, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

And we talk specifically about ice hockey in this regard, but overall when it comes to athletes, and in particular, Indigenous role model athletes, Reggie Leach is by far at the top of that list. It's unfortunate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I only have 10 minutes, and I could just literally spend those 10 minutes just reading all the accomplishments and the achievements of Reggie Leach.

But I do want to highlight a few. So, in particular, Reggie Leach, for example, played nine seasons with Philadelphia: three of those seasons was a 20-goal scorer, three of those seasons was a 30-goal scorer, one a 40-goal scorer, one a 50-goals scorer and one, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a 60-goal scorer.

And that's just unbelievable when you think about in comparison to where we are today, and kind of the hockey standards that are set. Some of the benchmarks that we talk about in hockey are 10-goal season, 15-goal, 20-goal seasons and how great an athlete is to achieve that benchmark.

Well, Reggie Leach has far exceeded that. He's also played 1,000 games in the NHL. He's a member of the Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame and the Philadelphia Flyers hockey fame.

He still, today, hold the records for the most goals in playoffs with 19, including five goals in one game against the Boston Bruins. He also won the Conn Smythe for the MVP in 1976. To this day—and to this day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Reggie Leach is the only player to have scored a total of five goals in playoff game and not be recognized in the Hockey Hall of Fame.

He also still holds the record for the most goals in a single playoff run, having 19 goals in 16 games. Many players with fewer goals in more games have been currently inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame. He's also only the non—the only non-goaltender on a losing team to be awarded the Conn Smythe most valuable player in 1976, which, again, just go to the attributes and the achievements that he has accomplished in his lifetime.

One of the things that kind of stood out for me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is I've had the opportunity to talk and visit with Reggie Leach on a number of different occasions and a number of different events. Some of it is hockey events at the hockey academies that

him and his family are part of bringing forth for the people of Manitoba and for Canada, but also at golf tournaments and also at school events.

So, Reggie has the opportunity to share his story and to share his inspiration with all of us. And he truly does that. I've had that opportunity many, many times to do that, where he has the conversation with youth of all ages, with older folks, too, as well. As well as people in—seniors in our province that are inspired by what he has brought forward.

And one of the things that I do have to kind of make note of, Mr. Deputy Speaker—because this is something that resonates with young people in particular, young hockey players—is that, in his 14 seasons, when he earned the nickname, the Riverton Rifle, he was reported to have clocked a slap shot at 115 miles an hour, which is absolutely amazing.

So, one of the funny things that I talked about when we had those conversations—he was speaking to a group of young people—is they asked him, you know, what kind of flex did you have on your stick to get 115 miles an hour. And the fact of the matter is, it was with a wooden stick, so there was no such thing as flex on his stick at that time. So, that was absolutely amazing to be able to do that.

And I do want to share also this little tidbit as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that when he played for Philadelphia Flyers, he was also in a—the member of Flin Flon is very proud of this fact, too, that Reggie was also a member of the Flin Flon Bombers in northern Manitoba. So, I do want to share some of those stats as well: 45 games played in one year, 67 goals; 59 games, 87 goals; 22 games, 36 goals; 57 games, 65 goals. Which is absolutely amazing to his talent.

But I will say this also, and the member from Flin Flon will attest to this. This was kind of Flin Flon Bomber hockey at the time. He also had 543 penny—penalty minutes at time. So, that is something that's a little bit more the Broad Street Bullies and I know members opposite can relate to the fact that when Philadelphia was those Broad Street Bullies, that was part of how hockey was as well.

But it came down to, really, the work ethic of Reggie Leach, the Riverton Rifle, and what he brought and the—where he came from, you know, being from Berens River, being from Riverton, small-town Manitoba, small First Nation in Manitoba. And being able to bring his gifts to the world and show what can be done and what we could all achieve as

young people—and in particular in this case with Mr. Leach, as young Indigenous people.

So, he not only brought that gift, nourished his gift, showed the world what his gift could do. But now he's going back and he's speaking to that. He's saying and sharing those stories as to what he's done in his life.

And the obstacles that he had in his life. Because there is issues that Mr. Leach had in his life that—obstacles that were in his way that he helped to overcome, and made him who he is today, made him a stronger character today. And he brings that back, and he always has time for those—I don't know if members opposite have ever had the opportunity to attend an event where Mr. Leach has been speaking, but he always has time for everybody.

And Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to share a little bit of a personal story. In one of my former roles, I was at a conference in Toronto. And there was a break during lunch so I just kind of go walk on the street, find some place to have lunch. And all of a sudden, I found myself outside the Hockey Hall of Fame. And I thought, well, I'm going to go in here. I've got a few minutes. I want to go in and check it out.

So, I walked in there and I was at an AFN event, so there was a number of different speakers there, including Mr. Leach, who was speaking at the event. So, when I walked on the street, walked into the Hockey Hall of Fame, I see a dad and two kids. And one of those kids had on a Philadelphia Flyers jersey. There was no name on the back. It was blank, mind you. But he was walking around, showing his kids the displays.

And who do we see walking off to the side, is Reggie Leach. So, I asked the dad, do you recognize who that is? And he looked, he definitely knew who it was but couldn't really place who it was or really probably couldn't believe who it was. I said, that's Reggie Leach, the Riverton Rifle.

So bang, a connection was made. There was pictures all over with the kids and everything like that because that's who Reggie was. Reggie was that person that always and is—to this day—has the time for everybody. So, that is what is very important as to who he is.

So, when we talk about a worthy person to be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame, there—the stats are there. But it's also based on the content of the person's character. So, we do have Mr. Leach personifying exactly what that is. I meet the criteria

by the standards set out in the rules. But I also—the content and the character of Mr. Leach that he brings to all of us and shares with all of us.

And I do want to kind of mention, there is a song and I believe the video is on YouTube where—it was by John K. Samson, Manitoba. And in the song, he recites the text of his own petition to have Reggie Leach inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame. And he formerly presented that own—his own petition to the Hockey Hall of Fame in 2013.

And Mr. Leach is also cited as the inspiration example in Richard Wagamese's novel, *Indian Horse*, to show exactly who Reggie is and the inspiration that he bring forward.

So, I encourage members opposite and members and all of Manitobans to educate themselves on the life of Reggie Leach and what that means for Indigenous people here in Manitoba, but for Indigenous people all across Canada, but for all of us. And the inspiration about how a small-town First Nation in Manitoba, a small community in Riverton in Manitoba, can inspire and bring forth true inspirational role models here in Manitoba, and for all of us.

* (11:10)

So, there is a number of different factors that we believe, and I personally believe this, and I know I'm not—I'm definitely not alone in this regard, Mr. Deputy Speaker—where Mr. Leach is a worthy candidate for induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame. And whatever we can do on this level to be able to do that, I'm sure we don't have a vote in that matter, but we could raise that issue.

In particular across Canada, across Manitoba, we talk about reconciliation here in Manitoba, and lifting up Indigenous people and Indigenous voices, Indigenous role models. Mr. Leach checks all of those boxes as well. So when we talk about Reggie Leach being a worthy candidate for the Hockey Hall of Fame, he not only checks every box by Hockey Hall of Fame standards, but he checks every box by the standards of society.

So, I would encourage all members opposite to support this. And I bring this up on our, kind of, our last day of session for the simple reason is, I wanted to uplift Mr. Reggie Leach, to have him recognized and notified, and put on notice that the fact that this person needs to be inducted in Hockey Hall of Fame because he's an inspiration to all of us.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Questions

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

The floor is open for questions.

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): I know, and I think we all agree, hockey is a fast, exciting sport, and getting to the NHL is no small feat and it's not easy for anybody.

So I'd ask the question: What inspired the member opposite in bringing forward this resolution?

Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook): I thank the member from Dauphin for that question. And I think the inspiration is just knowing who Reggie is and knowing what Reggie brings to all of us in Manitoba. And we're sitting here talking about hockey and the playoff hockey right now. We have Zach Whitecloud playing for the Las Vegas Golden Knights; Brandon Montour playing for the Florida Panthers.

So, at some point in time, they also had that inspiration to be able to say, I want to be like Reggie Leach as well. And we know that going forward, people are going to say I want to be like Zach Whitecloud. I want to be like Brandon Montour.

So, the inspiration that I had to bring this forward today is those voices, and uplifting those voices for Manitobans.

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): I want to thank our colleague, the MLA for Keewatinook, for bringing this forward.

I have learned a great deal in a very short amount of time about this incredible hockey player, Reggie Leach, and I'm wondering if our colleague can share a bit more about the criteria that Reggie Leach meets in order to be inducted to the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Mr. Bushie: I thank the member from Union Station for that question. And there is a basic criteria, or a basic criteria for the Hockey Hall of Fame: the playing ability, sportsmanship, character, contributions; and Mr. Leach checks all those boxes, I mentioned in my speech earlier on.

But, in particular, I really want to highlight the character, and the content of the character of

Mr. Reggie Leach, and what he's bringing forward after his playing career as well. Even though his playing career by far exceeded the expectations and the requirements, the content of his character and what he's bringing forward to all Manitobans today is really also a huge part of his basis as to why he deserves to be there.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I thank the MLA for Keewatinook. This is an important resolution. Reggie Leach, there's no question, deserves to be in the Hockey Hall of Fame.

I wonder if the member would let us know why he thinks he's not there now, and what we can do now to make sure he gets into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Mr. Bushie: I thank the member for the question, and maybe the question is, yes, why not? Right? Why not now? Why haven't we—why hasn't he already been a member of the Hockey Hall of Fame. And I'm sure there's a bunch of societal questions as to maybe that's—there's concerns as to why that may be the issue.

But what can we do as legislators here in Manitoba? We can discuss resolutions like this and raise and lift up inspirational people that are true role models for all of us. So, what can we do as legislators? We can pass resolutions like this, have the discussions and keep the discussions going, until such time that this becomes a reality.

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): I'd like to thank the member for bringing forward this resolution. I think it's certainly past due to—for him to have some further recognition and the hall of fame is certainly an appropriate place to do it.

Great that we would support this resolution and work with the opposition to bring this forward as a matter and get attention to it, but what other things does the member think we can do as Manitobans and Canadians to make sure that this individual is properly recognized here and internationally?

Mr. Bushie: I thank the member for the question.

This resolution was brought forward as truly a non-partisan—so, I think we're all in agreement as to the stats, the reasons, the need for Mr. Leach to be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

So I would say, and this is almost to my previous answer, is we have the discussions and we continuously have the discussions, we continuously bring forward the issue, we always speak about Reggie Leach, we always speak about the accolades. The attention that this deserves needs to not go away.

We can't end at an hour from now, and now the conversation's gone; the resolution's passed and doesn't go anywhere. We need to continuously have the resolution, because this is truly a—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MLA Asagwara: Thank our colleague for his really thoughtful responses on this PMR. And we've also heard some really good questions in regards to this PMR, which is really nice on this last sitting day.

I'm wondering if our colleague can talk a bit about how Reggie Leach's accomplishments inspires Manitobans in regards to sport, but also just generally?

Mr. Bushie: I thank the member for the question.

Growing up, well, most kids have role—especially if they're playing sports, they have role models, whether it be basketball, they're looking up to LeBron James; or to hockey, Wayne Gretzky; hockey, Reggie Leach; football, they're looking up to Joe Poplawski here in Manitoba.

But the fact of the matter is, those accomplishments, especially within First Nation communities—you still, to this day, have many, many, many ice hockey players that go there and are still shooting like Reggie Leach; I'm shooting like the Riverton Rifle. So those accomplishments, even though Mr. Leach is generations removed from playing ice hockey at that level, that inspiration is still there to this day.

So—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Michaleski: The pathway to the Stanley Cup went from—through Flin Flon, Boston Bruins, the California Golden through to the Philadelphia Flyers. Reggie Leach has done a—has had a great pathway to success.

So, I'd like to ask the member opposite: Who did he consult with in bringing forward this resolution?

Mr. Bushie: I thank the member for that question. And the consultations have happened over the course of many, many years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with kids of all ages at hockey events, with people at golf tournaments, with First Nations communities as well, including, also, with Reggie Leach himself.

But when it came to having this discussion with Reggie Leach, he did not want to talk about the need for having to be inducted into the Hockey Hall

of Fame. And, again, that just goes to the character of Mr. Leach: not thinking of himself, but rather thinking of, let my record stand for itself; let my accomplishments—I'm not going to sit here and brag about myself. And he didn't do that at all, whatsoever.

But these consultations, time and time again, have happened with a number of First Nation communities and young people and—alike.

MLA Asagwara: I thank the—our colleague for his responses again.

And I'm wondering, you know, we're seeing now the impact that athletes have across their various platforms. We see a lot of professional athletes use their platforms for a tremendous amount of good. We see some athletes, even very recently, use their platforms in pretty harmful ways.

Can the member talk about why it's so important that Reggie Leach has done an incredible amount of positive work in the community and used his platform and his voice for so much good?

* (11:20)

Mr. Bushie: I thank the member for the question which is very important.

When we talk about platforms and role models, and having that influence and somebody that people look up to and somebody that people listen to, when they bring forward their stories, they bring forward their lived experiences. So, Mr. Leach brings that forward each and every day, each and every time he speaks.

And I know he's going to sit here and talk about himself being in retirement, when the fact of the matter is, he's probably working harder today than he has in the past, just doing all of those things where he's out there, talking, sharing his stories, sharing his lived experiences, sharing those challenges that he faced as a young person growing up, not only in a First Nation community, but in small-town Manitoba and those challenges to get and overcome those obstacles that were put forth in front of him.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Are there any further questions?

Debate

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Seeing none, the floor is open for debate.

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): I want to thank the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie) for bringing forth this resolution here today, calling on—getting Reggie Leach into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

And I can say this is a very timely resolution. The issue of youth in sport and having strong role models is always been important, and it's really significant at this stage of the game in Manitoba.

So, we know that Reggie played for the Philadelphia Flyers, but he had a pathway to get there, again through Flin Flon Bombers. I even recall—it seems to me when I was watching the Dauphin Kings at that age, I don't recall Mr. Leach playing at that time, but I do recall watching him on TV. And watching him—and that goes back a long time—so I know he was a noted star on the Flyers and they're an exciting team to watch.

But Mr. Leach, again, has been an extraordinary model for youth, in general, and he does—has been using his platform to promote the role that sports play in developing communities, and that, again, is so important.

And I'll just reflect back on just the recent announcements that came through in my constituency: the investments that were made in—a lot of them went towards recreation facilities and rinks and you know, these are things that, you know, I'm sure Mr. Leach would appreciate that those investments are being made because they do have—provide tremendous opportunities for kids to play sports and to, you know, again, have good coaching, good mentoring, good life-skill building at a young age.

So, Leach is an active advocate and role model. And he connects and presents to Indigenous youth about making positive life choices and overcoming challenges.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can most certainly say he probably, at that time—and the road to the NHL is a tough one and it's quite a grind. I never played organized hockey at that age, but I know the long road trips.

It was a tough, tough game—much more tough game back then, tougher culture and so it's great to see the success that Mr. Leach is having and he's using that platform now as a role model for young kids.

And I, again, I'll just keep my comments very brief, but I do think this is an important resolution that recognizes the outstanding achievements and contributions of Reggie Leach to the sport of ice hockey, as

well as a significant impact he's had on the community in the province of Manitoba.

Thank you very much.

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): I am grateful for the opportunity to put a few words on the record in regards to Reggie Leach.

As a former athlete myself, at certainly not the level that Reggie Leach achieved, but as a former athlete, in having an understanding of how difficult it is to get to a certain level of competition, I'm really thrilled that our colleague has brought this forward in the spirit that he has. And that I've—alongside colleagues have the opportunity to learn about not only Reggie's professional success, which is incredible and stands alone in and of itself, but his personal success and his contributions to our communities.

He's an incredible role model. And I think it's especially cool that his kids have also seen success. So, he's created generations of incredible athletes here in our province, and a culture of what it means to be a great athlete. It's not just about what you achieve on the ice or on a court, although that's incredibly important, but, you know, you can also be an—a great community contributor. You can also be a great leader and role model and embrace the opportunity of being a role model.

You know, I won't reiterate a lot of what my colleague has already said. It is very obvious to me, and I think probably to all of us in this Chamber, that Reggie Leach should have been inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame quite some time ago. And, you know, maybe there are reasons that speak to systemic issues that he hasn't been inducted. Could it be racism? You know, could it be any number of things? We have to look at those factors and be honest about perhaps those things impacting why he hasn't been inducted.

However, we have this really great opportunity right now to collectively work toward making sure that the wrong that is Reggie Leach not being in the Hockey Hall of Fame is made right. And, you know, we can use our voices as legislators to help amplify the amazing—the amazing history of Reggie Leach in sport and also amplify his good work as a community member.

You know, I've really enjoyed hearing stories from our colleague in terms of how Reggie Leach is regarded in communities. The fact that kids playing hockey today will nickname themselves or a slap shot after him, or use his, you know, one of his famous

nicknames in doing so. I think that that—it obviously speaks to the generational impact that Reggie Leach has had.

And it would be a wonderful thing if on the last day of this 42nd session that we come together and support a resolution that to me is pretty common sense. It's an opportunity to lift up Reggie Leach and his family. It's an opportunity to recognize that he accomplished some pretty incredible things in and outside of sport during a time where, I would imagine, he would have faced disproportionate challenges to other athletes.

Hockey is still very much a sport that is in need of greater representation and diversity. We see athletes—Indigenous athletes, hockey players—even today, still facing racism in sport and having to endure those negative experiences and still chart a successful path forward as professional athletes.

So, one can only imagine what Reggie endured and overcame when he was playing hockey. And that is really a testament to just how incredible he must have been and how incredible he is as a person to have faced those challenges head-on, overcome them, been an incredible, you know, record-setting hockey player and had the capacity and the desire and the will to give back to communities in such a positive and impactful, monumental, inspirational way.

And so, I am thrilled that I had the opportunity to stand up and put a few words on the record in regards to Reggie Leach. We know that other folks have advocated for him to be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame. Local musicians, local artists, like John K. Samson, who's famous. You know, famous musicians from Winnipeg writing songs about Reggie Leach and how he should be in the hall of fame.

Like, there's a ton of support across our province for him. And the very least that we can do today is pass this resolution brought forward by our wonderful colleague, the MLA for Keewatinook and from this moment forward continue to do the heavy lifting. You know, in honour of the heavy lifting that Reggie has done in so many ways, we can continue doing some of that heavy lifting, and make sure that he's rightly inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

* (11:30)

Thanks.

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): I would like to thank the member again for bringing forward this resolution. I think it's really great, very positive and

uplifting, especially in this last day of session. But also very deserving, and certainly the stats show fantastic numbers, and many of the records still stand. And so, that is certainly telling you an awful lot.

In fact, especially when you consider the fact that the equipment he was using back in the '70s is not up to today's modern standards, to have a 150-mile-an-hour slap shot, which would be fantastic even by today's standards, it's almost unbelievable to have done with the kind of equipment that they had at that particular point in time. And so, it certainly bodes well for the quality of the individual.

And the other thing I found particularly interesting when I did a little research on this, and we can all quote lots of records, but I think we all know that there are a lot of them, and very good. But that he played a lot of years as the right wing to Bobby Clarke, first in Flin Flon, when they played their semi-pros, or amateur sports, and then, of course, through all the trades and everything, ending up on the—in Philadelphia together at the same time.

I think coaches can take a little bit of a lesson from that, frankly, in that if people are familiar across the line that they often do achieve wonderful things by working together and co-ordinating their activities, and understanding each other and knowing where we're going to be on the ice at any particular moment. And maybe something that some of the coaches today could learn a little bit from, because they do like to mix things up a lot more than they used to.

Anyway, that aside, I am certainly pleased to stand in support of this resolution. I think it's very positive. I think we should look beyond what we can do today, because a resolution from this House probably isn't going to change the mind of the hall of fame by itself; but look for other opportunities to multiply this and bring it forward, and make it appropriate to have the recognition of this individual, not only for what he achieved on the ice, but what he's become in the community with a—being a role model and also the period of time that he was able to coach and give back some of the skills that he had acquired during his lifetime.

And all of those things are positive and should be recognized, so thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank the member again for bringing forward the resolution.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Reggie Leach: amazing hockey player, an amazing person. Born April 23rd, 1950, he grew up with his grandparents in

Riverton, a member of the Berens River First Nation, and he achieved fame in hockey as the—the Riverton Rifle.

I served as the Member of Parliament representing Riverton for four years in the 1990s. Reggie was famous. His feats were widely known. He was an extraordinary person and an inspiration to youth. He was an incredible hockey player. He played in 934 NHL games, scored 381 goals and had 285 assists for 666 points.

He won a Stanley Cup with the Philadelphia Flyers in 1975. He set an NHL record when he scored 19 goals in 16 post-season games, and scored a goal in 10 consecutive playoff games.

And yet, interestingly, he has said, and I quote, I am more proud of what I did after hockey. It was just a stepping stone for what the Creator wanted me to do after. End of quote.

Why is this? Part of the explanation may be this: that following his time in hockey, he addressed his challenges that he'd had with alcohol. He said, and I quote, afterwards, quote, alcohol ruined my marriage. It ruined my relationship with my kids. Alcohol took over my whole life, and I had to stop. End of quote.

And stop he did. He took up the challenge of talking to kids to get them to understand the issues around alcohol, and he said, and I quote, as far as I'm concerned, if I talk to a thousand kids and get one of them to listen, or even to think about it, I'm doing my job. And he talked, and has talked over the years, to thousands and thousands of kids.

After he left the National Hockey League, a number of years later, in 2006, he started the Shoot to Score hockey school with his son, Jamie. The school runs hockey development camps in Winnipeg and in communities across the country. It's to be noted that his son, Jamie Leach, won a Stanley Cup with the Pittsburgh Penguins in 1992, and that Reggie and Jamie are the only Indigenous father and son couple to both win a Stanley Cup. Incredible.

Today, with the hockey school, Reggie Leach and his son Jamie, reach more than 2,000 children every year. And they often work with First Nations communities. It's an incredible and inspiring story. Indeed, his story is featured in the book and in the movie *They Call Me Chief*.

It was written, the book was, and the movie was produced by Winnipeg writer and filmmaker Don Marks. It's an amazing story, an amazing movie and

everyone should have a look at it. It tells in full the story of Reggie Leach.

There is no question that Reggie Leach belongs in the Hockey Hall of Fame. He belongs in the Hockey Hall of Fame because of his prowess and his achievements in the National Hockey League. He belongs in the hockey hall-of fame because of his achievements after hockey and the work that he has done with young people and helping young people to learn to live as well as to play hockey.

He belongs in the Hockey Hall of Fame because he overcame substantial challenges to be in the NHL and substantial challenges to achieve what he did afterwards.

He should be in the Hockey Hall of Fame. I suggest to the member that the text of Hansard for today should be sent to the Hockey Hall of Fame with a strong letter, urging the Hockey Hall of Fame to consider, now, inducting Reggie Leach. It's long overdue. It needs to be done. I hope it's done soon.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

MLA Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I want to thank the member from Keewatinook for bringing forward this very important resolution that hopefully, in a few minutes, we'll unanimously pass and get Reggie Leach the recognition that he so rightfully deserves.

It would fail me as the member from Flin Flon to not stand up and talk about Reggie Leach, because there isn't a kid who plays hockey in Flin Flon who doesn't know who Reggie Leach is. There isn't a person who follows the Flin Flon Bombers who doesn't know who Reggie Leach is.

* (11:40)

One of the great things I got to do as an MLA was attend the very first Indigenous persons induction ceremony for Indigenous people into the Indigenous sports hall of fame, here in Manitoba. The member from Keewatinook and I were there.

Reggie Leach was one of those very first inductees getting some of the recognition he so rightfully deserves. And you talk about a very humble man. We talked to him after the ceremony and he'd have talked to us all night long; not about his hockey career, not about how brave he was.

He talked about things that mattered to him; about kids; about making sure that kids knew the right path; that he could use his life to help kids achieve greatness.

We need, as a province, to push that Reggie Leach should be inducted into the hall of fame.

Other members of the Flin Flon Bombers have played with Reggie, have been inducted into the hall of fame. Other members who played with the Philadelphia Flyers with Reggie have been inducted into the sports hall of fame.

It's well past time that we recognize the Riverton Rifle, the Flin Flon Bomber, in that hall of fame, where he so rightfully deserves to be.

So, I look forward to us passing this resolution, right now.

Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Flin Flon (MLA Lindsey).

MLA Lindsey: Point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On a point of order.

MLA Lindsey: I just need to point out, and I'd be remiss not to point it out, the member from Keewatinook talked about a song recognizing the petition that John K. Samson had put forward. Mr. Samson is here with us in the gallery this morning.

Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: To the guest in the gallery, we certainly welcome you here.

To the member for Flin Flon, it's not a point of order. But, hey.

* * *

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

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Okay, the question before the House is resolution 19, Calling Upon the Legislative Assembly to Support the Acknowledgement of the Outstanding Achievements and Contributions of Reggie Leach.

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

The honourable minister of economic development, investment and—*[interjection]* Oh, I'm sorry. Okay, I saw—*[interjection]* Yes, yes, okay.

Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook): Mr. Deputy Speaker, can we show that the vote was unanimous?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there leave for the record to show that the vote was unanimous? *[Agreed]*

* * *

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Acting Government House Leader): Can you canvass the House to see if the will to call it 12 o'clock?

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

The time being 12 noon, this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 this afternoon.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 1, 2023

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