

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

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
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ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
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HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, October 23, 2018**

*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**

**House Business**

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader):** Good morning, Madam Speaker.

On a matter of House business, pursuant to rule 33(7), I'm announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt). The title of the resolution is Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for Riding Mountain. The title of the resolution is Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

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**Mr. Goertzen:** I'm seeking leave of the House to move to debate this morning Bill 230, The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day Act, sponsored by the honourable member for Fort Richmond (Mrs. Guillemard).

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to proceed with Bill 230 this morning? *[Agreed]*

**SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 230—The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day Act**

**Madam Speaker:** We will move then to second reading of Bill 230, The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day Act.

**Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond):** I move, seconded by the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma), that Bill 230, The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day Act; Loi sur la Journée de sensibilisation à l'ensemble des troubles causés par l'alcoolisation fœtale, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

*Motion presented.*

**Mrs. Guillemard:** Madam Speaker, today I hope to begin a dialogue that will help to educate not only members in this Chamber but also the next generation of parents. You often hear people say that knowledge is power, because with knowledge you can make informed decisions. It is my hope that the discussions today and in the future on this topic will increase knowledge and bring about some healing.

Bill 230, The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day Act, is a step in the right direction to help spread understanding of a complex condition in order to reduce the stigma and ultimately reduce harm. September 9th, 1999, was the first national FASD awareness day that was celebrated across Canada. The ninth day of the ninth month in the year 1999: using the number nine to reflect the nine months of pregnancy.

Madam Speaker, I became aware of this condition as a child, when my father, Dr. Albert Chudley, would share with us some of the research he had done as a geneticist and researcher on fetal alcohol effects. It was a relatively new discovery, having first been published in *The Lancet*, which is a medical journal, in 1973 by Dr. David Smith and Kenneth Jones. Up until this publication in 1973, medical consensus was that alcohol did not cause harm to unborn children and therefore no warnings were given about its consumption during pregnancy.

Madam Speaker, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, or FASD, as it's referred to, is a neurodevelopmental disability that is caused by prenatal exposure to

alcohol. The severity of effects depend on the frequency and amount of alcohol consumption, as well as the time during pregnancy when the developing fetus was exposed.

The word spectrum indicates a wide range of possible developmental outcomes for children who have had exposure to alcohol before they were born. Some of the most common symptoms identified in individuals with FASD are difficulties with learning, memory, attention, sometimes language, their social skills, motor skills, behaviour, reason and judgment.

Some children are born with facial characteristics associated with FASD, but the majority show no outward signs of alcohol effects. For this reason, diagnosis can be a challenge, because the symptoms are often mistaken for other disorders. A proper diagnosis requires an interdisciplinary approach, including pediatricians, psychiatrists, psychologists and other experts familiar with the condition.

An early diagnosis is important in order to access the many necessary supports. Some of these supports include speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, social workers and educators, in addition to physicians and pediatricians. There is also training involved for parents and caregivers to help them navigate individual needs of their children.

Estimates from recent studies suggest that close to 4 per cent of Canadians, or approximately 1.4 million people, meet the diagnostic criteria for FASD. In Manitoba alone, experts estimate that a minimum of 140 children are born with this condition every year.

Madam Speaker, there's no cure for FASD, but there is hope for prevention. I would love to say that this condition is a hundred per cent preventable by simply abstaining from alcohol when planning a pregnancy and for the duration of pregnancy, but saying this as a simple fix would require me to ignore the very real-world experiences and factors that lead to unintended consequences.

The rate of alcohol consumption among young adults is on the rise, including amongst young women. Every young adult demographic and socioeconomic group showed increases in binge drinking. It has become a socially acceptable activity to not only drink alcoholic beverages, but to drink in excessive amounts.

I'd like to share a quote from Deborah Goodman from a National Post article on April 10th. She said: One of the risk groups is actually professional women who binge drink. It is easy to keep at a distance and say, that's not me, it relates only to those in poverty and despair, but that's just not the case with FASD. It's an equal opportunity brain injury.

It is understood that roughly 50 per cent of pregnancies are unplanned. In these situations, many women don't even know that they're expecting until they are two or three months along. In this short time, if alcohol is consumed, there could be harm done to the developing fetus; however, the severity of further effects can be prevented by avoiding alcohol as soon as you know that you're pregnant.

\*(10:10)

Madam Speaker, I fall within this 50 per cent of demographics who did not know that they were pregnant, with my first child. And it is only by the grace of God that I did not participate in the typical behaviours of young women at that time, out drinking. I was too busy working and attending school full-time. And I realize how quickly I could've been within the statistics that we are talking about today. It doesn't apply to one group or another; it applies to every single group who doesn't know and is not educated about these effects.

Excessive drinking is not a new phenomenon. And we likely won't see reductions in numbers among young adults. But it does demonstrate the need to continue in our efforts to educate everyone on the potential dangers. There is no known safe amount of alcohol to consume while pregnant. So the general rule is to abstain completely. However, in a situation where a person is dealing with addiction to alcohol, this advice could be near impossible without the supports to achieve this goal.

New research has shown that men who drink excessive amounts of alcohol can also pass along altered traits to their children as well. This is shedding light on an important aspect of everybody's role in helping to reduce harm on the next generation of our children. This is not a woman's issue. It is a society issue.

Madam Speaker, while meeting with experts and those who work directly with families, it became clear that the biggest obstacle that our families face when seeking supports to help with alcohol addiction while pregnant is stigma. Stigma is a powerful tool,

but it never results in changing the behaviour for the better. It is a way to keep people in a cycle of sadness and despair by blaming and shaming. In order to break this cycle, we need to spend time understanding the root causes of addiction, including inter-generational trauma and social pressures.

Madam Speaker, language matters. During a meeting with Holly Gammon, manager of FASD initiatives at Healthy Child Manitoba and her colleague Melanie Muehling, an FASD prevention consultant, the importance of using the correct language to encourage better outcomes was highlighted. They both expressed how discussions surrounding FASD tend to focus on the disabilities and overlook the many wonderful qualities of individuals with FASD.

Changing the focus to highlighting the abilities has a beneficial effect on the children and their caregivers, motivating them to continue learning and developing. I appreciated the feedback and recognize the value of their advice, as I reflected on my own experiences as a parent navigating a complex condition for my own child. I remember the first few days after my son was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes where I was questioned by relatives and friends if I'd fed him too much sugar, which is a common misunderstanding of the condition. Or if it was my family genes that had been passed along to cause this. No loving mother intentionally causes harm to her child. So this blame can hurt deeply and never helps regardless of the diagnosis.

Madam Speaker, Manitoba is known globally for its research on FASD and it is time that we show that we, too, want to reflect the importance of the education and the steps towards reducing harm and reducing the incidence and numbers of people affected by this condition.

Dr. Geoff Hicks, Dr. Chudley, Dr. Jim Davie are together researchers from the University of Manitoba and have teamed up with Israel's researchers to form the Canada-Israel International Fetal Alcohol Consortium, or CIIFAC, in order to study FASD and FASD prevention. This consortium, then expanded to include France, and has demonstrated that Manitoba is a global leader in this field of study.

The intentions of this bill is to open a dialogue; is to continue the discussions and to reduce stigma and harm to those who are living with FASD and hopefully, to show movement and compassion to the families who have to support and love these individuals who have so much to offer to society.

Thank you, 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 only one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** Can the member—does the member agree that more investments in public education and awareness are essential and need to be—need to coincide with this—the goals of this bill? So not just an awareness day, but actually putting funds into a public campaign, funding some schools to make sure that kids are aware of the dangers before they're, you know, making these decisions to drink and then maybe getting pregnant.

**Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond):** I want to thank the member for the question, and I do want to remind the member that private members' bills actually cannot cost the government money, so when considering what types of initiatives and actions that we can take as private members, I realize that education starts with each of us.

When we learn a new element and we learn something new about something, we can share that with our circles and we can certainly use our positions within social media and other elements to spread the awareness and have a great effect.

Ultimately, I think that any initiatives that help support families who are dealing with and living with FASD and, hopefully, preventing further cases of this, I think is beneficial to all.

**Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson):** And I do want to thank the member for bringing this matter to us to discuss. I think this is already having some intended effects that she might have wanted, which is that we, as legislators, are at least being educated. But, of course, our hope is is that this goes well beyond these circles.

Now, my question for the member is: Are there any current events in the province that help bring attention to this important issue, the issue of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder?

**Mrs. Guillemard:** And I appreciate the question from my colleague. Absolutely, there have been

initiatives and recognition activities across the province, including an FASD day barbeque, a celebration with a keynote speech from our current mayor, Brian Bowman, coffee, discussions with experts and FASD awareness walks.

These initiatives have been organized by the grassroots groups who have already established supports and many elements of help to reduce stigma, to spread awareness and education and, Madam Speaker, I hope that we see more of these events going on in future.

Thank you.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I want to follow up the member for Fort Richmond calling for greater awareness of FASD and what can be done.

One of the approaches which has been suggested is to have labelling on all alcoholic beverages, that people should be aware that if they are drinking that—and they are pregnant, that there is a risk of having a child with that FASD.

Would the member for Fort Richmond (Mrs. Guillemard) be prepared to advocate for this and even to bill in a bring-to bill in a subsequent bill to make this happen?

**Mrs. Guillemard:** I appreciate the question from the member. Absolutely, I think that there have been initiatives that have focused on advertisements at various locations that do sell alcohol. We had the With Child – Without Alcohol campaign that had gone on for a number years and has resurged and continues to educate and at least bring some awareness.

I am in support of any initiative that would bring more awareness, more education to help reduce the harm. I truly believe that what I've learned through this process is that we need to look at the language we're using in medical offices and in our support networks to reduce the stigma and to encourage families to seek out supports and help.

Thank you.

**Mrs. Smith:** Does the member agree that in order to reduce the number of children born with FAS, expectant mothers should have facilitated access to addictions treatment and services in this province?

**Mrs. Guillemard:** I appreciate the question. I think that all supports that help women to have healthier lives and healthier pregnancies absolutely is very

important, but I think a key element here, too, is including the men in their lives, that this should not be a focus just on women because the support networks, when we're even talking about addictions, are very integral in terms of seeking help and sustaining that help.

\* (10:20)

So, Madam Speaker, I do believe that access to various supports absolutely needs to be priority, and our government has actually very much supported them through the RAAM clinics, and we've had our own programs that are already established for mothers who seek help with their addictions.

Thank you.

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Fourteen years ago, I remember dealing with fetal alcohol syndrome disorder in Ottawa. It seems that we just haven't really moved the bars forward very much. But I also am concerned about other issues around our young people, around the new deregulation of pot. Is there anything the member would like to say about alcohol or pot during pregnancy, or smoking pot?

**Mrs. Guillemard:** I appreciate the question from the member. I do believe that we are quite aware of a lot of research that has been done on the effects on young brains when it comes to marijuana consumption or cannabis consumption. And from that I think we can deduce that cannabis doesn't bring any benefits to a developing child at any stage. So I would assume that any harmful elements to the adult body or young developing body would also have—not benefits to a developing fetus.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development):** And we know that reducing the stigma would certainly eliminate some barriers for expectant mothers, and mothers to come forward and receive supports. But can the member tell us how this bill would—and this awareness day—would help reduce the stigma for those afflicted with FASD and help them enhance their lives and get the supports that they need?

**Mrs. Guillemard:** I'd like to thank the member for the question. I believe that this bill is a starting point for discussion. And the more you talk with those who work in the field—and I'd just like to take a moment to welcome my guests here today from Healthy Child. We have Holly Gammon, Melanie Muehling, Angela Gerbrandt, Ken Lamoureux, and

from the U of M we have our researchers Geoff Hicks, Miyoung Suh, Bruce Hardy, Brent Schacter, Richard Lennon, Dan Eliasson, Beradino Petrelli.

Madam Speaker, they have joined us today in support of this bill to bring awareness, to bring education, and to allow others to learn the dialogue and the language to help reduce stigma and bring awareness to others.

Thank you.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, one of the problems in this area is that there are children who have learning disabilities which look very similar or like FASD. But right now, often because there is not a label of FASD, these people are not able—the families and the children are not able to get the support.

Why is it that children with significant learning disabilities are treated differently, whether it's FASD label or not, in fact, it would decrease stigma if we just diagnosed the learning disability and helped children with the learning disability without having as much emphasis on the fact that is alcohol related.

**Mrs. Guillemard:** I appreciate the question coming from the member. And I, too, believe that all children who have learning disabilities or who struggle with educational needs should receive the supports specific to their needs. Absolutely.

Does the diagnosis absolutely affect how they are taught? I believe there's an element of importance of understanding the causation of anybody's difficulties because then it helps to tailor specifically to what they need for ultimate success, whether that's in education or in life because we know that the alcohol affects on the brain can cause behavioral issues and can cause impairment of judgment well into adulthood—is a lifelong condition.

So I do think there's an element of importance, certainly, in diagnosis and getting early access to treatment.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** The bill that's presented seems to be good. I can support the bill, except that there seems to be a disconnect between what is being said and how much money is being put in towards research to the University of Manitoba.

How much money is in the budget that will support the University of Manitoba research? Do you even know?

**Mrs. Guillemard:** I appreciate the question.

Again, I'm going to remind the member that private members' bills actually can't deal with the cost of money or accessing extra funding.

Our government has actually been quite supportive of research into this area, as well as many other areas of concern for the public. I actually do have the numbers, and I would be glad to meet with the member after we've had our debate and share some of those numbers. And he'll see how generous the government has been and continues to be with grants and other funding for research into solutions.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### Debate

**Madam Speaker:** The time for questions has expired. Debate is open.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** You know, having an awareness day certainly would create dialogue. It would create—you know, getting rid of some of that stigma. But I don't believe that it's going to, you know, help with the research, help with the kids who are living with it, helping with the families who need extra support.

As someone who has a niece who's—I think she's about 25, 26 now—she's lived with FAS all her life. We've had to struggle. My mom actually adopted her, and we've had to struggle our whole lives to try and support her, to try and get extra supports in school, to try and get diagnosis through the hospital. So I think that's certainly something that needs to be also looked at.

And my colleague here from Tyndall Park was talking about the research. Well, we know that the research into FASD has been cut dramatically. So we ask this government, you know, if this is something that they believe in, that they, you know, want to put more emphasis on and they want to stop this from happening and make people more aware and create education around this, why are they cutting funding would be my question.

We should be making more investments into this. And, you know, the biggest stigmatism is not, you know, around a parent who used when they were pregnant; it's around prevention. How do we prevent this from happening if we're not talking about this in schools, if we're not giving the teachers the tools that they need—and I was an educator for over 20 years. I worked with so many kids in my class. I had worked

with so many parents who were struggling to support, to get the needs—get the special support that they need for their child.

And I tell you, these parents weren't afflicted, as the minister had said. You know, these are families that, unfortunately, didn't have the right education, didn't know about, you know, if they had one drink or their partner had one drink or two drinks that that opens the door to potentially their child having FASD. I, certainly, know when my son was born in 1991, while I was pregnant and going to the doctor, that I was told a glass of wine a day was okay. So now we hear that it's not okay, you know. And I wonder how many people are still hearing that message, that possibly one glass of wine or one beer a night is fine, that's nothing's going to happen to the fetus.

So I think we need to put a lot of emphasis on prevention and making people aware that this is, potentially, you know, something that can affect your child's life for the rest of their life. You know, my niece struggles with keeping a job. She's registered with disability services, so she's often in a job and then she doesn't have, really, a cause and effect, so sometimes she doesn't—you know, if she's late 10 minutes, she doesn't realize if you're late 10 minutes, three times, you could possibly lose your job. And that's actually happened to her.

\*(10:30)

We see over-incarceration rates in the justice system. We see, you know, children doing things that they wouldn't otherwise do if they weren't living with FASD.

So we need to make sure that we have more supports not only for our educators, but for our parents and for our children. Like, our children need to know what, you know, they're living with and how it's affecting them, and what are some of the steps they can do to actually support themselves and get the support that they need, because it's not something where there's a cure for it. You know, they're living with this for the rest of their lives.

And I represent Point Douglas. I mean, I see a lot of, you know, families that come into our office looking for support, especially educational support in the school system because it's—you know, they'll get support in early years. They'll have a one-to-one or someone that's working in their class and that's supporting their child and other children in the class, but when they go to middle years that support isn't

there anymore, or they have to fight for that support, and it's even worse when they get to high school, so some of these kids aren't even graduating.

So when we look at, you know, what's happening, we need to make sure that our kids are aware of what's happening within their brain and help them to make better choices. But there's not those supports in place, and creating awareness day is great, but we also have to have more resources put in place to support those families.

My mom was a single mom; she, you know, raised us. We went off and then all of a sudden she found herself raising an 18-month-old. We were already all moved out. And she had complex needs, you know, she had tantrums. There were nights where my mom was up all night, and when she went to school, you know, things were difficult because she had some learning difficulties, and she was never diagnosed until she was about six years old, and that was only because she got into school, and the school helped advocate with my mother.

So, you know, we have to have some form of assessments in the hospitals so that, you know, families can get the supports when they leave that hospital, that they're not having to wait 'til someone else is helping to advocate for them and that, you know, those children—degree of success increases with the amount of supports that we provide.

You know, Liquor & Lotteries is benefiting from this. And, you know, my colleague here had mentioned about, you know, what's their responsibility in this, and perhaps putting something on, you know, the labelling of the bottles and more campaigns where it's letting people know about those things.

But I think, you know, when women are dealing with addictions they're also dealing with trauma, and when men are dealing with addictions they're also dealing with trauma. And they're not often thinking about, you know, if I have sexual encounters tonight, I'm intoxicated, perhaps I'm going to make a baby, and, you know, my baby's going to be FAS. You know, they're not thinking about that.

You know, those—there's root causes to why people are using addictions, and right now this government is decreasing the amount of supports that they've given to the Manitoba addictions foundation, they've decreased the amount of supports that they're giving to Marymount. I worked at Marymount for 12 years. I worked partly in the addictions



stabilization unit, so I saw first-hand, you know, kids who were suffering, kids that didn't know what was going on, why they were being punished, why they were being locked up, even though it was for their own safety. But this was something, you know, attributed to their FASD, but yet we punish kids for something they had nothing to do with.

So we need to make sure that we're putting, you know, more resources into helping these children, helping these families and, you know, making sure that teachers have tools to be dealing with making sure that these kids are more successful in school.

And then when we look at the justice system, you know, I bet to say that at least maybe 30 to 50 per cent of those people that are incarcerated probably are, you know, living with FASD and don't have, you know, the cause and effect. And yet we punish people, but we don't give them the resources to do anything else.

So I would hope that this government would reverse their decision to, you know, cut the amount of supports that they're giving to addictions, because right now we're in a crisis here in Manitoba. I visited Manitoba—or Main Street Project this summer, and I heard that actually the drug of choice is changing from alcohol to now meth. And we know drugs also have an effect on children, you know. And as my colleague from St. Johns had shared with me this morning, you know, she's talking to nurses who are telling her that they're seeing children coming in as young as 14 that are struggling with addictions.

So, although this is a great, you know, a great tool, I also think that, you know, strong investments are needed, and I know the government said, well, this bill, you know, we can't invest any money, but they can actually invest money. They can put the money back into the funds that they took from Marymount [*phonetic*]. They can put the money back that they took from the research into FASD. They can put the funds back that they took from the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, and they can put some money into the education system. They can ask Lotteries to put some labelling on, you know, what they're selling. And they also have the power to be able to give more supports to families. So, you know, although I agree with this bill and I know—on this awareness day, I think that there needs to be more put into it, and I definitely think families, you know, are looking to this government—

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

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development):** I just really want to commend my colleague from Fort Richmond for bringing forward Bill 230, the fetal alcohol spectrum disorder awareness day. And we certainly do think that this has a great potential to reduce stigma and enhance the lives of those who are afflicted and also go a long way in prevention.

And I also just want to commend my colleague from Fort Richmond for using her voice once again. She has demonstrated in this House many times, and outside of this House in her community, the power of a woman's voice, and she's brought forward many emotional issues to the floor here, issues that are really challenging to talk about, whether it be pregnancy loss and the effects on a woman, a woman's life, or mental illness and depression. And so I really commend her for once again using her voice to talk about a very challenging issue, but one that's really important, and I think that this awareness day could go a long way in helping reduce the stigma, create awareness, move towards prevention and help those that are living with FASD.

I also want to commend all the folks from the University of Manitoba and Healthy Child and commend them for their work and their research and their dedication to helping improve the lives of people in Manitoba. It is shocking to know that in Manitoba, according to the researchers, that we have about 140 children that are born every year with FASD, and that certainly is a startling number but not one that is entirely shocking to me. We've heard a lot about what causes FASD and then what are the after-effects.

And I do want to point out that, you know, there's a lot of stigma around, you know, FASD and a lot of shame that goes with it because there's oftentimes an unintended or perhaps an intended consequence directed back at the mother. But what we really are dealing with is a society that at oftentimes is unaware. We know that we've got women who are—their pregnancy is unknown to them and they've consumed alcohol not intending at all, in any way, shape or form, to create harm and yet they have consumed alcohol not knowing the—that they are pregnant.

We also know that attitudes have shifted. In fact, just recently I was talking to someone about the attitudes in other European cultures where they—the words that they've used when, in my conversation with them, is that North Americans are really uptight

about things and have all this, you know, stigma around drinking while pregnant and yet, in our culture, it's okay to consume alcohol during pregnancy, and that is an attitude that is prevalent in some—in among some circles and with some cultures.

\* (10:40)

And we know that the research is very inconclusive about the amount of alcohol that is considered safe. And so, I think, an awareness day, really talking about putting your best foot forward when you're expecting, is to be without alcohol is certainly something that we could do, No. 1, decrease the number of children that are born with FASD each year and also to give supports to the people that are already afflicted by having an awareness day and helping reduce that stigma.

We know that that stigma's a real barrier for people living with FASD to come forward and get the supports that they need. It's a real barrier for mothers to reach out and say, I have a child and I think my child is FASD-affected. And, can you get the help—can we get the supports for my child? Because there is so much stigma and there is so much blame and I really appreciate this bill and how it would eliminate that, help break down those walls so that families can move forward and get the supports that they need.

You know, one of the quotes that I was reading from Deborah Goodman, the director of the Child Welfare Institute at the Children's Aid Society of Toronto, she said: Let's just look at the prevalence of alcohol—it's not just in the low income areas. Alcohol is consumed by all strata of society. So, in tackling FASD, it actually means tackling the bigger problem of, let's get together and have a drink, which is part of our culture.

And so that really leads to that need to change our culture in Manitoba. And an awareness day is certainly something that we can do to help, in addition to the many other things that our government is already doing in regards to helping people with addictions and moving forward on that front, and giving supports to women and their families. And we certainly do believe that when we lift up a woman, when we help a woman, we're helping her family. And when we're helping a family, we're helping an entire community.

And so this bill is definitely in keeping with the philosophy of our government. And I just—I know that the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) has

said that she was supportive of the notion behind the awareness day act, and yet, here, again, we're seeing her having ideology and partisanship prevent her from supporting legislation, preventing us from moving forward. She's already indicated that she's not going to support this. And it's really unfortunate.

We've seen the NDP put partisanship and ideology, time and time and time again—whether it's talking about child welfare, or animal welfare—they refuse to move forward on an initiative that would help reduce instances of night hunting and—on the animal welfare front, they refuse to move forward on that. They have refused to move forward on—other members of our side of the House, with legislation that would create an awareness day for our conservation officers.

They absolutely refuse to move forward on an issue that's brought forward by our government, whether it be someone on our upper benches or someone in government. And yet we've shown that when they bring forward good issues we have had healthy debates and we've brought—helped them bring things into law. We've supported initiatives that we've agreed with. And I just ask that they put aside their partisan ideology and their simple-minded thinking and support this bill to create an awareness day that would help people.

And I hear—you know, I know I've struck a little sour note with the members opposite. I guess the truth hurts. You know, the truth hurts when they refuse to support the people. Let them show that they have some dignity. Let them show the people in the gallery that they're willing to move forward, put aside their ideology and let this bill go to committee. It is a good issue. It would reduce the stigma, and it would help the very people that the member for Point Douglas purports to support. It would be a win-win for our community if we were to let this bill go forward. And I just urge them to reconsider their position and move forward and let this bill go to committee.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for—

**An Honourable Member:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

#### **Point of Order**

**Madam Speaker:** Oh, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** I just want to put on the record here for the

purposes of everybody, including those that are in the gallery: we just had the Minister for Status of Women and Sustainable Development get up in a very accusatory tone on what our stand is in respect of the member for Fort Richmond's (Mrs. Guillemard) bill. The member—the minister doesn't know what our stand is. In fact, we've said publicly that we support the bill.

So I don't know what the minister's talking about when she says an ideological approach to this bill, but more importantly, Madam Speaker, I think it is wholly disrespectful for a minister of the government to call members on this side of the House simple-minded, particularly when we're talking about a bill in which people—Manitobans—have physical developmental disabilities. And so you bring that type of language in to colleagues in this House who have actually said nothing except that we do support the bill.

I would ask, Madam Speaker, that you advise the minister to apologize to the colleagues on this side of the House for such egregious and offensive language.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Crown Services (Mrs. Mayer), on the same point of order?

**Hon. Colleen Mayer (Deputy Government House Leader):** On this point of order, yes. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We know that topics in this House get debated every day. We know that people have strong feelings about certain topics. We have seen behaviour in this House from time to time—there should be no pointing of fingers on behaviour because all members of this House from time to time—and members opposite are included in that—say things that get everybody riled up.

This is a very serious issue, Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Mayer:** This is a very serious issue. I'll say it again so that members opposite can hear me very clearly rather than interrupting: This is a very serious issue. This is something that's important to all of us in the province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I'm going to allow you to rule on this matter because I know that the—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Mayer:** When we speak of disrespect, we hear very clearly that the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) and the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) continue to be disrespectful to members in this House just as well as they are claiming against them.

Madam Speaker, I'll allow you to rule. Thank you very much for the work you do in the House. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

I would indicate that the member did not specifically point out which rule was breached, but I would point out also that—and as I said yesterday, too, and we have a lot of guests in the gallery right now, including children—that I do think it's important that debate in this House be respectful debate.

And I know everybody gets, you know, very passionate about some issues—and we should get passionate about issues or we wouldn't be here if we didn't have that passion—but I would just urge members that when we are in debate, that we do have respectful debate that happens in this House and that members do respect each other and listen carefully and show respect for questions that are asked and answers that are given.

And I think sometimes we stray from that—and all sides of the House do it, that is true—but I would ask members to be careful with the language because some language that can be used can provoke behaviours in the House and I think it takes away from what we're trying to achieve in the House when that happens.

So I would just urge members some caution in debate and that we do show the proper decorum in the House so that our guests in the gallery, particularly the children, can see that democracy does work.

\* (10:50)

Oh, and I would just indicate that there was not a point of order—I would indicate that in this matter, as I have ruled in other occasions, that when we do use disrespectful language in the House, that it is a point of order.

So the member does have a point of order and I would ask all members to, when they are standing, to very clearly put that information right out front in stating what their point of order is in terms of a

breach of a rule, so in this case, there is a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Yes. I'd like to speak to the bill.

**Madam Speaker:** The member's out of rotation right now. The next person in rotation is the member for River Heights.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** First of all, Manitoba Liberals support this bill. To have an FASD Awareness Day on September the 9th, I think this is important to do.

I think I'm going to focus my remarks on what we need to make people aware of. We have clearly some significant things that we need to be talking about. One is awareness that if you drink alcohol and you are pregnant, then your child might be born with FASD. I've suggested in question period and before this that we should have labels on all alcoholic beverages warning that if you drink when you are pregnant, then your child may develop FASD. I hope that the member for Fort Richmond (Mrs. Guillemard) will bring an initiative along this line forward.

Second thing that we should be aware of is that if you have a child who is slow to develop or has a behavioural problem, that FASD should be considered. It's important to have a diagnosis and an assessment.

I also want to bring up and talk about the fact that there is often a gap and that gap is this: that you have a child who is FASD-like, but without a history of the mother drinking—and it is important that we have a diagnosis for that child in terms of the learning disability which is present and that that child has support because I have seen too many children fall through the gaps, and they're not getting support in school; they are not getting the understanding because, oh, they don't have FASD; they're just a bad kid, and we need to do better than that. We need to make sure we can identify them as having a learning disability and that that can be communicated with the parents, with the school, and that child can be helped.

Thirdly, we need to be aware of the fact that children who are identified early on can actually be helped in a major, major way. It changes the life of the child where the family has a diagnosis. They become attune to the fact that this is the reason for the child's behaviour, that this is not a terrible, awful,

bad kid, that this is a child who has a real substantive problem and that we need to be sensitive. We need to know how to address or help such children, and, indeed, there can be a tremendous amount of difference from helping such children early on.

Fourth, we need to be aware of the fact that there is a lot of neuroplasticity in all our brains and that includes children and adults with FASD.

The member for Fort Richmond says that it is unequivocally a lifelong condition. Now, I've seen children with FASD or FASD-like learning disabilities who have shown remarkable learning and development and even on judgment issues as they have aged, and sometimes it takes them a lot longer to develop the skills, and it takes a lot of patience and help.

I have also seen children with learning disabilities in the right learning environment who are, incredibly, at grade level at grade 6, and that is what having the right supports and learning environment can sometimes do for these children. They can do remarkably well, but we have to work out and make sure that we are supporting them optimally.

Fifth—we need to be aware that there are some successes in preventing FASD. One community where I have seen such success is in Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, in Nelson House, where they have an amazing, holistic approach to FASD. They have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of children with FASD, and that is accompanied by statistics on substance abuse showing that the community has actually had much less substance abuse with alcohol.

So that the—there is a possibility. There is real-life examples of success in reducing FASD. We need to build on those. We need to make people aware that it's possible instead of going along, year after year, and having almost the same number of children every year with FASD.

We need to make sure that there are 'wareness' of the advances in neuroscience, that there are learning programs like the Arrowsmith Program, which has been developed in Toronto, which can be remarkable in enabling new approaches to learning disabilities, broadly, and to children with FASD, specifically. We are very slow to bring that approach adequately here to Winnipeg, but we need to do better.

Seventh—we need to be aware of the importance of nutrition. It remains possible that there are aspects

of nutrition—vitamin A has been suggested as one example—which may prevent or mitigate the development of FASD. I believe that we need to be much more focused on making sure that women during child-bearing years and children who have FASD have the adequate approach to nutrition and are really well supported in this area.

Indeed, it is interesting that there is a physician who is dealing with dementia, at the opposite end of the lifespan, whose name is Bredesen, who has developed a multimodal approach to brain health. And we need to start using such a multimodal approach to brain health to women in child-bearing years, to others as well. We need to teach it in schools. We need to take this to children with FASD and make sure that they are supported in the optimum way in terms of the development of their brain health.

Much more is possible than we are doing at the moment. I thank the many who have come today and the contributions that you are making to the knowledge growth that we have and to the individual children and others and families and communities, where we are seeing help for those children with FASD and increasing efforts to prevent FASD. Thank you for being here.

Thank you for coming and supporting this effort.

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

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is second reading of Bill 230, The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day Act.

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

**Mrs. Mayer:** Can I—can we see it 11 o'clock so that we can start resolution debate?

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

## RESOLUTIONS

### Res. 20—Conflict of Interest

**Madam Speaker:** The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private members' resolutions.

The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on conflict of interest, brought forward by the honourable member for Assiniboia.

\* (11:00)

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** I—bringing forward a resolution—

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

The member has to move and second it.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Well, I—I didn't—I don't think I need a seconder, but—I move—

**Madam Speaker:** The member does need a seconder.

**Mr. Fletcher:** I do?

**Madam Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr. Fletcher:** —the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont).

**Madam Speaker:** The member needs to continue with what his resolution is.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Oh, yes. Okay. Sure.

I move, seconded by the member, St. Boniface,

*WHEREAS "Manitoba has the oldest and arguably the weakest conflict of interest legislation in Canada", according to the scathing April 2018 report of Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Jeffrey Schnoor, Q.C., which proposed 84 recommendations; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government has failed to act on previous resolutions on this issue raised by the Member from Assiniboia nor use his proposed Bills as a framework to introduce its own legislation; and*

*WHEREAS conflict of interest legislation is largely intended to assist elected representatives by providing an objective understanding against which they gauge their actions, and to satisfy themselves and the public that they are acting appropriately; and*

*WHEREAS Manitobans need an update to the long overdue system of conflict of interest rules that will greatly enhance the public confidence but not compromise the privacy interests of elected provincial representatives; and*

*WHEREAS broader disclosure, which is required in the 21st century, must include all personal assets, private interest and be extended beyond financial measurements; and*

*WHEREAS the investments markets, federal and provincial taxes, and ease of investing through*

*electronic methods has changed dramatically and quite significantly in the last few years; and*

*WHEREAS MLAs currently do not have to disclose their penny stock holdings, stock holdings, ETFs, bond holdings or property owned outside of Manitoba; and*

*WHEREAS the federal guidelines are far more comprehensive than those in Manitoba and the Federal Finance Minister has recently been accused of conflict of interest surrounding property outside of Canada and family trusts; and*

*WHEREAS individuals who are hired as exempt staff or constituency assistants for Ministers and MLAs using taxpayer funds often also serve as members of the Board of Directors of political parties, organizations, or fundraising activities, thus creating a potential conflict of interest based on those competing roles; and*

*WHEREAS it is in everyone's interest to strengthen the conflict of interest legislation with the philosophy "trust and verify".*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to update the conflict of interest legislation to include better definitions for immediate family, all investment vehicles, property, trusts, corporations in Canada or liquid assets that are traded on anywhere in the world by employing the legislation introduced by the member of Assiniboia on conflict of interest as a possible framework for new and much-needed conflict of interest legislation which also includes disclosure and appropriate political activities for those who work for or with MLAs or Cabinet ministers.

**Madam Speaker:** For the record, the member was correct, we do not need a seconder. We have addressed the rules, and rule 33(12) despite subrule 69(1), an independent member will not require a seconder to move their resolution.

So the House apologizes to the member for that.

And I would indicate then that the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) has moved,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to update the conflict of interest legislation to include better definitions of immediate family, all investment vehicles, property, trusts, corporations in Canada or liquid assets that are traded anywhere in the world by employing the legislation introduced by the member

of Assiniboia on conflict of interest as a possible framework for new and much-needed, made-in-Manitoba conflict of interest legislation which also includes disclosure and appropriate political activities for those who work for or with MLAs or Cabinet ministers.

**Mr. Fletcher:** The issue of conflict of interest is very important in Manitoba, particularly because the legislation basically doesn't exist for any practical purpose. The legislation is woefully inadequate. I've said this for years now in this place, and for years nothing has happened. The government should have introduced conflict of interest legislation immediately. It hasn't. And it's going to lead to a lot of awkward questions, some of which I will be bringing up today.

Madam Speaker, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner did present a report with 84 recommendations, and in the preamble of my resolution it deals with the, a lot of the issues that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner raises, not the least of which is that the government should implement all the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's recommendations, all 84 of them. And he also agrees that the government should have done this a long time ago; they didn't. There was a letter to LAMC, which I'll table, that—it was bizarre. The—on one hand they—on one hand, LAMC apparently commissioned the report but wouldn't accept the report.

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

Anyway, the end result is that we have a report that condemns the current situation in Manitoba, something that my legislation would have mitigated but, again, was ignored.

Madam Speaker, a couple weeks ago, the member from Riding Mountain got up in this place and said that he was in conflict. He was—he said he was in conflict on Bill 8, which deals with advertising, government notices in newspapers, and his conflict was that he owned a newspaper, community newspaper, which would sometimes run government ads. He declared a conflict. I don't think he needed to in that case, but he did. So, interestingly, if that's the standard of a conflict, well, what I'm about to say is definitely a conflict—many conflicts.

Madam Speaker, the last time this came up, I was—I had introduced my 35-page bill on upgrading The Conflict of Interest Act, and in my remarks,

I reflected upon the fact that in Manitoba, the regulations have changed for marijuana use. The provincial Cabinet was responsible for these changes, specifically the Minister of Justice (Mr. Cullen). And I made the observation—the observation—that a stock in Manitoba went from about 20 cents to almost four bucks in a matter of hours and left it at that.

With—a lot of people could have made a lot of money with that transaction if they knew what the regulations were going to be or not going to be or what companies would get outlets and which ones wouldn't.

The Premier (Mr. Pallister) got up to tell this House, when I first raised this possibility, that, oh, well, he's going to get all his MLAs—or, all his ministers to sign a declaration that they don't have any marijuana stocks. Oh, okay. Very difficult for the public to find that. And also, why marijuana? Because it also goes to land, land acquisition, land transfers, licensing, a zillion other things. But he focused just on that one issue.

But I think it's an example of how weak the legislation is. So we move forward, back to June. I got ridiculous letters from Delta 9 legal—I don't think it's Delta 9; I think it's their legal department trying to intimidate debate in this place, and I have subsequently tabled—or I subsequently have registered complaints with the Manitoba law society about the actions of Delta 9's legal counsel, MLT Aikins, and I have tabled that material in the binders that have been presented.

\*(11:10)

The other relevant issues with Delta 9 is that their legal counsel has very strong ties to the Conservative Party. The Conservative Party, PC Manitoba—the PC Manitoba Fund is chaired by the same person who chairs MLT Aikins. The legal—the lawyers for the PC Party are from MLT Aikins. The—yet, I raise Delta 9, and those same lawyers come down on me like a ton of bricks. Is that because they were representing Delta 9, or the PC Party? I think it was the latter, but I guess we'll never know. Oh, but this is a real problem because the minister responsible, the Minister of Justice, also is close friends with the chair of Aikins, which is fine, but they also are business associates, or do business together. So I've tabled those documents. And that raises eyebrows, surely. Maybe there is a conflict. Delta 9, PC Party fund, close buddies with

the Minister of Justice, who is responsible for the cannabis legislation.

So, if the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) has a conflict because he owns a paper, this has to be a conflict. Now we go to the fact that this—and I've also tabled this—a lawyer at MLT has published quite an extensive document about the regulations of cannabis in Manitoba on the MLT Aikins website. Same surname as the Minister of Justice. It turns out that they're part of the same family.

And the lawyer for Delta 9, now we go to this whole Bruce Oake-Vimy land deal. For one dollar, the Province transferred land worth millions of dollars to a not-for-profit organization. But who are their lawyers? Aikins, MLT Aikins. And they'd created a for-profit legal entity for that same organization. So—and who are the people involved? It's all the same people, over and over again.

And then you have the namesake, Scott Oake, provide commentary and presentation to a PC Manitoba fundraiser for thousands of dollars—or thousands of people, PC fundraising money, sweetheart land deals—

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

Order.

### 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.

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** Question to the member opposite. As we know, the Conflict of Interest Commission recently released a report that has been requested by our government.

Does the member think it's important to carefully review these particular recommendations?

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** You know, I'm sorry, I didn't hear that. I'm sorry, I didn't hear the question. But I think he was referring to the commissioner's report. The commissioner—the government did not request a report. LAMC and—LAMC refused to accept the report. And in a bizarre

situation, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner therefore, sent it to each MLA. And, fortunately, that material is also tabled in the documents that I have already referred to. Thank you.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I would ask the member why he believes, or thinks it's important that the conflict of interest legislation be updated.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Thank you and that's an excellent question. Because the conflict of interest is just not to protect the public, it's to protect the MLAs from these types of questions, these awkward situations. The primary purpose is to protect the public so that people don't profit from insider information. But since we don't have any conflict of interest legislation, there's no way of knowing. So we need it to protect the public interest, the public purse and politicians—everyone in this room—so that we don't get accused or we can at least mitigate doubt. People think negatively of politicians and—

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

**Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona):** Does the member from Assiniboia think it's important or that he should have included perhaps more the recommendations from Mr. Schnoor's report in his PMR? There's many recommendations that don't touch. Would you care to comment on so many of them that haven't been touched in your resolution?

**Mr. Fletcher:** Well, if the member had read the first WHEREAS in the resolution, it says that whereas the Conflict of Interest Commissioner has made 84 recommendations, and as—described the legislation in Manitoba as the worst in Canada, whereas so on and so forth. So, yes, the resolution, the preamble does discuss the 84 recommendations. And shame on the government to wait for these recommendations when it's common sense to everyone else in the country except for Manitoba.

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I'm going to pick up on what the member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski) asked because it is important, and I appreciate what the member says in his preamble, but the resolution that would actually be passed, if the Legislative Assembly agreed, would be to adopt the legislation you introduced.

But are you saying that you would accept the adoption of the 84 recommendations of Mr. Schnoor? Would that be an acceptable way to move forward in your view?

**Mr. Fletcher:** Yes, that's a good question. The framework, I suggest following the framework of my legislation which was based on what they did in Saskatchewan. And yes, of course, the 84 recommendations should be included. That came after my legislation, so I wasn't aware of those 84 recommendations until afterwards. And, yes, we should embrace those 84 recommendations. They should be part of the framework. And we should do it immediately and have it take effect immediately in this session, this Parliament.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Any other further questions?

**Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere):** Does the member think that it's important to consult with some of the other parties in the House on this issue? It would, of course, affect all of us. I'm wondering if he has met with and consulted with, spoken with, members or representatives from the other parties, and if he could review for the House their feedback and interaction on this matter.

**Mr. Fletcher:** The answer to this is the worst people to pass conflict of interest legislation about MLAs are MLAs. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner should be reappointed. The government tried to do a fast one this summer by appointing the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and also explaining how they would axe the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. And the Conflict of Interest Commissioner ideally should be the one that writes the legislation and we just pass it. Because we in this Chamber—

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

**Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail):** Has the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) conducted a cross-jurisdictional scan to see what the best practices are in other provinces across Canada?

**Mr. Fletcher:** Yes, I have.

That is why the accountability act federally was the first act that the Harper government brought forward. The—when I was scanning the provinces when I put the legislation together myself, where I'm only—I have a staff of one these days—I based it on Saskatchewan because it's a sister province and it had very comprehensive legislation. And even that is outdated.

\* (11:20)

We've got to get with the program. We have legislation from the 18th century and we're already in the 21st century. Let's get on with it.



**Mr. Smith:** Again, my question to the member from Assiniboia is that does he agree that the process should be more thorough and comprehensive before proceeding with this legislation.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Mr. Speaker, if you want to kill an initiative, the best way to do it in this place is to send it to committee. The—what we will get is a watered-down version of what we already know needs to be done. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner has outlined it. We have conflict of interest legislation everywhere in this jurisdiction—in Canada—all better than Manitoba.

Let's just embrace the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's suggestions, put it in the legalese and move forward. Keep the MLAs away at all possible when it comes to dealing with creating rules for themselves.

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

**Mr. Yakimoski:** I would like the member to comment a little bit if he thinks it might be a conflict of interest to perhaps use provincial MLA resources, perhaps as—such as signs, to campaign for another elected office.

**Mr. Fletcher:** I don't think this member should talk about the Premier (Mr. Pallister) in this way. The—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Fletcher:** —fact that the Premier has been a member of the PC party of Canada, the united alliance—or, the United Alternative, the Reform Party, the Conservative Party—before and present—the provincial Conservative Party and a federal MP while campaigning to be the provincial leader of the PC Party—you know what? You've got to take it up with the Premier.

And maybe he could also include himself in some of these conflict of interest—like, we should extend the conflict of interest legislation to Costa Rica as well.

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

**Mr. Micklefield:** It's odd to many of us that in a discussion about conflict of interest, a question was asked the member of Assiniboia—and so I'm going to repeat the question, because the member, in a discussion about conflict of interest, just dodged a

question that has the potential to put him in an awkward spot on the issue of conflict of interest.

The question had to do with using MLA resources, such as signs, to campaign for another elected office. I'd like the member to answer the question without dodging or pivoting or accusing any other member of this House, because that is the question that has been asked, and I think it's a fair one, and I think the member should answer it properly without taking potshots at other members. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Fletcher:** You know—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Fletcher:** —the sign that we need reflect on is when—and I talk about this in my preamble and in the conflict of—is when MLAs use their paid constituency or ministerial staff to—as the presidents of their constituency associations or for fundraising events or to do political activities.

That is certainly conflict of interest and it's in my resolution and I hope that this will be embraced because all your constituency staff will have a lot more free time on their hands.

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

So, the question period has expired.

### Debate

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The debate is open. Any speakers?

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Miigwech, Deputy Speaker, for allowing me to put a couple of words on the record in respect of the member for Assiniboine's resolution here this morning.

Certainly I would suggest to you that we understand the need for transparency on this side of the House, and I would suggest that, you know, we believe that Manitobans deserve to know a leader's land investments, even if it's outside of Manitoba, because being a public servant means working for the people and then certainly declaring all of the information that might prove otherwise.

I would suggest to you that the public needs to be assured that every decision a minister makes is in the interest of Manitobans and is not in the interest of hidden motives. And I would suggest to you that we need to make clear that members of the Legislative Assembly have a responsibility to act in the interests

of all Manitobans and not in their own private interests.

So, to that end, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would suggest—or, I would say to you that those of us on this side of the House fully support the commissioner's report and all of his recommendations to make everything more transparent and equitable here in respect to the information that Manitobans get to see. Miigwech.

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** I do appreciate the opportunity to speak to this particular resolution. You know, it is our government who has committed to reforming the current conflict of interest law to ensure Manitoba's elected officials are more open and accountable than the NDP ever were. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we—I mean, without 'belating' the point on accepting Jets tickets from Crown corporations, we know that members opposite have done that while in Cabinet. So, of course, getting up to speak on this bill—or this resolution, rather, is interesting, to say the least.

You know, with the respect to the member from Assiniboia, again, I do appreciate his efforts in trying to bring about changes to the conflict of interest legislation in this province, and, of course, that's what our government wants to do as well. We are—want to take the time to make sure it makes sense and that it's all-encompassing and that it actually addresses the issue of conflict of interest more than just create more red tape, and I know that's something that I'm sure that the member from Assiniboia will share the same concern when it comes to red tape and layers upon layers of government regulations. Of course, I know the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) again spoke up, and I'd just remind him about the Jets tickets he accepted as a Cabinet minister of the Crown here while he was in government, but, again, not to belabour the point.

You know, during the 2016 election, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we did commit to a number of things. We will provide the Conflict of Interest Commissioner with the power to investigate alleged MLA breaches of conflicts of legislation and recommend appropriate dispositions of Legislative Assembly. A commissioner will have powers and privileges of a commissioner under The Manitoba Evidence Act and will be able to take complaints directly from the public.

So what we've done so far, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is we've made much progress and we understand that much more work has to be done. However, we have

passed The Election Financing Amendment Act, so—which is the repeal of the in—annual 'allance' to abolish the vote tax subsidy for political parties. We on this side of the House believe that political parties and political officials need to ask the public for money, not expect a handout from the public purse. And I know the NDP opposite was very good at doing that, of course. Not only did they—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** —support a vote subsidy tax; they raised the PST and they do continue support a carbon tax on all Manitobans, Madam—Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's unfortunate that they refuse to acknowledge this fact that—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** —they are the party of the tax and spend, and we are the party of protecting the public purse. But, again, you know, that just shows what happened in 2016, why the NDP were soundly defeated in a huge margin, in a huge landslide victory for our Progressive Conservative caucus, and I would suggest that the members reflect on that day in 2016 because that's something that continues to happen so long as they forget the reason that they're here is to protect the integrity and, of course, the public interests not only financially but, of course, with respect to ethics and integrity in governing our province.

We've reduced the size of Cabinet by one third, saving millions of dollars each and every year, leading with the right tone at the top. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite forget that half—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** —half, almost half of their caucus was in Cabinet at the time. I mean, that's having half of your caucus as executive, which is, in my mind, and I think in many Manitobans', not a very good use of public money. Of course, the member from Concordia wasn't in Cabinet, so I guess that's why he decides to speak up at this point.

Of course, vacancies at Manitoba Legislature went unfilled for up to a year under the NDP. You know, when a MLA left, they wouldn't call an election for another year. We've changed the laws to make sure that Manitobans are represented in a

timely manner and not just left open for political expediency.

\* (11:30)

We've also established a standard 28-day election period for a fixed-date general election and shortened the 28-day and 34-day period for a by-election or general election that is not held on a fixed date, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We reinstated the referendum requirement for any increase to the provincial sales tax, payroll tax or income tax rates.

Our legislation also establishes a framework to reduce our government's inherited deficit by annually showing progress towards balance. And, of course, we've been very open in that, and we've had a number of town-hall style meetings with the public to show the public what we're doing. I know that's something the previous government wasn't very good on, but we've always been very open and very aggressive in getting our message out to the people that we are reducing the deficit.

We are making incredible progress towards balance. And I know that the members opposite don't typically like balance, but, I mean, that's why they didn't win in 2016—[interjection]

Balanced budgets, they don't like to balance—well, they balanced Cabinet. They have—Cabinet's—half of their caucus is in Cabinet. So, I mean, I guess that's a sort of balance.

**An Honourable Member:** Until they quit.

**Mr. Smith:** Until they quit and a have a historic rebellion, but that's, again, their point.

We introduced the public sector construction projects act that ensures all qualified workers and their employers regarding their union status have equal access to work on publicly funded construction projects in the province, and that all workers and employers in this province are treated fairly. This legislation prohibits public sector entities from requiring any of the following when tendering for work on a construction project.

First of all, the successful bidder to be, or become part of, a collective agreement; the successful bidder to employ only members of a specific union or to employ only non-unionized workers; and dues to be paid to a union for a work completed by non-unionized employees on a project. [interjection]

The public sector—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member for Assiniboia, on a point of order.

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Point of—the member is talking about union—it has nothing to do with the resolution that I introduced—

**Some Honourable Members:** Relevance.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Relevance.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Yes, on the—anyone else on the point—same point of order?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader):** Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker—Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a wide-ranging resolution that deals with a number of different issues, Madam Speaker. It can certainly touch on a variety of different issues.

I think the member for Southdale was not only on point; it was a sore point for some of the members opposite. They just don't want to hear it. But just because the members of the NDP don't want to hear the point doesn't mean it's not a valid point to make, and I urge you to allow him to consider on with his very salient point, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On the point of order, it's not a point of order.

I just want to remind members to be on the resolution topic and focus on the conflict of interest.

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**Mr. Smith:** I do take your ruling under consideration. I apologize.

But with respect to this particular resolution—[interjection]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** For this particular resolution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would urge the member, though, from Assiniboia to consider what our government is doing as—to address the problems with the current legislation as it stands.

We're—no one here on this side of the House is saying that the legislation that is in place is perfect. I mean, of course, not. We are saying, though, we want to take the time to get it right. And we see what happens when the members opposite were in

government and they made laws and rules for everything.

**An Honourable Member:** Willy-nilly.

**Mr. Smith:** And now we've got—willy-nilly is a great way of putting it—absolutely. They've made laws and rules and red tape—we'll maybe even call it orange tape—that were layer upon layer upon layer upon layer and upon layer, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They did not, in any way, have the best interest of Manitobans at heart, at our small-business owners, at anything. They were interested in their own political fortunes. And that is evidenced by the historical rebellions that happened back when the member from Minto and a few others had decided to go after then-Premier Greg Selinger over a PST increase.

The problem was, when the PST was increased, Mr. Deputy Speaker—Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the PST was increased, none of them said anything. They waited 'til they realized that the political fortunes of the NDP caucus were at stake. And that's when they rebelled.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they have no way and there's no justification that any of them having issue with what I'm saying right now, because they have been involved in—I mean, it's ridiculous what they've done. The fact that they were in power for 17 years—they spent 17 years putting our province in jeopardy—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** —putting our—

**An Honourable Member:** Back to conflict of interest.

**Mr. Smith:** Well, speaking of conflict of interest, absolutely.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite had 17 years to fix the conflict of interest act, and they did nothing. They've done nothing. Oh, they made all kinds of rules and regulations, but they did nothing to address the actual issue that's being addressed here by the member from Assiniboia.

So, when these members sit there and heckle, they have absolutely no moral authority to do so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no moral authority at all. And that's why, after 17 years of debt, decay and decline, they are the rump party that they are. This—on this side of the House—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** —we have created and we've worked very diligently to reduce the deficit, reduce the red tape and bring back some fiscal balance this province has badly needed.

The member from Minto, again, decides to take Jets tickets, while he's a Cabinet minister, from a Crown corporation. We can mention that a few more times if you like because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is the record of the NDP: do as I say, not as I do. And that is the problem that's been—plagued this province for 17 years under that administration.

Let's look at—with respect to the member from Assiniboia, he—I know he has an interest in reforming the laws of the land here with respect to conflict of interest, and that's fine, but our government here on this side wants to make sure we get it right. We've taken the time; we want to make sure that we get the best possible candidates to run for any party in this Legislature. We want to make sure that people that come forward are not in conflict, but, at the same time, that we get quality people to represent the people of Manitoba, quality candidates that can represent the communities that we represent here in this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So again, I will recommend that—I thank the member again for bringing this resolution forward. You know, it's—I appreciate his efforts on this, but I think we need to take more time and get this right.

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

The honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum). Oh, no, the honourable member for St. Boniface.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** In the last couple of weeks, Manitoba PC ministers who are landlords voted for a bill that would weaken tenants' rights—

**An Honourable Member:** Apologize.

**Mr. Lamont:** —I'll get to it—and reduce their right to appeal rent increases. The reason we know they're landlords is because it is on their official declaration of conflict of interest they have to file with the Clerk of the Manitoba Legislature. The BITSA bill also reduces taxes for privately owned corporations, when many members actively own, operate or sit on directors—on these companies.

After this happened, I asked the Premier (Mr. Pallister) whether he would enforce Manitoba's

conflict of interest law, which requires MLAs who are in a conflict to declare it and not to vote. I do want to correct myself. It turns out that Manitoba's conflict of interest laws are so weak that it is perfectly legal for MLAs to vote for a bill that directly benefits the business they own. In most other jurisdictions across Canada, this would be a clear-cut conflict of interest, and it would be illegal. In Quebec, it'd be illegal; in Alberta, it'd be illegal; in Ontario, it'd be illegal. In Manitoba, it's business as usual.

I do want to apologize to the member from Steinbach. He does only own a house his mother lives in and not apartments. I take responsibility for this error. There's no greater way for a son to show love for his mother than taking away her rights as a tenant.

This spring, April 2018, Manitoba's conflict of interest—*[interjection]*—thank you, sir. Thank you—Manitoba's Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Jeffrey Schnoor, reports—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Lamont:** —released a report with—I thought it was 83, but apparently it's 84 recommendations to fix Manitoba's conflict of interest laws, which he called the oldest and arguably the weakest in Canada. One of the issues that Schnoor says—the current law focuses only on financial gain and ignores other kinds of benefits, including insider trading. So while donations to political parties from unions and corporations are illegal, MLAs and their families can receive gifts of virtually any kind from anyone, like donors and lobbyists, so long as it isn't financial.

A chunk of the current law looks good on paper. It says that if an MLA finds that a conflict arises during meeting or vote, they're supposed to disclose the general nature of the conflict, withdraw from the meeting without voting or participating in the discussion and refraining at all times from trying to influence the matter. And I wanted to recognize that that's exactly what the member from Riding Mountain did, Greg Nesbitt. He deserves congratulations for doing the right thing.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Oh, order.

Just want to remind the member to address people by their constituency name or their title.

**Mr. Lamont:** Yes, I would like to recognize and congratulate the member from Riding Mountain for doing the right thing.

However, one of the challenges is that the legislation sets an incredibly high bar for what qualifies as a conflict. In most provinces, it is a personal benefit of any kind. In Manitoba, for an MLA to be conflict, they have to own more than 1 per cent of the entire market.

\* (11:40)

So, for an MLA who owns apartment buildings to be considered in a conflict, they have to own at least 1 per cent of all the apartments in Manitoba, apparently, for a farmer, 1 per cent or more of all the farms and so on.

So the entire issue of cannabis shares was empty theatre unless someone actually owned more than 1 per cent of all the cannabis shares in Manitoba.

When it comes to actually prosecuting a conflict of interest complaint, you have to pay—an individual voter has to pay a \$300 fee and has to prosecute the case privately through the courts, which is why the commissioner—the conflict commissioner said in the 35 years since this law was written and passed, not a single complaint has ever been filed. That is because Manitoba is the only province in Canada whose Conflict of Interest Commissioner has no powers of investigation or enforcement.

So, again, the commissioner has made an excellent report with recommendations to put a stop to a lot of this. MLAs would have to disclose more of what matters and the definition of conflict would be clear. It would empower the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to investigate and enforce conflict of interest rules.

Any Manitoban could file a complaint. However, there are a couple of sticking points, and it looks like the PCs have no interest in cleaning things up, because for a commissioner to be independent, they have to have security of tenure. They have to be appointed for terms of several years, and they can't be fired, or they have to be very hard to fire, and this is actually one of the recommendations that was made in the report, that the commissioner should be reappointed for a five-year term and that there shouldn't be conditions on it, and that the commissioner can only be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Legislature.

However, this summer, a PC-controlled committee called a meeting to re-appoint Mr. Schnoor with a clause that said he could be dismissed if any new conflict of interest legislation was passed.

If these—all these recommendations were passed, it would mean serious changes. Ministers would not be able to vote to take away tenants' rights or cut taxes for businesses they own, and one of the biggest changes is that MLAs would have to step away from businesses they are involved with. They would not be able to sit as president, director or officer of the corporation, and currently the First Minister's declaration of conflict shows that he is a president of one company, a director of two others and owner of a fourth.

The PCs ran on making Manitoba the most improved province. This is one of the easiest things they could do to improve things. Setting up an ethics commissioner who's full-time, independent, who could investigate and enforce conflict of interest rules would be an easy fix and it should be an immediate and major priority.

**Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona):** And thank you very much to my colleagues over on this—that side of the House. It truly is a pleasure to put some words on the record regarding the resolution from the member from Assiniboia, and I've had some discussions with some of the other members in this House regarding this resolution.

The member from Riding Mountain has given me a few pointers as has the member from Radisson. We've had some discussions. I'm very proud of the member from Riding Mountain, as mentioned by the member from St. Boniface. He did recuse himself when he felt he would be in a conflict.

So, I'm glad to put some words on the record of the resolution put forward by the honourable member from Assiniboia.

In his first whereas, the preamble of the resolution, he's referenced a scathing 2018 report. I don't know if I'd call it so much scathing as I would say it's a report that we commissioned, that we asked for, that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Cullen), in his previous role, asked to have done. Scathing might be some of—I'd refer to some of the—what we see in the media regarding the member from Assiniboia and some of his—I won't say antics, but his points of privilege that he uses here in the House to perhaps delay things.

*Mr. Dennis Smook, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

Within his PMR, he tends to reference the fact that he thinks our government—or that the people, the commissioner, should be referencing him or using his proposed bills instead of using the expertise,

perhaps, across jurisdictions and things like that. It seems as the member is perhaps more self-serving and self-promoting than thinking of Manitobans.

But, agreed—I do agree with him that conflict of interest legislation here in Manitoba needs to be improved, needs to be updated. It is outdated. We know that our government—we're taking the time to look into the rules, and we want to modernize them. We want them to make sense and society has changed. We live in a different connected world today.

Trust and accountability must begin here in this office. Full, transparent, proactive disclosure and transparency is quite important. We in this Chamber must lead by example, and that's why we sought out the recommendations, you know?

We asked Mr. Schnoor to take a look at it. And I met with him a few times. After every Throne Speech, we'd meet and we'd have some discussions. We asked him to look at it, come up with some recommendations, and he wants to—we will bring forth a bill, a government bill to amend or bring new legislation.

It is fair that the resolution did come out after the recommendations, and I think the member from Assiniboia agrees that they are very encompassing and they cover a lot areas, and they deserve to be studied and looked at by all members of this House.

I know we on the government side will take a look and see how they match up—the recommendations match up with what we have and what's available across the country or what's proposed across the country, so we can modernize ours, make them better, better for all of us in this House, actually.

I would like to mention a few things, go through a few different things that are in Mr. Schoor's [*phonetic*] recommendations. Members of the House did receive this report. I know some have maybe read it; some have not. I've gone through it on a few occasions and looked at different things.

I know there—one concern, recommendation 15, that refers to ministers being prohibited from engaging trade, occupation, any profession—I believe it may be done at the federal level. I was talking on this weekend with a former minister in the Liberal government and—who was a professional geoscientist, and she'd mentioned to me that she had to no longer be—she had to take away her accreditation

as a professional geo-scientist when she became a minister for a while.

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

So it's really important, we really don't want to prohibit people from seeking office here. Rules that are—we want the rules to be more—perhaps, more broad to protect the public, but we don't want rules in place that people who—will say, I can't seek that office because I have a business that I earn a living from and I might have to step away from that because we never know if we're going to be asked to serve as a minister.

Nowadays, we see the stats, there are more women that are running businesses, more women that are professionals than ever before, and we want more women running for public office to serve here in this Legislature. So you never know if you'll be asked. That is something that is definitely, we should have up for discussion.

The executive summary within the report that Mr. Schoor [*phonetic*] made, he—we've said it before, the member has mentioned it, we need—it is old legislation. It's perhaps the weakest. And we all agree, I think—let's modernize it. Let's make it better.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a few deficiencies in what he said here or in our previous conflict of interest. He wants it to be more broadly defined. Members who have exercised official power, as a minister perhaps, that would encroach upon his private interests, we have to make sure we disclose on those sort of things. He shouldn't make profit. He shouldn't benefit from anything that happens in here.

I know there's quite a few of us who own different types of—or businesses or corporations. Disclosure—and one of the recommendations I did notice within disclosure is modernizing it by having things available electronically. Electronic disclosure would allow the public more visibility. We have that now when it comes to our representation allowances, money that we spend to do this job. So that's a recommendation that is important.

\* (11:50)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think, in discussing with Mr. Schnoor, there were some things that he mentioned to me particularly that are odd, when it comes to receiving gifts and things like that, and it's something has to be discussed. A member who, perhaps, had a child who had a special birthday or a special graduation or even a wedding, within the

existing conflict of interest legislation, gifts outside of family members, immediate family—parents, children—gifts outside of there, a very good friend, above a certain level would have to be disclosed. We wonder if that is necessary. But again, it's part of the discussion that we have to have and make sure that we modernize it and improve it.

Last night, it was interesting, we've talked and you've heard in this House about perhaps the previous government and some of the decisions they made to attend certain sports games. I myself was at the Jets game last night and I was—had my own seats with my daughter and I was going there. And I talked to a friend of mine, John [*phonetic*], John [*phonetic*] who has terrific seats, and I know the member from Minto has been seated in John's [*phonetic*] seats. I don't think those seats are the ones we're referencing when we say that the member shouldn't have received seats or taken tickets on behalf of the government, it was when he was in—minister and had different seats. But those seats, agreed, are very, very good seats.

I was—so we've got a list here of some of the members who did take, who felt that it was their right to take: the member from Wolseley and Minto and Logan; former members Steve Ashton, Peter Bjornson, Dave Chomiak, Ron Kostyshyn, Ron Lemieux, Gord Mackintosh, Eric Robinson, Jim Rondeau, Erin Selby and Stan Struthers—all those people took tickets perhaps when they shouldn't.

But you know who didn't? Fellow sitting behind me. Great guy. Talked to him a little bit. A nice guy named Doug Martindale who was sitting here in the House yesterday. He was sitting yesterday and we had a little discussion. He's not on this list and I'm very glad to hear that. I just wanted to kind of put that on the record.

The member from Assiniboia, you'd like this resolution to move forward. I think we need time. It's really important to have the time to discuss this and make sure that we're agreeing that over the next election, over the next cycle, get this in place. It doesn't have to be done immediately. You're saying it has to be done immediately. I think because we have some time to get it done over the next few years, we'll make sure we get it right, as we are for all Manitobans.

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I appreciate the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) bringing this resolution forward today because I think it is a discussion and debate that's very important. And

from listening to the government members that have got up today, I think we've now understood a little bit more about this government's agenda and this government's concerns about actually implementing the report that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Jeffrey Schnoor, has brought forward with 84 recommendations.

Now, the member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski) seemed to have slightly better speaking notes than the member for Southdale (Mr. Smith), but they both put on the record some interesting comments today that I think maybe give us a little bit more understanding of the difficulty this government seems to have with the report that Mr. Schnoor has prepared.

And I was fascinated when the member for Southdale said that they were very concerned that implementing the recommendations would create more red tape. And that was his exact words. And of course, the wonders of Hansard is that, indeed, you put it on the record and it's there forever. The member for Southdale apparently thinks that members of the government actually having to disclose all of their interests which could have an impact on their role is somehow an unnecessary regulation and is somehow red tape. And I guess that's why we haven't seen legislation yet come in.

We've been very clear as the New Democratic Party opposition. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner made a very, very detailed report. The government ought, then, to move on that. And we don't why we haven't seen that law come forward. The member for Southdale has given us a little bit more detail.

And the member for Transcona, who, again, for most part gave a better speech than his colleague from Southdale, said, well, you know, hold on a second, we've seen the recommendations, but, you know, lots of us have businesses. You know, so let's not, like, let's not move too quickly on this. And I presume the Progressive Conservative brain trust is now sitting down to determine how they could bring in a conflict of—a new conflict of interest law that wouldn't actually impact all of them and their various business interests.

So, if the member for Transcona is satisfied that simply owning a business, if disclosed, is not an impediment, we don't see any problem with that. The issue is either if you have a business interest that has an impact or if you have business interests which are

required to be disclosed under the conflict of interest legislation and you don't do it.

And I'm surprised that the member for Southdale forgot to talk about his own leader, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) of this province, who has failed to perform his duty, as every MLA in this House has, to report and disclose corporations that are owned in which the Premier has an interest.

And we know that year, after year, after year, after year, the Premier had—was a big part of two corporations down in the country of Costa Rica—I haven't visited, nor have—I think, has any of my colleagues, but I hear it's warm in the winter. And he failed to disclose those corporations until he got caught. *[interjection]* Well, and I hear the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson) saying, well, that's just jealousy. No, I'm not jealous of a Premier who can't follow the very clear direction in the conflict of interest act.

And the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher), by bringing this forward, is highlighting that there are great weaknesses with the existing legislation, and with him I heartily agree. We may have different views on certain aspects of that. We may have different views on what corporate interests should or shouldn't be disclosed. But I do agree that it's important to have that debate.

And there's much more that I could go on and say, but I want to give time for us to have a vote on this resolution.

What was most fascinating was the member for Southdale criticizing members on this side of the House, saying, well, it's do as they say, not as I do. Well, he needs to look at the front row of his bench, with a Premier who is asking Manitobans to accept deep cuts to education, deep cuts to health care, deep cuts to social services and freezing wages without even going to the bargaining table, who we know refused to disclose corporations that he owned in Costa Rica and who, even more than that, failed to pay the luxury tax on his hacienda down in Costa Rica.

Not just one year, not just two years, but for 10 years the Premier didn't pay his luxury tax. And what is that luxury tax intended to do? It's intended to provide housing for the poorest people in Costa Rica. Well, that fits perfectly because he's done nothing to build housing for the poorest people in Manitoba. It's a daily double for this Premier, and it shows why we



have, certainly, a Premier who says do as I say, not as I do.

I'm hoping that members opposite will actually see the light and begin to question their Premier and begin to demand that he treat this Legislature and treat the people of Manitoba with the respect they deserve.

So, again, I thank the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) for starting an important debate this morning and for allowing the government members to put on the record what their real problem with effective conflict of interest legislation is.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere):** How interesting that a member so embroiled in so many

interesting conflicts would now bring up a resolution on the conflict of interest, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The member has acted in his own interest in this House time and time again: ringing the bells, denying leave, pulling all manner of pranks and stunts. And if we were to count the number of eyes rolled collectively in this Chamber, I think that the member for Assiniboia might win the prize at causing much consternation. But now this morning—

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

When this matter is before the House, the honourable member for Rossmere will have nine minutes remaining.

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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, October 23, 2018**

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