

First Session – Forty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
Standing Committee
on
Legislative Affairs

Chairperson
Mr. Dennis Smook
Constituency of La Verendrye

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CHIEF, Kevin	Point Douglas	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
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EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
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GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
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GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
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KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
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LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
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MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
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MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
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SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
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SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
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YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

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

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

TIME – 6 p.m.

LOCATION – Winnipeg, Manitoba

CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye)

VICE-CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail)

ATTENDANCE – 11 QUORUM – 6

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Mr. Goertzen, Hon. Ms. Squires

Ms. Klassen, Messrs. Lagassé, Lindsey, Micklefield, Ms. Morley-Lecomte, Messrs. Reyes, Selinger, Smook, Wiebe

PUBLIC PRESENTERS:

Bill 3 – The Mental Health Amendment Act

Mr. Chris Goertzen, Association of Manitoba Municipalities

Ms. Michelle Gawronsky, Manitoba Government and General Employees Union

Ms. Sandi Mowat, Manitoba Nurses Union

Bill 5 – The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act

Mr. Edmond Labossière, Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba

*Mr. Justin Johnson, Conseil jeunesse provincial
Ms. Paulette Carrière-Dupont, Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba*

Ms. Jacqueline Blay, Société franco-manitobaine

Ms. Annie Bédard, Santé en français

Ms. Michèle Léculyer-Hutton, Pluri-elles

Mr. Mathieu Allard, Association des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba

Mr. Ibrahima Diallo, private citizen

Ms. Madeleine Arbez, Francofonds Inc.

Mr. Rénaud Rémillard, private citizen

Mr. Alphonse Lawson, private citizen

Mr. Bernard Lesage, Division scolaire franco-manitobaine

Ms. Gisèle Saurette-Roch, Réseau action femmes Inc.

Mr. André Doumbè, African Communities of Manitoba Inc.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS:

Bill 3–The Mental Health Amendment Act

Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of Labour

MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION:

Bill 3 – The Mental Health Amendment Act

Bill 5 – The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act

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Clerk Assistant (Ms. Monique Grenier): Good evening. Bonjour. Will the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs please come to order.

Our first item of business is the election of a Chairperson.

Are there any nominations for this position?

Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Mr. Smook.

Clerk Assistant: Mr. Smook has been nominated. Are there any other nominations?

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

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

Are there any nominations?

Mr. Jon Reyes (St. Norbert): Mr. Lagassé.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Lagassé has been nominated. Are there any other nominations?

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

This meeting has been called to consider the following bills: Bill 3, The Mental Health Amendment Act; Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act.

I would like to inform all in attendance of the provisions in our rules regarding the hour of adjournment. A standing committee meeting to consider a bill must not sit past midnight to hear

public presentations or to consider clause by clause of a bill except by unanimous consent of the committee.

We have a number of presenters registered to speak tonight as noted on the list of presenters before you.

On the topic of determining the order of public presentations, I will note that we do have out-of-town presenters in attendance, marked with an 'asterik' on the list. As well, we have received numerous requests from presenters to make their presentation in French to Bill 5, marked with a double 'asterik' on the list. We do have translation staff on hand to accommodate consecutive translation.

With these considerations in mind, in what order does the committee wish to hear the presentations?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I'd suggest we hear the presenters on Bill 3 first, in the order that they are listed, and then do the presenters on Bill 5, with the out-of-town presenters being called first and the remainder following in the order that they're listed.

Mr. Chairperson: Is that agreed? *[Agreed]*

A written submission on Bill 3 from Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of Labour, has been received and distributed to committee members. Does the committee agree to have this document appear in the Hansard transcript of this meeting? *[Agreed]*

Before we proceed with presentations, we do have a number of other items and points of information to consider. First of all, if there's anyone else in attendance who would like to make a presentation this evening, please register with the staff at the entrance to—of the room. Also, for the information of all presenters, while written versions of presentations are not required, if you are going to accompany your presentation with written material, we ask that you provide 20 copies. If you need help with photocopying, please speak with our staff.

* (18:10)

As well, in accordance with our rules, a time limit of 10 minutes has been allotted for presentations with another five minutes allowed for questions from committee members. If a presenter is not in attendance when their name is called, they will be dropped to the bottom of the list. If the presenter is not in attendance when their name is called a

second time, they will be removed from the presenters' list.

Speaking in committee: Prior to proceeding with public presentations, I would like to advise members of the public regarding the process for speaking in committee. The proceedings of our meetings are recorded in order to provide a verbatim transcript. Each time someone wishes to speak, whether it be an MLA or a presenter, I first have to say the person's name. This is the signal for the Hansard recorder to turn the mics on and off.

For anyone who would wish a listening device, they're available at the back of the room if needed.

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

Bill 3—The Mental Health Amendment Act

Mr. Chairperson: Calling Bill 3.

Our first presenter and out-of-town presenter, is Chris Goertzen, Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

Mr. Goertzen, do you have any written material for distribution to the committee? You can proceed when you are ready, Mr. Goertzen.

Mr. Chris Goertzen (Association of Manitoba Municipalities): All right. Well, thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the Legislative Assembly. I appreciate you taking the time to hear our brief comments today about Bill 3. We won't keep you here 'til midnight like your deadline has.

This is something that we've worked on. All 137 municipalities are represented by AMM and this is something that we've worked on for a number of years, and we've expressed our challenges with The Mental Health Act and we appreciate the changes that are being presented here by these—this amended act.

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, 20 per cent of all Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime. Given the complex links between mental health and the criminal justice system, police responses to mental health issues continue to be a top of significant discussion—topic of significant discussion both within Manitoba and across Canada.

We are very pleased to see The Mental Health Amendment Act reintroduced into the Legislative Assembly. Thank you to the government of Manitoba; the Honourable Heather Stefanson for

introducing this bill; as well as the Honourable Kelvin Goertzen for working closely to see this come to fruition.

AMM has voiced its concerns about the time incurred by officers when supervising and transporting patients under The Mental Health Act. Our concerns stem from both public safety issues and the financial burdens placed on municipalities.

The transport and supervision of individuals under the auspice of Manitoba Mental Health Act reduces police service coverage and response times, particularly in small rural communities, but does affect all communities including cities.

I know when we met as members of the city caucus, as well, specifically part of AMM, this was a ongoing concern that was raised, and so they are very pleased to see this coming to fruition.

It can also contribute substantially to overtime costs and competing demands on police resources, while frustrating officers.

AMM advocacy efforts in this area resulted in the introduction of legislation prior to the provincial election, which would enable a qualified person to supervise MHA patients at our—at medical facilities under—until examinations or assessments are completed. The Mental Health Amendment Act would enable a qualified person other than a police officer to assume custody of and remain with an individual who is awaiting mental health assessment. This would allow officers to be able to respond to other public safety concerns.

With one in five Canadians experiencing mental illness in their lifetime, these proposed legislative changes should significantly reduce policing costs and help ensure police service coverage in all local communities.

We urge you to pass this bill which will reduce police time spent on transporting and supervising patients under The Mental Health Act and, as a result, ensure municipalities can maintain appropriate police service coverage and response times.

So thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

Do members of the committee have questions for the presenter?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): More of a comment

than a question. Mayor Goertzen and I have spent the better part of the last 10 years trying to convince people in our community that we are not brothers, and there's no greater proof of that than in his presentation. He references that my friend, Heather Stefanson, introduced the bill, when it was myself who introduced the bill. Had we been brothers, that would have been clear to Mayor Goertzen. So that is the proof for this committee.

But we are certainly, while not related, we are in accord on this bill and we appreciate the suggestions by the Manitoba association of municipalities. Also, I know you worked with the previous government on suggestions on this as well, and I want to say for the committee that we recognize that this was something that the previous government supported, and I—it's not a political issue. And so we appreciate the fact that the association of—AMM worked with the previous government, worked with us. And it really is a bipartisan and multi-government effort.

So thank you very much, Mayor Goertzen, for your presentation, and we look forward to working with you and your association on the creation of the regulations.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I also just wanted to thank Mayor Goertzen for coming down and presenting this evening on this bill. I wanted to thank him for his work with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities. I know it's a busy role for him and there's a lot of different perspectives to capture. So I can appreciate that he takes the time to come down and spend some time with us this evening.

I also appreciate the fact that he, as the minister alluded to, had spent much time with the previous government and, of course, the association had as well, in terms of shaping this particular piece of legislation and, you know, giving us their perspective.

I just wondered if the mayor could give us—and he might not have these facts in front of him. But I thought I'd give him the opportunity to just talk a little bit about the impact that this has on municipalities, maybe in a dollar-and-cents type way or manpower-type figure, or maybe just in broad terms of how this impacts municipalities and the impact that it has on the resources at the municipal level.

Mr. Chris Goertzen: All right. Thank you for the question. Obviously, you see that I'm low on facts,

since I don't—didn't even know which minister was—so I won't give you actual absolute facts.

But I will give you some anecdotal thoughts, and that is many municipalities have expressed this as a concern. It's not only a concern for our policing costs and the time, the frustration that police have, but it's also a concern for patients. This is about giving good health care and good services to patients as well. And so when you have patients being taken for—from my city, for example, up all the way to Thompson to find a placement, to find a place where they can be admitted to get help, that's a real problem not just for our policing costs, but it's also a problem for that patient as well.

And so that's just one anecdotal thing that is going on. There are countless hours every week that municipalities spend in overtime costs to help—to assist with people with mental health issues and being dealt with under The Mental Health Act.

And so this is going to aid reducing that greatly not only for us, but also for the Province. So we're very pleased about that, but it's in the many millions of dollars.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Goertzen.

I will now call Michelle Gawronsky, Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union.

* (18:20)

Do you have any written materials for distribution to the committee?

Please proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Michelle Gawronsky (Manitoba Government and General Employees Union): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and honoured members, thank you for allowing me a few minutes to share our thoughts.

For those that don't know me, my name is Michelle Gawronsky, and I am president of the Manitoba Government and General Employees Union. The MGEU represents over 40,000 Manitobans who live and work throughout Manitoba in a wide variety of workplaces. Roughly 14,000 are employed directly by the Province of Manitoba and others work in Crown corporations, universities, colleges, health-care facilities, social service agencies, as well as arts and cultural organizations, to list but a few, just to give you a little bit of a background of where I come from.

Thank you for the opportunity to present on this bill tonight. This is a bill that should be reviewed thoroughly with a full understanding of any and all implications to the public safety. All questions need to be answered fully before any decisions are made and the act is finalized.

Bill 3, or The Mental Health Amendment Act, seems like a minor change in a way involuntary patients are escorted through the mental health system. However, after reading the few details on the explanation of the bill, there are several questions that I would like to bring up here on behalf of the MGEU members that work in community health, mental health, Health Sciences Centre security and their colleagues in health care and mental health system. It is from their perspective as dedicated professionals who want the best care for their clients and patients that I offer some cautionary words when moving forward with this amendment.

As The Mental Health Act states today and as the explanation of the bill notes, The Mental Health Act requires a peace officer to take a person into a facility for an involuntary medical examination or psychiatric assessment and to stay with the person until the examination or assessment has been completed. The key word here is involuntarily, which means that some of the people going through a mental health crisis may not recognize that they are a threat to themselves or to others, requiring an involuntary assessment by a psychiatrist. These assessments generally begin in the community with mental health clinicians and/or law enforcement, and then move into ERs for formal assessment. Currently, a peace officer must remain with the patient until a psychiatric assessment is completed.

This process can run smoothly and often does. However, there are times when patients become agitated, violent and unpredictable. I have seen first-hand and have heard dozens and dozens of stories from our members who have experienced scary and often dangerous situations when working with people who are dealing with a mental health crisis. These situations arise when people feel they can't control their behaviours and their feelings, and have trouble coping with the demands of day-to-day life. The resulting emergencies can include: threats of suicide, threats of physical violence or actual physical violence to themselves or others, extreme impaired judgment caused by problems such as psychosis or intoxication, and medical conditions that can cause violent actions.

It is because of these risk factors that assessment and support from a professional is required to look after the health of the patient. The entire process can take a long period of time, as we know, and the more time passes the higher the risk. With the safety of the patient, service providers and the community in mind, who would now be in charge of watching over an—the involuntary patient during this long wait?

The proposed amendment states that another designated person with training can stay with the individual throughout this process. Will these designated people have the same authority as a peace officer? Will they legally be able to detain people? What type of training will they get and who will provide that training?

Stats from the Health Sciences Centre show that the areas designated for mental health services have amongst the highest number of incidents and injury when compared to other areas in the hospital. We have concerns that the proposed amendments in Bill 3 could make an already risky situation even more dangerous for everyone. All it takes is one incident, one assault or one tragedy for someone's life to change dramatically. Who's going to be responsible if that happens?

Our members would prefer if these situations were handled by the people who have the resources, training and perhaps more importantly, the authority to provide the highest level of safety and security for everyone involved. They know from years and years of experience what works and what doesn't. Safety is our No. 1 concern and we are more than willing to work with the government to ensure that the safety of patients, service providers, and the communities will be maintained. We recognize there will be a cost, but what is a life worth?

Thank you for the opportunity to present on behalf of the MGEU members tonight.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

Do members of the committee have questions for the presenter?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: I want to thank you, Michelle, for coming to the committee tonight and making your presentation. It's appreciated. I certainly would want to hear your input as the regulations are drawn up. It is important for the committee to know it's not a bill that will have immediate effect. There are obviously provisions within regulations and training provisions that have to happen. You

mentioned that within your—within your report, so that is appreciated.

It is a balance and I suspect that the previous government struggled with the balance as well between ensuring that an individual who's brought in an involuntary order into a hospital is protected and is protected from those around them, but also ensuring that the police are back into the community because I suspect that there are probably lives that are placed at risk as well when police are in a hospital for many, many hours and aren't in the community and able to respond to the call.

So it truly is a balance and it's a balance of safety and we certainly will do our best to get that balance as good as possible and would be—would welcome your input.

Mr. Wiebe: Yes. I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for coming out tonight and I appreciate the information and it was definitely some very good points that were raised, and I think a lot for this committee to chew on.

And I also appreciate the fact that you've come to us with an open stance, ready to work with government and members of the committee to make this legislation work for everybody.

I'm just wondering if you've had any contacts thus far with the minister's office or with other government officials to discuss any of these points before this public meeting tonight. Has anybody reached out to you to get the opinion of MGEU members to sort of get some sense of where you might be at in terms of representative of their—of the membership and to get some input before the legislation was drafted and before we got to this point here in the committee?

Ms. Gawronsky: No, not at this—not up 'til now.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: Knowing that this bill was before the Legislature previously, prior to the election, was there—did you not receive a call from the previous government for input?

Ms. Gawronsky: No, we did not.

Mr. Wiebe: So, just in the spirit of being nonpartisan and/or maybe bipartisan at the very least here in the committee tonight I think what we're hearing from you is that you're, again, open to work with the government, work with members of the committee to ensure that the legislation meets with your membership's concerns and I just want to thank you for—for, you know, coming here tonight,

expressing them so eloquently and so concisely here in this written package and in your words tonight and, again, just thank you for coming and sharing your concerns.

Mr. Chairperson: I'd like to thank you for your presentation, Ms. Gawronsky—oh, sorry. Mr. Lindsey?

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I want to thank you for coming and making your presentation as well, and I certainly understand your membership's concerns without knowing all the details of how this act is going to be implemented, what the regulations may be that will offer not just protections for your members, but protections for the public as well, and hopefully you and your group, as well as other union groups or worker groups that will be impacted directly as the front line that's going to see or feel the impact of this change, hopefully you're amenable to participating in any opportunity to craft regulations that will implement this in a proper and protective way, so I would hope that that will take place. Thanks.

* (18:30)

Ms. Gawronsky: Yes, absolutely. We'll work with anybody and everybody on this. This is something that is very, very important.

I know first-hand from working in the health-care system for 34 years, running an ambulance service out in a rural area and being on that ambulance myself, where, if it wasn't for the driver looking in the rear-view mirror, I might not be standing here today. So, I do understand the need and the desperation that we have to have, that not only is this taken under consideration of the costs of what is there, but also on making sure that the people that are going to be looking after the patients and the public are trained properly and that it's going to be recognized this is a great need that is needed.

Mr. Chairperson: Once again, now, I'd like to thank you for your presentation, Ms. Gawronsky.

I will now call on Sandi Mowat, Manitoba Nurses Union.

Do you have any written materials for distribution to the community—committee?

Ms. Sandi Mowat (Manitoba Nurses Union): No, I do not.

Mr. Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Mowat: Good evening, Chairperson and honourable members. My name is Sandi Mowat and I'm president of the Manitoba Nurses Union.

MNU represents more than 12,000 nurses across Manitoba. Our members work in a variety of health-care settings, ranging from acute care and community health to home care and long-term care. Thank you to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs for providing me an opportunity to present on Bill 3 this evening.

The Mental Health Act currently stipulates that a peace officer must retain custody of a person that is receiving involuntary medical examination or a psychiatric assessment and is required to stay with that person until the examination or assessment is completed.

As Manitobans, we recognize the important role peace officers have in upholding the law and ensuring public safety. As nurses, we especially recognize the invaluable role they play in protecting the safety of our patients, the public, nurses and all other health-care providers.

Bill 3, The Mental Health Amendment Act, proposes that another designated person with appropriated training will be able to stay with the individual throughout the assessment or examination process. The Mental Health Act specifically applies to involuntary patients, which are individuals that are experiencing a mental health crisis and are likely to be of harm to themselves or others.

When an involuntary patient is being sent to a health-care facility and is awaiting their medical or psychiatric assessment, their behaviour escalates due to the unfamiliar environment, combined with pre-existing factors. Optimal care is provided to such individuals when nurses and the health-care team can apply their full attention on providing care that focuses on the assessment and therapeutic interventions.

Nurses need to be in a position where they can trust any person accompanying involuntary patients, has the authoritative presence and experience to provide the highest level of safety for patients, the public and the health-care team.

It is important to note that this proposed legislation has the potential to significantly impact the safety of patients and health-care providers. Having been an emergency room nurse in the inner-city hospital for almost 20 years, I have first-hand experience on the violence nurses face every day.

It is no secret that the prevalence and risk of violence is exceptionally high in health care. We know from our research that more than half of Manitoba nurses have been physically assaulted, and 30 per cent of ER nurses experience physical violence at least once per week.

While I appreciate the intent of Bill 3, which is to utilize resources efficiently and to their fullest capacity, I would like to bring to your attention a few cautionary notes to consider in order to ensure Bill 3 does not jeopardize the health and safety of Manitoba's patients, the general public and those that provide care.

The first cautionary note is in response to Bill 3's lack of clarity surrounding the criteria an individual must meet to be considered a designated person and replace the role of a peace officer under the act. The government of Manitoba should 'clearly' define who will be eligible to be a designated person. Furthermore, governments should be deliberate in ensuring that any designated person possesses the necessary authority, training and capacity to prevent the escalation of threatening behaviours and be able to respond, intervene and detain individuals that pose a risk to themselves or others.

Additionally, any policies governing this new regulatory measure should be applied consistently across the province, as there are still many facilities, especially in rural Manitoba, that do not even have on-site security supports on a consistent basis.

We can't afford to increase the already heightened risk Manitoba's nurses face. In order for nurses to continue to provide optimal patient care, we have to responsibly ensure that they have safe practice environments. I would like to commend the Honourable Kelvin Goertzen for committing to hold consultations within the mental health community and law enforcement sector to determine what training is needed and who could potentially qualify to be a designated person under the act.

I recommend the government of Manitoba include nurses and all other health-care stakeholders during their consultation process. This vital input will enable government to craft legislation that upholds the health and safety of Manitoba's patients and those who provide care.

Nurses first and foremost care about their patients. They look forward to working alongside government to ensure strong security measures are

enacted in order to better protect patients and uphold the safety of the public and all health-care providers.

Thank you again to all members of the Legislative Affairs Committee for the opportunity to present to you this evening, and I would welcome any questions or comments.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

Do members of the committee have questions for the presenter?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: Thank you for the presentation and for your offer to be involved in consultations, and we will take you up on that offer as well.

You mentioned already that there are many potentially dangerous situations that nurses face in our hospitals, in our ERs. Presently, of course, there aren't RCMP officers normally within those ERs, and so it must be individuals other than those who are coming in under a mental health order who can present those challenges, and probably most often it is people who aren't coming in under a mental health order with an RCMP officer. Do you think having more people who are trained and trained appropriately to deal with individuals available to emergency rooms might actually make things more safe as opposed to less?

Ms. Mowat: I would certainly suggest that outside the city, that would be helpful. I hear from many nurses that they don't have the supports available. Sometimes our rural nurses don't get the training around mental health either, and certainly they're open to that. So I think that there's an opportunity to do training across the board, and then certainly adding those highly trained individuals to make sure that people are kept safe would be a positive thing.

Mr. Wiebe: I want to thank you, Ms. Mowat, for coming out and presenting to the committee. Again, this is very, very helpful information for us to have. It's certainly a great perspective to hear from those who are on the front lines, who are actually experiencing these situations first-hand. And, you know, I appreciate that the minister has said that he's open to listening to those front-line workers and making sure that they're a legitimate part of the process.

Just to follow up on sort of the thread we were—the minister was asking about in terms of training, can you talk a little bit about—maybe about some of the supports that you would need in order to facilitate

that training and maybe some of the work that would need to be done in order to train nurses to be able to, you know, at the very least, you know, be able to start to deal with some of these issues? And as you said, it's certainly not a new experience to them even in their current role right now. Can you talk a little bit about some of the supports that would need to be there in order to facilitate and allow them to get that training to be more capable to handle escalating situations of all kinds?

Ms. Mowat: Well, there's lots of good courses out there, particularly around de-escalating or defusing difficult behaviour. And I will also say that we have done a lot of work. I actually jointly chair a committee with the CEO of Prairie Mountain Health, Penny Gilson, and we're implementing the violence prevention program across Manitoba. And part of that violence prevention program is training for all health-care workers around mandatory defuse and de-escalating patients.

So we are getting that out there, and I think trying to make sure that that's done in a timely manner and then be renewed on a yearly basis so people are kept current. And then in those areas where there's more high-risk type patients, those would require more training, just, you know, a step above that training, plus the ability to have an authoritative process and the ability to 'tain'. So the—I think there's certain levels and that's—you know, you'd need to assess those areas and decide what kind of person you need in certain areas. I don't think it's a paintbrush that does the whole trick.

Mr. Lindsey: Again, I thank Ms. Mowat for her presentation to this committee, taking time to be here.

Just a question, and maybe it's—you're not, possibly, the right person to direct it to. Maybe it'll come up again when we're questioning the government itself. But do you see your members as having time to take on additional duties, or do you see this as being someone additional to your members, particularly looking at staffing levels in northern or remote health-care facilities?

* (18:40)

Ms. Mowat: I think that's something that would have to be looked at almost on a site-by-site basis. So, certainly, I would agree that there are many nurses across the province that it would be too onerous to add extra duties. Having said that, I think in some areas where there already aren't people there

detaining these mental health patients, those nurses do need the increased training and support. So I really think that the best way to do it would be actually to do a facility-by-facility—how many visits there are, you know, what the needs are of those specific facilities.

And I think the front-line health-care workers could certainly help you with that.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Mowat.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I wanted to say thank you for your presentation, as well. And I was also saddened to hear that you said over half of your nurses have experienced violence. Really appreciate that—knowing that fact, and hopefully we can work together as well on the side to try and reduce that number because I believe what the nurses do for our people is overlooked and underappreciated. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: As our time is now run out, I want to thank you for your presentation, Ms. Mowat.

That concludes the list of presenters I have before me for Bill 3.

Bill 5—The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act

Mr. Chairperson: We will now move into Bill 5. We will start with out-of-town presenters.

Would the honourable minister take the chair, here?

Mr. Vice-Chairperson in the Chair

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: I will now call on Edmond Labossière, Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba.

Do you have any written material for distribution to the committee?

Mr. Edmond Labossière (Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba): Yes, I do.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Labossière: Au nom du CDEM, le Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba, nous tenons à souligner le leadership d'action de l'honorable Rochelle Squires, et la remercier pour son engagement remarquable à l'égard de la communauté francophone du Manitoba.

L'appui du premier ministre Brian Pallister et celui de son gouvernement est aussi grandement apprécié.

Dans le même esprit, nous tenons à remercier tous ceux et celles qui ont parlé en faveur du projet de loi. Un merci particulier au député de Saint-Boniface, monsieur Greg Selinger, pour son leadership et son appui indénié à la communauté. Merci aussi à monsieur Jon Gerrard, député de River Heights, madame Cindy Lamoureux, députée de Burrows, monsieur Wab Kinew, député de Fort Rouge, madame Sarah Guillemard, députée de Fort Richmond, et monsieur Bob Lagassé, député de Dawson Trail, pour leurs belles paroles et leur appui en deuxième lecture du projet de loi.

Le CDEM apprécie l'occasion de pouvoir témoigner à ces audiences publiques pour commenter les aspects du projet de loi qui concernent nos municipalités bilingues. Le CDEM représente quelque 17 municipalités sur le territoire du Manitoba et appuie 14 corporations de développement communautaire qu'on appelle les CDCs.

Depuis sa fondation en 1996, le CDEM a misé sur la valeur ajoutée du bilinguisme pour assurer le développement économique et communautaire de ses régions. Vingt ans plus tard, nous sommes en mesure de constater le progrès vers cette notion de territoire bilingue. Il est important que vous, mesdames et messieurs, membres de l'Assemblée législative, compreniez que nos—les municipalités reconnues par l'AMBM, l'Association des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba, ne sont pas exemptées de fournir aussi leurs services en anglais. Nous représentons tout d'abord la population francophone, tant—autant francophone qu'anglophone de ces régions.

Notre statut n'enlève rien à la langue anglaise. Il ne faut qu'ajouter le français dans une perspective où le bilinguisme représente une valeur ajoutée. La réputation du CDEM dépasse maintenant les limites des municipalités bilingues, par exemple, par l'intermédiaire de nos services en économie verte, en particulier notre initiative avec les plans de changement climatique dans le corridor de la rivière Rouge. Cette initiative nous a permis d'étendre nos services au-delà du territoire des municipalités bilingues, dans les municipalités anglophones avoisinantes.

Le projet de loi 5 s'inscrit très bien dans la continuité du dialogue collaboratif qui a été à la base des municipalités bilingues pour accroître les opportunités en matière de développement

économique et d'employabilité des communautés. À l'heure de la mondialisation, le bilinguisme et les affaires représentent une opportunité économique importante pour les communautés francophones.

Selon l'étude « Le Canada, le bilinguisme et le commerce », commanditée par le Réseau de développement économique du Canada, notre organisme national au Conference Board du Canada en 2013 : l'une—l'un des avantages du bilinguisme est que le pays voit croître le volume de ses échanges commerciaux bilatéraux. L'étude confirme la valeur ajoutée réelle du bilinguisme pour le Canada. Toujours selon cette étude, en 2011, la connaissance du français au Canada bilingue avait fait augmenter les exportations de 1.7 milliard de dollars américains—américaines et les importations de 7.2 milliards. Dans ce contexte, le poids économique de la langue française est très important et le projet de loi 5 vient officialiser ce long cheminement que les citoyens bilingues ont permis de réaliser. La langue ne représente pas un fardeau, mais un avantage économique.

Ce progrès vers le bilinguisme a été rendu possible par l'affichage bilingue, l'offre active des services en français et par une reconnaissance du statut bilingue de nos gouvernements de proximité, les municipalités. Qu'il suffise de visiter nos municipalités qui arborent le « C'est si bon! Ensemble Together », où l'image de marque touristique « Joie de vivre », où on y découvre le caractère distinct qui balise l'espace francophone, qui vient enrichir le potentiel touristique et patrimonial du Manitoba.

* (18:50)

Évidemment, le projet de loi 5, Loi sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine, est le fruit d'une collaboration sur l'offre des services en français, qui remonte à plusieurs années et avec divers gouvernements. À titre de conseiller spécial au gouvernement manitobain sur les services en français pendant dix ans, j'ai personnellement été témoin des efforts du gouvernement Filmon pour la mise en œuvre de sa politique sur les services en français basé sur le concept de l'offre active, du leadership stratégique pour bâtir les premières étapes qui ont mené aux acquis dont bénéficie la population francophone du Manitoba et je suis fier de conclure que c'est dans la continuité et vers l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine, que s'inscrit le projet de loi 5.

L'un des points phare de ce projet de loi est la définition inclusive de la francophonie car elle reflète bien la communauté francophone d'aujourd'hui. La politique sur les services en langue française et le rapport du Juge Richard Chartier intitulé « Avant toute chose, le bon sens », en 1998, ont servi de levier stratégique pour la mise en œuvre des recommandations du gouvernement conservateur de l'époque et pour les gouvernements qui ont suivi. Le travail remarquable de monsieur Greg Selinger au cours des années suivantes concernant les services à la communauté de langue française fut très apprécié par notre communauté. Ce projet de loi vient consolider tous les acquis et renforcer le partenariat entre la communauté et le gouvernement dans l'évolution et l'épanouissement de sa francophonie.

En terminant, nous souhaitons que ce projet de loi ne devienne pas un enjeu partisan et qu'il reçoive l'assentiment unanime des 57 membres de l'Assemblée législative. Sur cette note positive, merci de m'avoir accordé ces quelques minutes pour offrir mon appui à ce projet de loi et celui de notre- l'organisme je représente, le CDEM.

Merci beaucoup.

Translation

On behalf of CDEM, the Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities Inc., we wish to applaud the active leadership of the Honourable Rochelle Squires and thank her for her remarkable commitment to Manitoba's francophone community. The support of Premier Brian Pallister and his government are also very much appreciated.

In the same spirit, we wish to thank all those who spoke in favour of the bill. A special thank-you to the member for St. Boniface, Mr. Greg Selinger, for his leadership and undeniable support to the community. Thank you also to Mr. Jon Gerrard, MLA for River Heights, Ms. Cindy Lamoureux, MLA for Burrows, Mr. Wab Kinew, MLA for Fort Rouge, Mrs. Sarah Guillemard, MLA for Fort Richmond, and Mr. Bob Lagassé, MLA for Dawson Trail, for their positive statements and support during the bill's second reading.

CDEM appreciates the opportunity to speak at these public hearings and comment on the aspects of the bill that pertain to our bilingual municipalities. CDEM represents 17 municipalities in Manitoba and supports 14 community development corporations known as CDCs.

Since it was created in 1996, CDEM has focused on the value added of bilingualism to ensure economic and community development in its regions. Twenty years later, we are seeing progress toward the goal of a bilingual territory. It is important that you, ladies and gentlemen, members of the Legislative Assembly, understand that our—the municipalities recognized by the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities, the AMBM, are not exempt from providing their services in English. We firstly represent the francophone population, both francophone and anglophone in these regions.

Our status does not take anything away from the English language. From the perspective in which bilingualism represents value added, all it does is add French. CDEM's reputation now reaches beyond the limits of the bilingual municipalities, for example, through our services in the green economy particularly our initiative on plans for climate change in the Red River corridor. This initiative has enabled us to extend our services beyond the boundaries of the bilingual municipalities, to the neighbouring anglophone municipalities.

Bill 5 is consistent with the ongoing co-operative dialogue that was a key element of the bilingual municipalities to increase economic development and employment opportunities in the communities. In this age of globalization, bilingualism and business represent a significant economic opportunity for francophone communities.

According to a study entitled Canada, Bilingualism and Trade Report commissioned in 2013 by the Réseau de développement économique du Canada, our national organization on the Conference Board of Canada, one of the advantages of bilingualism is that the country has seen the volume of its bilateral trade increase. The study confirms the actual value added of bilingualism for Canada. It states that in 2011, knowledge of French in bilingual Canada had increased exports by \$1.7 billion U.S. and imports by \$7.2 billion. In this context, the economic weight of the French language is very important and Bill 5 formalizes the long progression that bilingual citizens have contributed to. Language does not represent a burden, but an economic advantage.

This progress toward bilingualism was made possible through bilingual signage, the active offer of French language services and the recognition of the bilingual status of our local governments, the municipalities. One need only visit the municipalities

that display the C'est si bon! Ensemble Together logo, or see the tourism sector's Joie de vivre trademark to discover the distinct character that is unique to the Francophone space and enhances Manitoba's tourism and heritage potential.

* (18:50)

Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, is the result of co-operation on the provision of French language services that goes back many years and with various governments. As Senior Advisor for French language services with the Manitoba government for ten years, I personally witnessed the efforts of the Filmon government to implement its French Language Services Policy based on the concept of active offer, which showed strategic leadership in taking the first steps that led to the gains enjoyed by Manitoba's francophone population, and I am proud to conclude that Bill 5 is a continuation in the development of Manitoba's francophonie.

One of the key elements of this bill is the inclusive definition of the francophone community, as it reflects its current make-up well. The French Language Services Policy and Judge Richard Chartier's 1998 report, Above All, Common Sense, served as strategic levers for the implementation of the recommendations by the Conservative government of the day as well as subsequent governments. The remarkable work by Mr. Greg Selinger during the following years in relation to services for francophones was very much appreciated by our community. This bill consolidates the gains made and reinforces the partnership between the community and the government in the evolution and development of its francophonie.

In closing, we hope that this bill will not become a partisan issue and that it will receive the unanimous support of the Legislative Assembly's 57 members. On this positive note, I thank you for affording me this time to express my support and that of CDEM, the organization I represent, for this bill.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs): Merci beaucoup pour votre présentation.

Translation

Thank you very much for your presentation.

English

Our government looks forward to working with—continue collaboration with CDEM, and I just want to thank you for all of your efforts in, you know, building an enhanced and vital francophone community in our province. And I know that the francophone community had a strong champion in the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), and I can assure you that while those are big shoes I'm attempting to fill them. And I look forward to ongoing collaboration and support from the francophone community and a shared relationship.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Any other comments? Questions?

Merci, Monsieur Labossière, pour votre présentation.

Translation

Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Labossière.

English

Okay, Justin Johnson, Conseil jeunesse provincial.

Do you have any written material for distribution to the committee?

Mr. Justin Johnson (Conseil jeunesse provincial): Oui, c'est en circulation.

Translation

Yes, it is being distributed.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Okay, thank you. Please proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Johnson: Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. Merci aussi aux membres du comité. J'aimerais, avant de commencer, reconnaître que nous sommes sur le territoire n° 1 et au cœur de la nation métisse. Et j'aimerais aussi reconnaître la présence de la communauté franco-manitobaine, ou bien la francophonie manitobaine, rassemblée ici aujourd'hui pour ces audiences publiques.

Donc au nom des jeunes d'expression française du Manitoba, le Conseil jeunesse provincial, organisme par et pour les jeunes, est fier et heureux des démarches du gouvernement manitobain à avancer avec le projet de loi 5, Loi sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine.

À la base de ce projet de loi existe une reconnaissance que la francophonie manitobaine est toujours aussi dynamique et engagée que lors de la fondation même de notre province en 1870 par Louis Riel et son gouvernement provisoire. À la veille du 500^e–150^e anniversaire de la Confédération canadienne, l'adoption de ce projet de loi serait une occasion parfaite de démontrer la vraie valeur de notre dualité linguistique.

Même si en 98, je n'avais que six ans, ce projet de loi vient ajouter aux bénéfices découlant du rapport Chartier Avant tout chose, le bon sens. Le projet de loi 5 reconnaît l'importance et la diversité de la francophonie manitobaine en 2016. Une reconnaissance que je ressens, cette fierté d'être Métis et francophone au Manitoba que j'ai pu développer grâce à la communauté, mais qu'en termes pratiques n'a pas toujours été acquise.

Pour la jeunesse d'expression française, cette ouverture sur l'autre est au cœur de nos valeurs et fait partie de notre réalité. Le Manitoba tel que vu et imaginé par la jeunesse de 2016 est moderne et mondial. Il n'est pas rare pour la jeunesse surtout, de vivre la valeur de cette dualité qui est souvent mélangée l'un dans l'autre. De manière aussi naturelle, je dirais, que du « peanut butter and jam ».

La jeunesse de 2016 crée des initiatives qui mettent cette dualité en—au premier plan. Soulignons à titre d'exemple la Coop Vélo-Cité à Saint-Boniface, un atelier de vélo communautaire qui servira tant les francophones que les anglophones de Saint-Boniface, un véritable lieu de rassemblement.

Bien sûr que le français doit avoir une place à la table, compte tenu du rôle historique de cette langue dans la construction, dans la fondation même de la province du Manitoba. Le gouvernement du Manitoba actuel a un devoir d'être chef de file sur ce dossier et nous espérons que cette réconciliation avec la communauté francophone ouvrira la porte à mettre de l'avant des moyens de faire valoir aussi la justice—la juste place des langues autochtones et métisses dans les curriculums ici au Manitoba.

Il est évident que nous souhaitons que ce projet de loi soit adopté à l'unanimité. Grâce au leadership de Madame la Ministre Squires, et avec l'appui des autres membres de tous les partis politiques, la francophonie au Manitoba serait bien encadrée pour continuer à s'épanouir.

Au sein du réseau jeunesse et sur le plan la francophonie canadienne, le Manitoba est souvent

cité à titre de leader ou d'exemple. Il est bien de voir que nos décideurs politiques ont le goût d'avoir la même réputation. D'après tout, qui n'ose pas, n'a pas.

Nous tenons à remercier le gouvernement d'avoir rapporté ce projet de loi à la table en y ajoutant d'importants acteurs tels que le Conseil des arts du Manitoba, Sport Manitoba et Voyages Manitoba. Trois agences qui ont le potentiel à grandement contribuer à notre épanouissement.

Louis Riel a écrit : « Une bonne action, un bon travail ne sont jamais perdus ».

Le projet de loi 5, Loi sur l'appui de l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine, est une telle bonne action, un tel bon travail qui ne sera pas oublié ou perdu. Le rêve de Louis Riel d'un Manitoba bilingue, inclusif et rassembleur est toujours vivant. Ce rêve que partageaient mes ancêtres métis et canadiens-français. Finalement, mes ancêtres manitobains.

Ensemble nous agissons pour la bonne chose. C'est la chose manitobaine à faire. C'est comme si Riel avait de quoi à nous dire, même encore aujourd'hui : « Mais regardez-nous agir. Nous allons travailler et obtenir la garantie de nos droits et de vôtres. Vous viendrez à la fin partager. »

Merci beaucoup.

Translation

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson, and thank you to the committee members. Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge that we are here in Territory No. 1 and at the heart of the Métis nation. And I would also like to acknowledge the presence of the Franco-Manitoban community, or rather the francophone community of Manitoba, gathered here today for these public hearings.

So, on behalf of Manitoba's French-speaking youth, the Conseil jeunesse provincial, an organization by and for youth, is proud and happy to see the Manitoba government moving forward with Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act.

Underlying this bill is a recognition that Manitoba's francophone community is as dynamic and committed as it was at the very founding of our province by Louis Riel and his Provisional Government in 1870. On the eve of the 500–150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation, passage of

this bill would be a perfect opportunity to show the true value of our linguistic duality.

Although I was only six years old in '98, this bill adds to the benefits stemming from the Chartier report, Above All, Common Sense. Bill 5 recognizes the importance and diversity of Manitoba's francophone community in 2016. A recognition that I feel, this pride in being francophone and Métis in Manitoba that I was able to develop, thanks to the community, but that in practical terms has not always been a given.

For French-speaking youth, this openness to the other is at the core of our values and forms part of our reality. Manitoba as seen and imagined by the youth of 2016 is modern and worldly. It is not unusual for youth especially to experience the value of this duality, which is often blended together as naturally, I would say, as peanut butter and jam.

The youth of 2016 create initiatives that place this duality in the forefront. As an example, we would point to the Coop Vélo-Cité, a community bicycle workshop that will serve both the francophones and the anglophones of St. Boniface, a genuine gathering place.

Of course French should have a place at the table, given that language's historic role in the building, in the very founding of the province of Manitoba. The current government of Manitoba has an obligation to lead in this area and we hope that this reconciliation with the francophone community will open the door to providing the means of asserting the justice—the proper place of Aboriginal and Métis languages in the curricula here in Manitoba.

Obviously, we hope that this bill will be passed unanimously. Through the leadership of Minister Squires, and with the support of the other members from all the political parties, the francophone community in Manitoba would have a solid framework within which to continue flourishing.

Within the francophone youth network at the national level, Manitoba is often cited as a leader or an example. It is good to see that our political decision-makers have a desire for the same reputation. After all, nothing ventured, nothing gained.

We would like to thank the government for having brought this bill back to the table and added to it major players such as the Manitoba Arts Council, Sport Manitoba and Travel Manitoba, three agencies

that have the potential to greatly contribute to our enhancement.

Louis Riel wrote: Right action, right work are never lost.

Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act is one such action, one example of right work that will never be lost or forgotten. Louis Riel's dream of a bilingual, inclusive and unifying Manitoba is still alive. It is a dream that was shared by my Métis and French-Canadian ancestors. Ultimately, my Manitoban ancestors.

Together, we are doing the right thing. It is the Manitoban thing to do. It is as if Riel had something to say to us, even today: "But watch us act. We are going to work and obtain the guarantee of our rights and yours. You will come to share them in the end."

Thank you very much.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup pour votre présentation.

Translation

Thank you very much for your presentation.

English

And I also want to thank you for recognizing that we're on Treaty 1 land and for your comments on this bill. Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you, Honourable Minister.

Are there any more questions?

Merci beaucoup.

I will now call upon Paulette Carrière-Dupont, Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba.

Do you have any written materials for distribution to the committee?

* (19:00)

Ms. Paulette Carrière-Dupont (Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba): Oui, j'en ai donné.

Translation

Yes, I handed some out.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Carrière-Dupont: Monsieur le Président, mesdames et messieurs les députés, l'Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba est la doyenne du monde associatif du Manitoba francophone et, à ce titre, elle représente la fidélité et un idéal qui remonte à la Rivière-Rouge dans ses qualités de partage.

Sa loyauté au Canada et au Manitoba n'est plus à prouver, ne serait pas que—par ses membres qui ont été représentés—représentants élus démocratiquement depuis 1869, et qui ont fait et qui font encore partie, soit de l'Assemblée législative du Manitoba, soit de la Chambre des communes.

Dans sa politique concernant les Métis, le gouvernement provincial manitobain présente toutes les valeurs et tous les principes avancés par l'Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba depuis 1887, c'est-à-dire, entre autres, le principe de reconnaissance et celui de partenariat.

L'Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba fête cette année son 129^e anniversaire, est demeurée fidèle à ses racines historiques et identitaires et représente tous les Métis francophones du Manitoba depuis sept générations. Le rôle indéniable qu'ont joué les Métis et les Canadiens français dans la fondation de notre province est bien connu et reflété dans la vision de Riel sur le bilinguisme, et remonte à sa création en 1870.

Pour ceux et celles qui ne la connaissent pas, l'Union fut fondée par les familles de Riel et de ses proches en 1887, et l'Union est la plus ancienne organisation métisse qui fonctionne toujours en français au Manitoba, au Canada et en Amérique du Nord. Ses objectifs sont culturels et visent l'unité des Métis canadiens-français, la protection du peuple métis et ses intérêts et leur représentation en tant que peuple fondateur. Elle cherche à mettre en valeur les traditions, la culture, l'histoire des Métis de langue française.

C'est avec toute la reconnaissance de nos générations passées et celles à venir que nous remercions la ministre Rochelle Squires pour son leadership et son appui, si tôt dans le mandat de notre nouveau gouvernement conservateur, à la mise en œuvre de l'adoption du projet de loi 5 sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine.

Nous sommes reconnaissants pour l'adossement et le leadership de notre premier ministre Brian

Pallister et celle de son gouvernement envers l'adoption de cette loi provinciale qui encadrera l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine au niveau institutionnel et législatif.

Nous apprécions le leadership du député de Saint-Boniface, monsieur Greg Selinger, dans son soutien et sa contribution au développement des services et l'appui à la communauté francophone. Ce projet de loi prend racine dans la politique des services en français ainsi que le concept de l'offre active tel que détaillé aussi dans le deuxième rapport Chartier, Avant toute chose, le bon sens, et en 2013, de la Loi sur les centres de services bilingues. Nous remercions sincèrement les partis de l'opposition d'accueillir cette loi avec un esprit collaborateur—de collaboration et d'entente. En particulier, nous soulignons Monsieur Jon Gerrard, député de River Heights, Madame Cindy Lamoureux, députée de Burrows, Monsieur Wab Kinew, député de Fort Rouge, Madame Sarah Guillemard, députée de Fort Richmond, et Monsieur Bob Lagassé, député de Dawson Trail, pour vos témoignages et vos appuis en deuxième lecture du projet de loi. Votre désir de nous rendre justice ne passe pas inaperçu.

L'histoire a enregistré des moments difficiles et c'est grâce en partie au travail de plusieurs générations de membres de l'union nationale que les Métis n'ont plus à cacher ou à chuchoter le nom de Louis Riel ou à s'assimiler à la langue de la majorité. De sang et de cœur, les héritiers de Riel, les Métis canadiens français, ont conservé depuis des générations une culture qui leur est propre.

Tout au long de son histoire, l'union s'est déployée pour affirmer clairement ce que sont les Métis et pour combattre la marginalisation qu'on voulait leur imposer. Les membres de l'Union représentent les témoins vivants d'une très longue lutte en faveur d'une vision juste de Riel et du droit de tous les Métis de refuser de disparaître. Ce ne sont pas tous les Métis qui vivent avec ce fardeau de peur et de honte, avec ce sentiment de discrimination. Beaucoup d'entre eux participent pleinement à la société canadienne française ou anglaise du Canada et connaissent un certain succès.

Eux seuls, par contre, connaissent le prix de leur acculturation et de la renonciation à une partie de leur identité métisse. Ces décennies de camouflage identitaire font en sorte que, lorsque les jeunes générations, encouragées par l'existence de la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés, veulent partir à la découverte de leurs racines, elles doivent faire face à

une des cultures les plus complexes du Canada et du Manitoba.

En effet, la culture michif inclut un mélange constant d'identités cachées, mais elle est en même temps, aux yeux des Métis, la culture fondamentale et fondatrice du Manitoba, et fait certainement partie, à ce titre, du tissu national.

Les Métis canadiens-français connaissent bien les défis de préserver langue et culture. Il n'en demeure pas moins que ce pays a été fondé sur des principes bien particuliers et que Louis Riel a été la seule incarnation provinciale de ces principes à un moment où le Canada cherchait à prendre de l'expansion et à devenir une grande puissance. Nous rendons respect et honneur à nos leaders métis francophones tels que Joseph Dumas et Georges Forest qui furent des agents de changement incontournables dans la lutte d'obtention de droits pour la minorité francophone. Et le Manitoba en plein cœur du pays se retrouve encore, en 2016, en plein cœur d'une reconnaissance des droits linguistiques, au cœur même de la question sur la dualité linguistique manitobaine, l'encadrement et les bénéfices institutionnels pour les francophones vivant au Manitoba.

Et c'est pour cela que l'Union souligne aujourd'hui, auprès de ce comité, la véritable importance historique qu'en 2016, les partis gouvernementaux manitobains s'unissent pour adopter la loi 5, qui selon nous, est positive et sera bénéficier tous les manitobains et canadiens.

C'est le fruit de multiples efforts et de partenariats de plus d'un siècle d'individus, de familles, de communautés, de groupes d'institutions communautaires, de représentants élus, de différents gouvernements par exemple, de Roblin, Schreyer, Pawley, Filmon, Doer, Selinger et maintenant Pallister pour normaliser les appuis et les bénéfices de la dualité linguistique manitobaine. Un appui unanime des 57 membres serait porteur d'un message solidaire vis-à-vis à la contribution de la francophonie auprès de tous les Manitobains et les Canadiens, de quoi nous pourrions être fiers, de quoi nous pourrions célébrer.

L'Union représente la pérennité d'un idéal canadien que l'on retrouve dans la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés, avec ses valeurs d'inclusion et de respect. C'est donc avec fierté et sans réserve que l'union appuie la nouvelle définition de la francophonie, car elle reflète la diversité et la réalité de la communauté francophone manitobaine.

Nous gardons toujours espoir, chers membres du comité, que dans cette nouvelle ère de vérité et de réconciliation, d'inclusion et de collaboration, nous puissions ensemble créer un savoir-être manitobain et canadien à la hauteur des principes visionnaires et modernes promus par Louis Riel : le bilinguisme, le multiculturalisme, l'ouverture et le respect de la différence, l'entraide et le sens aigu de la justice sociale. Vous pouvez compter sur l'engagement, la participation et la collaboration continus envers ce devenir de la part de l'Union nationale métisse, héritiers de la nation métisse.

Translation

Mr. Chairperson, members of the Legislative Assembly, l'Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba is the oldest association in Manitoba's francophone community and, as such, represents a continued commitment to an ideal that goes back to the Red River (settlement) and its values of sharing.

No further proof of its loyalty to Canada and to Manitoba is needed. One simply needs to consider the fact that its members have been represented—democratically elected representatives since 1869, and have been and continue to be members of either Manitoba's Legislative Assembly or the House of Commons.

In its Metis policy, Manitoba's provincial government sets out the values and principles that l'Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba has been advocating for since 1887, that is to say, among others, the principles of recognition and partnership.

L'Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba is celebrating its 129th anniversary this year, and it has remained true to its historical roots and identity and represented Manitoba's francophone Metis for seven generations. The undeniable role that the Metis and French Canadians played in founding our province is well-known and it is reflected in Riel's vision of bilingualism that dates back to its creation in 1870.

For those who are not familiar with l'Union, it was created by the families of Riel and his associates in 1887 and is the oldest Metis organization still operating in French in Manitoba, Canada and North America. Its objectives are culturally focused and are geared toward ensuring the unity of the French-Canadian Metis, protecting the Metis people and their interests and representing them as a founding people. It seeks to promote the traditions, culture and history of the French speaking Metis.

It is with the full gratitude of our past generations and those to come that we thank Minister Rochelle Squires for her leadership and support, so early in the mandate of our new conservative government, and in tabling Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act.

We are grateful for the endorsement and leadership of our Premier, Brian Pallister, and that of his government in passing this provincial legislation that will support the development of Manitoba's francophone community at an institutional and legislative level.

We appreciate the leadership role played by the MLA for St. Boniface, Mr. Greg Selinger, through his assistance and contribution to the development of services and support for the francophone community. This bill has its roots in the French Language Services Policy and the concept of active offer as set out in the second Charter report, Above All, Common Sense, and in 2013, The Bilingual Service Centres Act. We sincerely thank the opposition parties for supporting this legislation in a spirit of co-operation and goodwill. We wish to thank in particular Mr. Jon Gerrard, MLA for River Heights; Ms. Cindy Lamoureux, MLA for Burrows; Mr. Wab Kinew, MLA for Fort Rouge; Ms. Sarah Guillemard, MLA for Fort Richmond; and Mr. Bob Lagassé, MLA for Dawson Trail, for their personal stories and support during the bill's second reading. Your desire to see that justice is done has not gone unnoticed.

History has recorded many difficult moments and it is thanks in part to the work of a number of generations of Union nationale members that the Metis no longer have to hide or mention Louis Riel's name in whispers or assimilate the language of the majority. As his blood relatives and strong believers in his cause, Riel's heirs, the French-Canadian Metis, have for generations preserved a culture that is unique to them.

Throughout its history, l'Union has been active to clearly affirm who the Metis are and to fight against the marginalization being imposed on them. The members of l'Union are the living witnesses of a long battle for Riel's fair vision and the right of all Metis to refuse to disappear. Not all Metis live with this burden of fear and shame and this feeling of discrimination. Many participate fully in French speaking or English speaking Canadian society and have achieved some success.

Only they, however, know the price of their acculturation or abandonment of a part of their

Metis identity. Decades spent hiding our identity means that when young generations, encouraged by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, embark on a journey to discover their roots, they face one of the most complex cultures of our country and province.

In fact, the Michif culture includes an ongoing mix of hidden identity, but it is also in the eyes of the Metis the fundamental and founding culture of Manitoba, and as such is certainly part of the national fabric.

French-Canadian Metis are very familiar with the challenges of preserving language and culture. It nevertheless remains that this country was founded on very unique principles and that Louis Riel was the only incarnation in this province of those principles at a time when Canada was seeking to expand and become a great power. We pay homage to our francophone Metis leaders such as Joseph Dumas and Georges Forest who were undeniable agents of change in the struggle to secure minority francophone rights. And in 2016, at the heart of the country, Manitoba also finds itself at the heart of the recognition of language rights, at the very heart of the matter of Manitoba's linguistic duality: a framework and institutional benefits for francophones living in Manitoba.

This is why today, l'Union is underscoring to the committee the real historical importance that in 2016 Manitoba's political parties are uniting to pass Bill 5, which in our view is positive and will benefit all Manitobans and Canadians.

It is the result of many efforts and partnerships over the course of a century by individuals, families, communities, community institutions, elected representatives, and various governments, including the Roblin, Schreyer, Pawley, Filmon, Doer, Selinger and now Pallister administrations, to normalize the supports and benefits of Manitoba's linguistic duality. The unanimous support of the 57 members would send a message of solidarity to all Manitobans and Canadians with respect to the contribution of the francophone community, a united stand we could be proud of and celebrate.

l'Union represents the longevity of a Canadian ideal found in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, with its values of inclusion and respect. It is therefore with pride and without reservation that l'Union supports the new definition of the francophone community as it reflects the diversity and reality of Manitoba's francophone community.

Committee members, we continue to hope in this new era of truth and reconciliation, inclusion and co-operation, that together we might create a Manitoban and Canadian way of living that is up to the standards of the visionary and modern principles promoted by Louis Riel: namely bilingualism, multiculturalism, openness and respect for differences, mutual assistance and a heightened sense of social justice. You can count on the ongoing commitment, participation, and co-operation of l'Union nationale métisse, the heirs of the Metis nation, in achieving this.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

* (19:10)

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

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup pour votre présentation.

Translation

Thank you very much for your presentation.

English

I really appreciate your words on—from a historical perspective and I want to congratulate you on your anniversary, the anniversary of your organization, and your comments in regards to the nonpartisan nature of bilingualism in the province were very, very important, and I just really appreciate that, so thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your comments.

Are there any more questions?

Okay, thank you for your presentation.

I will now call upon Jacqueline Blay, Société franco-manitobaine.

Do you have any written material for the—for distribution to the committee?

Ms. Jacqueline Blay (Société franco-manitobaine): Yes.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Blay: Monsieur le Président, mesdames et messieurs les députés, pour la première fois depuis 1890, la communauté francophone du Manitoba n'éprouve pas, en ce juin—en ce 28 juin 2016, le

besoin de s'opposer aux actions de son gouvernement dans le domaine des droits linguistiques. Au contraire, elle choisit de les approuver et de les appuyer.

En effet, la loi 5 sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine dont il est question aujourd'hui, nous replace, comme citoyens et citoyennes, à égalité avec les Manitobains dans leur ensemble. Notre seule différence est que notre langue maternelle, une différence que nous estimons être à l'avantage du Manitoba et du Canada.

Bien souvent au cours de notre histoire, nous avons présenté des opinions différentes de notre gouvernement provincial dans le domaine des droits linguistiques et nous avons demandé un redressement d'une situation qui nous défavorisait et nous empêchait de grandir. Ainsi, nous avons été en désaccord, en querelles et en positions adverses.

Aujourd'hui, cette loi 5 efface, dans sa simplicité et son bon sens, de longues décennies d'inégalité. Elle nous garantit un avenir encadré par des acquis mis en place de façon concertée et à la mesure de nos besoins.

Cette loi, nous la demandons expressément et ouvertement depuis 2007, mais en fait nous l'attendions depuis 1890, alors que nos droits constitutionnels étaient abolis et ensuite rétablis au 20^e siècle, il y a plus de 30 ans.

Nos porte-paroles, Georges Forest et son avocat Alain Hogue, et ensuite, Roger Bilodeau et son avocat, Vaughan Baird, se sont rendus jusqu'à la Cour suprême du Canada pour obtenir réparation. Nous étions partie prenante dans leurs actions et nous avons subi beaucoup d'épreuves pendant ces années de revendications constitutionnelles qui depuis ont fait place à des progrès significatifs.

Notons, en 1981, la création du Secrétariat aux affaires francophones, suivie de l'instauration, en 1989 de la Politique sur les services en français, et l'année suivante, du concept de l'offre active, la présentation en 1998 du rapport Chartier, Avant toute chose, le bon sens, et, en 2013, la Loi sur les centres de services bilingues. Ce sont des étapes marquantes qui, petit à petit, nous ont fait regagner le terrain perdu en 1890, dans ce domaine fondamental des services en français. Aujourd'hui, la boucle est bouclée.

Nous sommes heureux de constater que, jusqu'à présent, aucune voix politique dissidente ne s'est manifestée pour s'opposer à cette loi 5.

En particulier, nous remercions les partis de l'opposition de l'avoir avec-accueillie avec un esprit de collaboration et un désir de nous rendre justice. Le gouvernement précédent et, en particulier, le député de Saint-Boniface (M. Selinger), avait préparé ce terrain d'entente.

Cela nous confirme que la question des droits linguistiques des francophones du Manitoba n'est pas et n'est plus une question partisane mais plutôt une occasion de réconciliation et de collaboration.

Pour notre part, parallèlement à ces avancées législatives et gouvernementales, nous avons cheminé sur le plan communautaire. Plus particulièrement, depuis la fin 2013, nous nous sommes remis en question. La tenue des États généraux de la francophonie manitobaine avec 146 cafés-citoyens, 1 531 participations et 400 heures de réflexion nous ont fourni un premier rapport suivi d'une ébauche d'un plan de stratégie-plan stratégique communautaire, de même qu'une ébauche de vision.

Tout-très simplement, nos consultations la semaine dernière nous indiquent que notre but est de vivre en français dans toutes les dimensions de la vie quotidienne. Ni plus, ni moins. Cette loi 5 nous donne l'espoir d'y parvenir, avec l'appui de votre gouvernement. Nous souhaitons que les nouvelles générations n'aient plus à connaître les actions clandestines, les procès sans fin, les épreuves difficiles, les colères et le désespoir qui ont été la marque de leurs ancêtres, parents et grands-parents.

Le dépôt rapide de cette loi 5 nous a heureusement surpris et rassurés. Après votre arrivée au pouvoir, vous nous avez consultés et nous vous avons suggéré quelques ajustements, que vous avez partiellement accordés. L'un d'entre eux nous frappe et nous plaît plus particulièrement : vous avez ajouté le mot « reconnaissance », captant ainsi l'esprit de l'heure et celui de notre communauté.

En effet, au cours de nos États généraux, nous avons constaté chez les participants ce même désir d'ouverture, donc de réconciliation avec la majorité anglophone.

Les mariages exogames, le phénomène de la mondialisation, le succès des programmes d'immersion sont tous des facteurs qui nous entraînent nous aussi vers ce désir de réconciliation et son corollaire de collaboration, pour une relation avec vous et une vie sociale et communautaire plus harmonieuse.

D'ailleurs, à cette étape-ci de notre histoire, nous connaissons bien la valeur de nos contributions dans tous des domaines, qu'ils soient politiques, culturels, sociaux, touristiques, économiques, et cetera.

Nous savons aussi que nous pouvons aspirer à de plus grands succès, puisque dorénavant nous avons accès à cette loi qui encadre nos acquis. Fondamentalement, cette loi 5 nous permet de ne plus craindre pour ces progrès et surtout de dialoguer avec vous de façon régulière, notamment dans le cadre du conseil consultatif qui est inscrit dans la législation.

Nous serons présents autour de la même table et nous prendrons la parole de façon constructive pour le bien-être des francophones, bien sûr, mais aussi et surtout du Manitoba. Dans ces discussions, notre avenir sera construit avec notre accord. En cas de désaccords, nous chercherons à les résoudre de façon à respecter nos interlocuteurs, tout en conservant nos principes fondamentaux. Notre communauté n'en attend pas moins de nous.

De plus, dans cette loi 5, nous sommes heureux, et d'ailleurs vous le savez, de voir que la nouvelle définition de francophone reflète ce caractère inclusif dont nous avons tant parlé durant nos États généraux.

Nous y retrouvons les caractéristiques fondamentales présentes dans la politique des services en français, c'est-à-dire la minorité de langue officielle, accompagnée de deux autres éléments essentiels en 2016 : les francophiles, qu'ils soient issus des écoles d'immersion ou de l'amour de notre langue maternelle, et les nouveaux arrivants attirés par notre stratégie d'élargissement de l'espace francophone et qui contribuent à notre communauté de mille et une façons.

Ce nouveau visage de la francophonie est présent dans cette loi 5 et il nous correspond bien. Il nous permet de vivre de façon plus harmonieuse avec nos voisins, sans crainte, comme nous l'avons tant fait par le passé. En ce sens, notre avenir se dessine dans l'inclusion et, jusqu'à un certain point, la réconciliation avec l'ensemble du Manitoba.

En terminant, Madame la Ministre Squires et vous membres du gouvernement, nous vous remercions infiniment de votre diligence à répondre à nos besoins d'une part, et d'autre part, d'avoir très bien compris l'importance que cette loi 5 a pour notre communauté. C'est la raison pour laquelle, au nom

de nos membres et de l'ensemble de la communauté francophone, nous souhaitons l'adoption à l'unanimité de la loi 5 sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine dans les plus brefs délais. Nous estimons qu'elle est notre passeport vers une pérennité et une durabilité que nous attendons et recherchons depuis très longtemps. En 2016, cette attente et cette recherche n'ont plus de raison d'être.

En retour, nous sommes certainement bien prêts à travailler avec vous pour le plus grand bien du Manitoba et du Canada.

Je vous remercie beaucoup.

Translation

Mr. Chairperson, members of the Legislative Assembly, for the first time since 1890, the francophone community of Manitoba does not feel the need on this 28th day of June, 2016, to oppose the actions of its government in the area of language rights. On the contrary, it is choosing to approve and support them.

In fact, Bill 5 respecting the enhancement and support of Manitoba's francophone community, which is being considered today, restores our status as equal citizens within Manitoba's population as a whole. The only difference is our mother tongue, a difference that we feel benefits Manitoba and Canada.

Over the course of our history, our opinions have frequently differed from those of our provincial government with respect to language rights, and we have asked for a correction of the situation that has put us at a disadvantage and thwarted our development. As a result, we have found ourselves in an adversarial situation and were involved in disagreements and disputes with each other.

Today, Bill 5, by its simplicity and common sense, erases many decades of inequality. It guarantees a future built on gains to be put into place in a concerted manner based on our needs.

We have been calling for this bill openly and expressly since 2007, but in fact we have been waiting for it since 1890, when our constitutional rights were abolished and then restored in the 20th century more than 30 years ago.

Our representatives, Georges Forest and his lawyer, Alain Hogue, followed by, Roger Bilodeau and his lawyer, Vaughan Baird, went as far as the Supreme Court of Canada to obtain redress. We supported

their actions and endured many hardships during the years that these constitutional claims were ongoing, which led to significant progress.

Specifically, in 1981, the establishment of the Francophone Affairs Secretariat, followed by the French Language Services Policy in 1989, the concept of active offer the following year, the Chartier report, Above All, Common Sense, in 1998, and, in 2013, The Bilingual Service Centres Act. These are significant steps that gradually allowed us to regain the ground lost in 1890, in the key area of French language services. Today, we have come full circle.

We are happy to see that, so far, there have been no dissenting political voices objecting to Bill 5. In particular, we would like to thank the opposition parties for supporting this bill in a spirit of co-operation and a desire to ensure that justice is done. The previous government and the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) in particular, had laid the groundwork for this mutually agreeable solution.

This confirms that the matter of language rights for francophones in Manitoba is not and is no longer a partisan issue, but rather an opportunity for reconciliation and co-operation.

For our part, parallel to this legislative and governmental progress, we have made headway at a community level. More specifically, since the end of 2013, we have carried out a self-assessment. A comprehensive review process (États généraux) was undertaken by Manitoba's francophone community including 146 citizen cafes, 1,531 participants, and 400 hours of reflection, which resulted in a first report followed by a draft community strategic plan, and a draft vision statement.

Simply put, the consultations held last week indicated that our goal is to live in French in all areas of daily life. No more, no less. Bill 5 gives us hope that this is possible, with the support of our government. We hope that coming generations will not be witness to clandestine actions, unending legal proceedings, undue hardships, and the anger and despair so familiar to previous generations including their parents and grandparents.

The swift tabling of Bill 5 was a pleasant and reassuring surprise. After coming to power, you consulted with us and we suggested some amendments, which you accepted in part. One of these caught our attention and we are particularly pleased by it: the word "recognition" was added,

capturing the spirit of the current state of affairs and of our community.

In fact, during the course of the comprehensive review process, we noted this same desire for openness among participants, and reconciliation with the anglophone majority.

Mixed marriages, the phenomenon of globalization, the success of immersion programs are all factors that have instilled in us this desire for reconciliation and cooperation, as a basis for a relationship with you and a more harmonious social and community life.

Moreover, at this point in our history, we know the value of our contributions in all areas well, whether in the political, cultural or social arenas or the tourism or economic development sectors.

We know also that we can aspire to even greater success, given that we have this legislation to protect our gains. Fundamentally, Bill 5 frees us from any concerns related to those gains and provides opportunity for ongoing dialogue with you, particularly through the advisory council, provided for in the legislation.

We will be sitting at the same table and will contribute to the dialogue in a constructive manner, for the well-being of francophones and of course all Manitobans. Through these discussions, our future will be fashioned with our consent. We will seek to resolve any disagreements in a manner that is respectful of our counterparts, while preserving our fundamental principles. Our community expects no less from us.

As you know, we are pleased to see included in Bill 5, the new definition of "francophone," which reflects the inclusive character we spoke of so often during the comprehensive review process.

It includes the fundamental characteristics found in the French Language Services Policy, that is to say the official language minority along with two other key elements in 2016: francophiles, whether they have come through immersion schools or simply have a love of our mother tongue, and newcomers who were drawn here by our strategy to expand the Francophone presence and who contribute to our community in a myriad of ways.

This new profile of the francophonie is present in Bill 5 and reflects us well. It allows us to live in greater harmony with our neighbours, without fear, as we did to such a great extent in the past. In this

sense, our future is based on inclusion and, to a certain degree, reconciliation with the entire province.

In closing, we wish to thank you, Madam Minister, and other members of government, for your diligence in meeting our needs, and for understanding the importance that Bill 5 has for our community. It is for this reason that on behalf of our members and the entire Francophone community, we look forward to the unanimous passing of Bill 5 on the enhancement and support of the francophone community, as soon as possible. We are of the view that it is the key to the longevity and sustainability of our community, which we have been waiting and searching for, for such a long time. In 2016, our wait and our quest are over.

In return, we are certainly prepared to work with you for the greater good of the province and country.

Thank you very much.

English

Thank you very much.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup, Madame Blay.

I consider you an adviser, but more importantly, a friend. So thank you for your words. Thank you for your efforts and everything you've done for the francophone community, and I look forward to ongoing dialogue.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Are there any more questions.

Thank you very much for your presentation.

* (19:20)

I will now call upon Annie Bédard, Santé en français.

Do you have any written materials for distribution?

Ms. Annie Bédard (Santé en français): No.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Bédard: Alors bonjour, Monsieur le Président, mesdames et messieurs députés ainsi que les collègues et amis de la francophonie.

Alors, nous vous remercions de cette opportunité de vous dire notre reconnaissance et de souligner que Santé en français appuie le projet de loi 5 qui vient renforcer la contribution et les obligations des offices régionaux de la santé, les régies des services à l'enfant et la famille, et des établissements de la santé des services sociaux qui sont désignés francophones et bilingues.

Santé en français, comme porte-parole officiel de la communauté francophone du Manitoba, en matière de services sociaux et de santé, joue un rôle de leadership pour favoriser l'accès à des services de qualité en français dans le domaine de la santé et des services sociaux.

L'appui que nous souhaitons unanime par les trois partis représentés à l'Assemblée législative au projet de loi 5 sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine, sera pour nous un témoignage important. Merci en particulier aux députés Lamoureux, Kinew, Guillemard, Lagassé, Gerrard, pour des témoignages parfois très personnels. Ces témoignages sont pour nous des marqueurs importants sur la place de notre communauté francophone dans le Manitoba d'aujourd'hui. Nous vous sommes reconnaissants de l'appui offert pour assurer son épanouissement et sa contribution à l'avenir de notre province.

Merci à ceux et celles qui, à l'intérieur du gouvernement, guidés par le leadership des premiers ministres Selinger et Pallister, ont préparé ce projet de loi en étroite collaboration avec les organismes de notre communauté francophone, dont notamment la Société franco-manitobaine.

Son adoption constitue un moment important dans l'histoire de notre communauté de notre province. Elle s'inscrit dans la trame initiée par Louis Riel lors de la création du Manitoba, basée sur le respect et la collaboration entre les communautés vivant sur ce territoire, une trame qui certes a subi au cours des années plusieurs obstacles et de trop nombreux détours.

Nous sommes ici aujourd'hui, presque 50 ans après qu'un autre premier ministre, l'honorable Duff Roblin, au printemps 1967 ait réanimé cet esprit de respect de collaboration en restituant par la loi 59 le droit d'enseigner en français dans les écoles du Manitoba.

Les cinq décennies qui ont suivi ont connu leur lot de difficultés mais elles ont aussi vu des progrès continus. Des progrès dont la poursuite est

dorénavant assise sur les bases légales solides grâce à l'adoption du projet de loi qui est devant vous aujourd'hui, d'où l'importance, bien sûr, de son adoption.

Merci à vous, Madame Squires, Ministre responsable des Affaires francophones, de proposer ce projet de loi en début de mandat. Nous voulons aussi reconnaître l'appui offert par monsieur Goertzen, Ministre de la Santé, des Aînés et de la Vie active à ce projet de loi.

En effet, la santé et les services sociaux sont des domaines où l'importance d'avoir accès aux services dans sa langue est primordiale. Et ce, tant pour le système de santé que pour la population desservie. La capacité de comprendre et d'être compris est au cœur de la relation qui s'établit entre une et un professionnel et son client et sa cliente, au point que la qualité et l'efficacité mêmes des soins offerts et leur coût en dépendent.

Vous trouverez, monsieur le ministre de la Santé et madame la ministre des Affaires francophones, dans Santé en français un allié pour la mise en œuvre de cette loi. Et non seulement un allié, mais un ensemble de partenaires qui ont déjà fait leurs preuves. Le Manitoba est en effet un chef de file dans les initiatives visant à améliorer l'accès à des services de santé et des services sociaux en français.

De concert avec ses partenaires communautaires et du système de la santé et des services sociaux, Santé en français a mené ou appuyé de nombreuses initiatives afin d'améliorer la prestation de services. Par exemple, la création de centres de santé à Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes et à Saint-Claude, ainsi que le tout nouveau Centre d'accès à Saint-Boniface. Avec plusieurs organismes dont l'Université de Saint-Boniface, les Centres de la petite enfance, la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine et Pluri-elles, nous avons formé des secouristes membres de la communauté en premiers soins en santé mentale. Grâce à des tournées en région, nous avons facilité le placement dans les régions du sud de Manitoba de stagiaires bilingues provenant des programmes en sciences infirmières et qui ont résulté dans des embauches, donc des emplois pour des nouveaux diplômés et qui assurent des services en français pour notre population. Et aussi par l'adoption de trois politiques par le ministère de la Santé, dont une toute récente touche les ressources humaines, nous avons préservé, grâce à ces politiques, des acquis pour la communauté francophone et équipé nos partenaires dans les offices régionaux de la santé pour faciliter

leur travail dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de leur plan de services en langue française.

Nous espérons avoir bientôt l'occasion de vous rencontrer afin de vous présenter nos aspirations et nos projets. En terminant, Madame la Ministre responsable des Affaires francophones, Madame Squires, nous félicitons votre gouvernement d'être passé à l'action en ce tout début de mandat, et nous vous assurons notre entière collaboration pour la mise en œuvre de cette loi importante pour l'avenir de notre communauté.

Les bases qui sont contenues dans cette loi permettent les plus grands espoirs. Ensemble, soyons audacieux. Mettons-nous au défi d'atteindre des résultats qui bénéficieront non seulement à la communauté francophone du Manitoba, mais à l'ensemble du Manitoba et du Canada.

Nous savons que c'est possible. Ensemble, assurons-nous que tous les partenaires, incluant le gouvernement du Canada, soient au rendez-vous.

Sur ce dernier point, permettez-nous, Madame Squires, de vous—à inviter le gouvernement du Canada à renforcer son appui à des initiatives qui pourront émerger de ce nouveau cadre législatif. Comme vous le savez, des consultations ont cours présentement pour la préparation de la prochaine phase 2018-2023 du plan fédéral d'action pour les langues officielles, dont une consultation aura lieu ici à Winnipeg la semaine prochaine. Donc assurons-nous que cette prochaine phase mette à notre disposition au Manitoba les ressources capables d'appuyer les ambitions que cette nouvelle loi nous inspire.

Merci.

Translation

Good evening, Mr. Chairperson, members of the Legislative Assembly, and colleagues and friends of the francophonie.

We thank you for this opportunity to express our appreciation and to indicate that Santé en français supports Bill 5, which reinforces the contribution and obligations of the regional health authorities, child and family services authorities, and the health and social services facilities that are designated francophone and bilingual.

As the official representative of Manitoba's francophone community in the areas of health and social services, Santé en français plays a leadership

role in promoting access to quality French language services in these areas.

The support of the three parties in the Legislative Assembly for Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, which we hope will be unanimous, will be an important testimonial. I wish to thank in particular MLAs Lamoureux, Kinew, Guillemard, Lagassé and Gerrard for relating their sometimes very personal stories. These are important accounts on the place of our francophone community in today's Manitoba. We are very grateful for the support provided to ensure its development and contributions to the future of our province.

Thank you to all those in government who, guided by the leadership of Premiers Selinger and Pallister, prepared this bill in close co-operation with the organizations in our francophone community, in particular the Société franco-manitobaine.

The passing of this bill is an important moment in the history of our community and province. It is part of the path forged by Louis Riel at the time of Manitoba's creation based on mutual respect and co-operation among communities living in this territory, a path that over the years has been filled with obstacles and far too many detours.

We are here today, almost fifty years after another Premier, the Honourable Duff Roblin, rekindled this spirit of respect and co-operation in the spring of 1967 by restoring the right to teach in French in Manitoba schools through Bill 59.

The five decades that followed brought with them their share of difficulties but also ongoing progress. That progress will, from this point on, rest on a solid legal footing thanks to the passing of the bill before you today, reinforcing the importance of ensuring that it is indeed passed.

I wish to thank you, Ms. Squires, Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs, for tabling the bill early in this mandate. We also wish to acknowledge the support provided by Mr. Goertzen, Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living, with respect to this bill.

Health and social services are areas in which it is critically important to have access to services in one's first language. This is true, for both the health care system and the population served. The ability to understand and be understood is at the heart of the relationship that is established between a professional and his/her client, to the point that the

very quality and effectiveness of the care provided as well as its cost depend on it.

As Minister of Health and Minister of Francophone Affairs, you will find in Santé en français an ally with respect to the implementation of this bill—not only an ally, but a group of partners who have already proven themselves. Manitoba is in fact a leader with respect to initiatives aimed at enhancing access to health and social services in French.

Together with its community partners and the health and social services system, Santé en français has led or supported many initiatives to improve service delivery. For example, the creation of health centres in Notre Dame de Lourdes and St. Claude as well as the recently opened Access St. Boniface Centre. Along with a number of organizations including the Université de Saint-Boniface, early childhood education centres, the Division scolaire franco-Manitobaine and Pluri-elles, we offered training in mental health first aid in the community. Further to visits in rural areas, we facilitated practicums for nursing students in southern Manitoba that resulted in permanent positions for some students, so jobs for recent graduates that provide health services in French for our population. As a result of three policies of the Department of Health, including a very recent one pertaining to human resources, we have preserved gains for the francophone community and provided tools to our partners, including regional health authorities, to facilitate the work of implementing their French language services plans.

We hope to have the opportunity to meet in the near future and share our hopes and projects with you. In closing, Madam Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs, Ms. Squires, we congratulate your government for taking action early in its mandate, and we assure you of our full co-operation in implementing this important bill for the future of our community.

This bill lays down a foundation that gives us great hope. Together, we can be daring. Let us take on the challenge of achieving results that will benefit not only the francophone community of Manitoba but the province and country as well.

We know it can be done. Together, let us ensure that all partners including the government of Canada join forces.

On this last point, allow us to encourage you, Ms. Squires, to invite the government of Canada to strengthen its support for initiatives that may stem

from this new legislative framework. As you know, consultations are currently underway to prepare the next phase, 2018-2023, of the federal action plan on official languages, with a consultation taking place here in Winnipeg next week. Let us ensure that this next phase will make resources available in Manitoba to support the ambitions this new legislation has inspired in us.

Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup, Madame Bédard.

I wanted to let you know that the federal government did reach out to our government to inform us that they were very excited about seeing this—the implementation of this bill in the province of Manitoba and that they wanted to learn more about that.

And I just wanted to thank you for the work that your organization does in conjunction with the Francophone Affairs Secretariat in getting together those French language services plans for our regional health authorities and child and family services authorities, so thank you very much. Merci.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Are there any more questions?

Thank you for your presentation.

I will now call upon Michèle Lécuyer-Hutton, Pluri-elles.

Do you have any written materials?

Ms. Michèle Lécuyer-Hutton (Pluri-elles): Yes.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Yes? Okay. Please proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Lécuyer-Hutton: Bonjour. Je me présente, je suis Michèle Lécuyer-Hutton, présidente de Pluri-elles Manitoba Inc.

Je suis ici ce soir avec notre directrice générale, Mona Audet. Je tiens d'abord à remercier le comité de nous donner l'occasion de vous entretenir sur l'importance du projet de la loi 5 sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine.

Pluri-elles est un organisme qui fut créé par des femmes leaders, sans but lucratif, qui procure des

outils nécessaires aux Franco-manitobains pour favoriser le développement sur les plans personnel et professionnel. Notre organisme est actif dans les domaines de l'éducation, de la formation, de l'économie, de la culture, de la santé et des services sociaux. Nous contribuons à bâtir des communautés francophones plus fortes d'un bout à l'autre de la province.

Nos services sont subventionnés par la Province du Manitoba, le gouvernement fédéral, Centraide de Winnipeg et Francofonds.

Notre clientèle est vaste, nous offrons des services aux femmes, aux hommes francophones, métis, immigrants, aux adolescents et les adolescentes, aux familles endogames unilingues, exogames interlinguistiques et interculturelles, aux enfants de zéro à six ans, aux immigrants, aux immigrantes et aux nouveaux arrivants et aux enfants scolaires-d'âge scolaire.

* (19:30)

Nous offrons des programmes en alphabétisation. Avec l'aide de 21 personnes qui travaillent en alphabétisation, nous desservons 24 communautés où nous offrons de la formation, notamment en alphabétisation, francisation, re francisation, cours informatiques et aide aux devoirs.

Nous comptons sept centres partout dans la province qui offrent des services à 460 adultes, dix centres d'aide aux devoirs qui offrent des services à 642 élèves. Chaque année, nous offrons par Internet, le programme de DEG, le diplôme d'équivalent à la 12^e année. Cette année, nous avons formé 15 participants et participantes. Nous offrons une émission à Envol 91 tous les mardis matin avec tous nos secteurs.

En counselling et en entraide, nous offrons également des services de counselling et entraide. Cette année, nous avons 94 personnes au moyen de counselling, effectué 357 interventions, donné 282 ateliers et sessions de groupes à un total de 2 405 participants individuels. Au moyen des interventions, 7 291 personnes ont bénéficié des programmes. Également, plus de 21 092 personnes ont visité notre site Web pour y chercher—site web, excusez, pour y chercher de l'information.

En employabilité, nous offrons aussi des services en employabilité. Nous jumelons des citoyens à des employeurs potentiels et nous offrons des formations

d'appoint. Cette année, nous avons accueilli 292 nouveaux clients et effectué 9 129 contacts. Nous avons offert 42 ateliers à 270 participants et accueilli 31 clients en informatique.

Informatique pour les aînés : cette année, nous avons aussi aidé 45 aînés qui ont profité d'une session de trois mois en informatique.

Budgétisation—littéracie financière : nous offrons également un programme de budgétisation—littéracie financière, un programme qui accueille huit clients. Nous avons atteint notre objectif.

Aujourd'hui, c'est au nom des clients issus de tous les horizons que je vous adresse la parole. Il est clair pour nous, selon la clientèle que nous desservons, qu'un Franco-manitobain ou une Franco-manitobaine n'est pas uniquement une personne de langue maternelle française. Notre francophonie a mille accents, mille couleurs et n'a pas d'âge. La nouvelle définition proposée par le projet de loi permet mieux de refléter cette réalité franco-manitobaine et de reconnaître son évolution. Cette réalité se traduit concrètement par les mariages exogames, les écoles d'immersion et l'immigration. Nos organismes fourmillent des gens venant de tous ces horizons. Il n'est pas rare de voir des jeunes d'immersion impliqués dans nos organismes jeunesse, ou encore pour des nouveaux arrivants de siéger à nos conseils d'administration. Notre francophonie se veut ouverte et inclusive. La nouvelle définition proposée fait en sorte que l'on reconnaît la contribution de tous et chacune.

Nous reconnaissons aussi l'importance que le gouvernement de mettre en place les cadres nécessaires en vue de favoriser l'épanouissement de notre francophonie du Manitoba. Le projet de loi, tel qu'il est constitué, nous semble accroître à la collaboration et le dialogue entre la communauté et le gouvernement. Nous ne pouvons trop insister sur la consultation des organismes et des citoyens francophones de tous les horizons lors de l'élaboration des plans sur les services en français et sur le rapport concret des avancées.

Notre clientèle est la preuve que les services en français, partout au Manitoba, touchent beaucoup de gens, plus de francophones—plus que juste les francophones de souche. Cette loi permet à notre clientèle et tous les citoyens et citoyennes du Manitoba un service en français accru grâce à un encadrement et des bénéfiques institutionnels qui découlent de la politique et du rapport Chartier.

Bref, nous appuyons le projet de loi dans son ensemble et avons hâte de collaborer davantage avec vous.

Je vous remercie de votre intérêt et je suis prête à répondre à vos questions.

Merci.

Translation

Good evening. My name is Michèle Lécuyer-Hutton and I am president of Pluri-elles Manitoba Inc.

I am here this evening with our executive director, Mona Audet. I wish firstly to thank the committee for providing this opportunity to underscore the importance of Bill 5 on the enhancement and support of the francophone community.

Pluri-elles is a not-for-profit organization created by women who are leaders, and it provides the tools needed to promote personal development and skills training for Franco-Manitobans. Our organization is active in the areas of education, training, economic development, culture, health and social services. We contribute to building stronger francophone communities throughout the province.

Our services are funded by the Province of Manitoba, the federal government, United Way of Winnipeg and Francofonds.

Our clientele is varied and includes francophone and Metis men and women, children and adolescents, newcomers, unilingual endogamous families and interlinguistic and intercultural exogamous families.

* (19:30)

We provide literacy programs. With the help of 21 literacy workers, we serve 24 communities and provide literacy training as well as francisation, refrancisation, computer training and help with homework.

We have seven centres throughout the province that provide services to 460 adults, and 10 centres that provide help with homework to 642 students. Every year, we offer the GED program, high school equivalency, through the Internet. This year we had 15 participants. We also host a program on Envol 91 every Tuesday morning that all of our sectors participate in.

We also provide counselling and peer support. This year we provided counselling to 94 individuals, carried out 357 (social work) interventions, gave 282

workshops and group sessions to a total of 2,405 individual participants. Through interventions, 7,291 individuals benefited from the programs. Over 21,092 individuals visited our website to look for information.

We also offer employability services. We match potential employees and employers with each other and provide upgrading. This year, we welcomed 292 new clients and made 9,129 contacts. We gave 42 workshops to 270 participants and provided computer training to 31 clients.

This year we also provided a three-month computer training session to 45 seniors.

We also offer a program in budgeting and financial literacy, which had eight participants. We met our objective.

Today, I am speaking on behalf of clients from all walks of life. It is clear to us and based on the clientele we serve, that being Franco-Manitoban does not simply mean having French as one's mother tongue. Our francophonie includes a thousand accents and colours and is of all ages. The new definition proposed in the bill better reflects this Franco-Manitoban reality and acknowledges its evolution. From a practical standpoint, this reality stems from mixed marriages, immersion schools and immigration. Large numbers of individuals with many different backgrounds are involved in our organizations. It is not rare to see young people from immersion schools involved in our youth organizations or newcomers sitting on our boards of directors. Our francophonie is open and inclusive. The new proposed definition acknowledges the contribution made by all.

We also recognize that it is important for the government to put into place the framework required to promote the development of our francophonie in Manitoba. As drafted, the bill appears to increase opportunity for co-operation and dialogue between the community and the government. We cannot emphasize enough how important it is for francophone organizations and citizens from all backgrounds to be consulted when French language services plans are developed and to receive reports on concrete progress.

Our clientele is proof that French language services throughout Manitoba, touch the lives of many people, more than francophones—more than just old-stock francophones. This bill gives our clientele and all Manitoba citizens greater services in French

through an approach and institutional benefits stemming from the policy and the Chartier report.

We support this bill in its entirety and look forward to working more closely with you.

Thank you for your interest. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup pour votre présentation.

Translation

Thank you very much for your presentation.

English

Really thank you for the work that you do and really appreciated your words this evening.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Are there any more questions?

I will now call upon—oh, thank you for your presentation, sorry.

I will now call on Mathieu Allard, Association des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba.

Do you have any written material for the distribution—for distribution to the committee?

Mr. Mathieu Allard (Association des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba): Yes. Oui, j'ai fait parvenir des copies de la présentation au comité. Merci de m'entendre aujourd'hui.

Translation

Yes, I had copies of the presentation sent to the committee. Thank you for hearing me today.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Okay, please proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Allard: Thank you.

Alors en ce mardi, 28 juin 2016, c'est avec grande fierté que je représente le conseil d'administration de l'Association des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba, l'AMBM, en ce moment historique qui nous mènera, nous l'espérons, à l'adoption unanime du projet de loi 5, un projet de loi

sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine.

Avant tout, permettez-moi de transmettre nos plus sincères remerciements à la ministre Rochelle Squires, non seulement pour son appui envers notre francophonie, mais pour avoir osé poser si tôt dans son mandat ce geste de grande importance, un geste apprécié et remarqué par l'ensemble de nos membres municipaux et de la francophonie manitobaine, voire canadienne, le premier ministre Brian Pallister et l'ensemble de son cabinet pour leur vision et pour croire sincèrement en la valeur sociale et économique de notre francophonie, le député de Saint-Boniface, monsieur Selinger, pour son leadership et son appui de longue date envers nos municipalités et envers la communauté, monsieur Jon Gerrard, député de River Heights, madame Cindy Lamoureux, députée de Burrows, monsieur Wab Kinew, député de Fort Rouge, madame Sarah Guillemard, députée de Fort Richmond; et monsieur Bob Lagassé, député de Dawson Trail, pour leur soutien marqué en deuxième lecture du projet de loi 5.

Catalyseur du développement, de la prospérité et de la pérennité des collectivités bilingues du Manitoba, l'AMBM agit depuis 1995 en tant que chef de file politique et stratégique pour regrouper, appuyer et représenter une gouvernance municipale forte et solidaire.

Il est démontré que la structure de l'AMBM, incluant son moteur de développement économique, le CDEM, répond aux aspirations de croissance et de vitalité des 17 municipalités qui en sont à la même—qui en sont à la base même. Notre modèle s'inspire—notre modèle inspire même plusieurs autres collectivités du Canada. De plus, les municipalités bilingues du Manitoba sont devenues des chefs de file canadiens en matière d'économie verte, avec l'initiative Éco-Ouest qui est en pleine expansion dans l'ensemble du pays.

Une partie du crédit revient certainement à la province du Manitoba qui nous offre constamment un appui de taille. Nous ne pourrions passer sous silence l'entente de partenariat qui fut signée avec Éco-Ouest en 2015 et qui permet aux municipalités de notre province de bénéficier du leadership franco-manitobain dans leur virage vers une économie plus verte. Nous tenons aussi à souligner la collaboration exceptionnelle que nous offre le Secrétariat aux affaires francophones. Leur soutien permet d'offrir à nos membres municipaux des ressources pour la

traduction de documents publics, ainsi que pour le maintien des bibliothèques et des initiatives de sports et de loisirs en français dans nos communautés.

Pour l'AMBM et ses membres, la politique sur les services en langue française et le rapport du Juge Chartier, Avant toute chose, le bon sens, constituent des pierres d'assise fondamentales au développement et à l'offre active de services en français sur notre territoire. À nos yeux, la loi 5 constitue la prochaine étape logique favorisant l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine et notre association appuie sans réserve son adoption.

Il sera toutefois critique que cette loi inclue de façon évidente une mention favorisant le maintien, l'augmentation et la pérennité des services en français pour les municipalités bilingues qui ont dû fusionner avec des municipalités anglophones au cours des dernières années.

Les fusions municipales ont eu pour effet de diminuer le poids démographique francophone de nos municipalités, ce qui engendrera à plus long terme une diminution de l'offre de services en français au plan municipal.

Par exemple, depuis octobre 2014, le Village de Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes et la Municipalité de Lorne se sont fusionnés pour former la nouvelle Municipalité de Lorne. Avant la fusion, la population de Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes était francophone à 87 pourcent et disposait de cinq droits de vote autour de sa propre table au conseil municipal. Depuis la fusion, Lorne compte 34 pourcent de francophones et Lourdes ne dispose plus qu'une—plus d'une seule voix au conseil municipal. Voilà un exemple parmi d'autres.

Le projet de loi 5 devrait pouvoir contrer cette diminution de la représentativité francophone en assurant l'offre active des services municipaux en français auprès de la population. Sinon, à long terme, on assisterait inévitablement à une dévitalisation de notre francophonie.

* (19:40)

Le phénomène des fusions revêt néanmoins certains côtés positifs. Maintenant que cinq de nos membres ont dû fusionner avec des municipalités anglophones, nous croyons que ces dernières seront à même d'apprécier la valeur ajoutée de cette francophonie sur les plans social, touristique et économique. Ainsi, l'AMBM travaille présentement à une revue de ses statuts et règlements pour devenir encore plus inclusive et être en mesure d'accueillir

ces municipalités en tant que membres en règles de notre association.

Même si le projet de loi 5 ne constitue pas, à notre avis, un enjeu partisan, mais plutôt la reconnaissance pleine et entière de la contribution des francophones et francophiles à la prospérité de notre province, nous considérons le parti Conservateur du Manitoba comme un allié depuis longtemps. Notamment, nous serions toujours reconnaissants envers le gouvernement Filmon d'avoir appuyé dès leurs débuts la création de l'AMBM en 1995 ainsi que son moteur de développement économique, le Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba, CDEM, en 1996. Il y a 21 ans, c'est monsieur Gary Filmon lui-même qui marquait officiellement le lancement de l'AMBM par sa présence au premier congrès de notre association.

Enfin, nous vous remercions une fois de plus de ce pas géant que votre gouvernement permettra vraisemblablement à la francophonie manitobaine de franchir par l'adoption du projet de loi 5 et nous croyons sincèrement que cette loi entraînera du même coup le renforcement du partenariat entre nos municipalités membres, la communauté et le gouvernement provincial dans l'évolution de l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine.

Merci de votre attention et longue vie à la loi 5.
Merci

Translation

So, it is with great pride that I represent the Board of Directors of the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities, the AMBM, this Tuesday, June 28, 2016, at this historic moment that we hope will lead to the unanimous passage of Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act.

Above all, allow me to convey our sincerest thanks to Minister Rochelle Squires, not only for her support to the francophone community, but for her daring so early in her term to make this important gesture, a gesture noted and appreciated by all of the members of our organization and the francophone community of Manitoba, and even Canada; Premier Brian Pallister and his entire cabinet for their vision and for sincerely believing in the social and economic value of the francophone community; the member for St. Boniface, Mr. Greg Selinger, for his leadership and his long-standing support for, and leadership of,

our municipalities and the community as a whole; Mr. Jon Gerrard, the member for River Heights, Ms. Cindy Lamoureux, the member for Burrows, Mr. Wab Kinew, the member for Fort Rouge, Ms. Sarah Guillemard, the member for Fort Richmond, and Mr. Bob Lagassé, the member for Dawson Trail, for their strong support during second reading of Bill 5. A catalyst for the development, prosperity and sustainability of Manitoba's bilingual communities, the AMBM has since 1995 been acting as a leader in policy and strategy for bringing the communities together, and supporting and representing strong and united municipal governance.

The structure of the AMBM, including its driver of economic development, CDEM, has proven to meet the aspirations for growth and vitality of the 17 municipalities that are at the very—that are at its very foundation. Our model is inspired—our model even inspires other communities in Canada. Furthermore, the bilingual municipalities of Manitoba have become Canadian leaders in the green economy, with the EcoWest initiative that is rapidly expanding across the country.

Some of the credit unquestionably goes to the province of Manitoba, which has provided us with considerable support on an ongoing basis. We could not go without mentioning the partnership agreement with EcoWest that was signed in 2015 and which enables the municipalities of our province to have the benefit of Franco-Manitoban leadership in their shift to a greener economy. We would also like to emphasize the outstanding co-operation provided to us by the Francophone Affairs Secretariat. Its support allows us to offer to our member municipalities resources for translating public documents, and for maintaining libraries and French language sports and recreation initiatives in our communities.

For the AMBM and its members, the French Language Services Policy and Judge Richard Chartier's report, *Above All, Common Sense*, are cornerstones for the development and active offer of French language services in our areas. In our opinion, Bill 5 is the next logical step fostering enhancement of Manitoba's francophone community and our association wholeheartedly supports its passage.

It is, however, crucial for this legislation to expressly include favourable mention of the maintenance, expansion and permanence of French language services in the bilingual municipalities that were

obliged to amalgamate with anglophone municipalities in the last few years.

The municipal amalgamations have had the effect of reducing the demographic weight of francophones in our municipalities, which will in the long term lead to a decline in the active offer of French language services at the municipal level.

For example, in October 2014, the Village of Notre Dame de Lourdes and the Municipality of Lorne were amalgamated to form the new Municipality of Lorne. Prior to amalgamation, the population of Notre Dame de Lourdes was 87 per cent francophone and had five votes on its own municipal council. Post amalgamation, Lorne is 34 per cent francophone and Lourdes has but one vote on municipal council. That is just one example.

Bill 5 should be able to counteract this decline in francophone representation by guaranteeing the active offer of French language municipal services to the public, otherwise we will inevitably witness a sapping of the vitality of the francophone community over the long term.

* (19:40)

The amalgamation phenomenon nonetheless does have some good sides. Now that five of our members have had to amalgamate with anglophone municipalities, we feel that the latter will be able to appreciate the value added by this francophone community on the social, tourism and economic levels. The AMBM is thus currently reworking its constitution and bylaws to become even more inclusive and admit these municipalities as members in good standing of our association.

Although Bill 5 is not, in our opinion, a partisan bill, but a full recognition of the contribution of francophones and francophiles to the prosperity of our province, we have long considered the Conservative Party of Manitoba to be an ally. We are still grateful to the Filmon government for having supported the creation of the AMBM back in 1995 and its economic development driver, the Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities, CDEM, in 1996. Twenty-one years ago, it was Mr. Gary Filmon himself who officially marked the launch of the AMBM with his presence at our association's first conference.

Finally, we thank you once again for the giant stride forward that your government may well enable Manitoba's francophone community to make through

the passage of Bill 5. We sincerely believe that this legislation will simultaneously strengthen the partnership among our member municipalities, the community and the provincial government in the development and enhancement of Manitoba's francophone community.

Thank you for your attention and long live Bill 5. Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Ms. Squires: Merci, Monsieur Allard.

And I really thank you for your comments regarding the municipalities and I agree with you that this bill is a good first step towards an enhanced francophone community and I appreciate your efforts. Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

I will now call upon Ibrahima Diallo.

Do you have any written materials?

Mr. Ibrahima Diallo (Private Citizen): Yes.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Diallo: Bonjour tout le monde, honorables députés, mesdames et messieurs.

Je m'appelle Ibrahima Diallo. Je suis originaire du Sénégal, un pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.

Je suis arrivé au Manitoba comme immigrant en 1984, donc il y a 32 ans. Et actuellement, je suis professeur à la faculté des sciences de l'Université de Saint-Boniface. J'ai aussi été là-bas doyen de la faculté des arts, sciences et administration des affaires et service social pendant dix ans, de 2000 à 2010. J'ai été particulièrement impliqué dans la communauté francophone du Manitoba. J'ai été conseiller à la DSFM, qui venait de naître dans les années 94, à-j'ai siégé à Abri Marguerite, Francofonds. J'ai aussi été le président du Manitoba Immigration Council. Je suis actuellement le consul honoraire du Sénégal à Winnipeg, et j'ai aussi présidé la Table nationale de concertation sur l'immigration avec la FCFA. Et évidemment aussi, je pense c'est important de le dire, j'ai été-j'ai eu la chance de siéger comme conseiller au CA de la SFM en 1988-1989. Et que par la suite, j'ai aussi eu le

privège d'avoir été le premier président africain du conseil d'administration de la SFM de 2006 à 2011.

Je pense utile de rappeler ces éléments-là parce que je ne représente pas du tout un organisme en particulier, mais que je suis un témoin privilégié voyant l'évolution de la communauté francophone depuis que j'habite au Manitoba, et je profite évidemment de l'occasion pour remercier chaleureusement notre ministre responsable de la francophonie, madame Rochelle Squires, les premiers ministres Brian Pallister, Greg Selinger, sans oublier Jon Gerrard, ainsi que tous les députés, toutes tendances confondues, qui se sont montrés très favorables à la proposition de loi et qui en ont débattu avec une attitude inspirante, encourageante et très constructive.

Je remercie aussi la SFM, sa présidente Jacqueline Blay, son PDG Daniel Boucher ainsi que tous les membres de son conseil d'administration qui, je n'en doute pas, n'ont ménagé aucun effort pour faire avancer ce dossier. Évidemment je pense qu'il est utile de souligner dix prédécesseurs. La liste est longue. Je ne veux pas vous retenir jusqu'à minuit, partant de Louis Riel, Duff Roblin, Ed Schreyer, William Pawley [*phonetic*], Gary Filmon, Gary Doer, Georges Forest, Roger Bilodeau, Leo Robert, Maria Chaput, même le clergé, les Métis et d'autres intervenants communautaires qui ont tous, chacun à sa façon, en fonction du contexte du moment, contribué à faire avancer le fait français au Manitoba.

Merci pour l'opportunité que vous me donnez de participer à ces audiences publiques dans le contexte du dépôt du projet de loi sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine.

Mais avant de rentrer dans le vif du sujet, j'aimerais juste faire un petit recul historique très personnel. Comme indiqué plus haut, je suis arrivé au Manitoba au lendemain de la grande crise linguistique qui a secoué la province en 82-83. En 83, j'étais encore au Sénégal alors que je me préparais à immigrer, à venir rejoindre mon épouse et ma fille ici à Winnipeg, un ami sénégalais que j'ai rencontré à Dakar m'a dit, parce qu'il était venu faire une courte visite au Québec, il m'a mis en garde. Il me disait : « Tu vas au Manitoba, tu sais que c'est très dangereux pour un francophone de vivre au Manitoba ». Il avait en effet vu dans les nouvelles de l'époque qu'il y avait un débat sur la place que devait occuper le français au Manitoba. Le débat faisait rage, et particulièrement le traitement qui était réservé aux francophones, et d'ailleurs il ne manquait

pas de me rappeler pour mettre en encore en garde que non seulement moi j'étais africain, mais en plus j'étais francophone, et je m'en vais dans l'Ouest. Je vous laisse deviner là où il voulait en venir. Et aujourd'hui, ça a été déjà dit avant moi, on est en 2016, quel changement, quelle évolution, quelle bonne nouvelle que j'entends ici.

Lors de l'assemblée générale d'octobre 2007, des membres de la communauté francophone—je vous ai donné la liste sur ma feuille que je vous ai remise—ont mandaté la SFM de prendre toutes les dispositions nécessaires pour doter notre communauté d'une loi sur les services en français, condition nécessaire pour nous assurer une sécurité linguistique, la sécurité linguistique de la communauté, des institutions et bien au-delà. La communauté était mature, confiante de passer du mode de survie du français au mode de vie et d'épanouissement français, compte tenu de tous les acquis au cours des dernières années. Et là, évidemment, vous avez ici beaucoup de représentants. On parle de la DSFM, l'Université de Saint-Boniface, l'Accueil francophone qui parle des immigrants. En 88-89, quand je parlais d'immigration même au niveau de la SFM, c'était pas un enjeu. Et actuellement c'est devenu un enjeu très, très, très important. Les services de santé et les services sociaux, la petite enfance, Festival du Voyageur, le CDEM, le Centre de commerce mondial, Pluri-elles, Francofonds, Cercle Molière, Centre culturel et j'en passe, sans oublier les jeunes évidemment, qui sont des parties prenantes de cette dynamique communauté.

Notre communauté a changé en effet. Et pour le mieux. La communauté dans son esprit de résilience a tenu bon. De plus en plus d'immigrants francophones venant du monde entier s'installent chez nous. De plus en plus d'élèves dont la langue maternelle n'est pas le français étudient notre langue, fréquentent l'école d'immersion, vont dans nos universités et contribuent à l'enrichissement et à l'agrandissement de notre espace.

Tous cela fait en sorte que je suis venu témoigner. La Loi sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine, j'aimerais d'entrer de jeu affirmer ici que j'adhère totalement aux principes fondamentaux énoncés dans ce projet de loi. Le titre de la loi me plaît à plus d'un titre. Les mots « appui », « épanouissement » et « francophonie manitobaine » m'ont non seulement rassuré, mais ravi.

Il s'agit d'un projet de loi qui non seulement permettra d'encadrer nos acquis, de nous procurer certainement une sécurité linguistique dont je parlais, mais aussi d'appuyer notre développement et de veiller à notre épanouissement par des mesures positives. Là vous reconnaissez un peu la partie de la loi 7 sur les langues officielles. Il nous permet aussi de rejoindre, faut pas l'oublier, d'autres provinces qui se sont déjà dotées d'une loi sur les services en français depuis déjà plusieurs années, l'Ontario, le Nouveau-Brunswick, la Nouvelle-Écosse, entre autres.

Je dois aussi vous dire que ce débat se fait dans un contexte de climat apaisé, où tous les partis politiques, toutes tendances confondues, se sont mis à travailler ensemble pour le plus grand bien de la communauté francophone et aussi de la province du Manitoba.

* (19:50)

Pourquoi j'appuie cette loi? Il y est question de plusieurs éléments fondamentaux : la reconnaissance d'une communauté et de sa langue, l'offre active de services, l'appui à l'épanouissement, la francophonie, une définition moderne, inclusive de la francophonie qui reflète effectivement ce que nous sommes. Comme d'ailleurs des milliers d'immigrants d'Afrique, le français n'est pas ma langue maternelle. Ma mère ne parle pas le français. Mon père a appris le français quand il s'est enrôlé dans l'armée française pour aller à la guerre. J'ai appris le français à l'instar de ces dizaines de milliers d'élèves des écoles d'immersion de notre province ou d'anglophones qui ont choisi aussi d'étudier. J'enseigne à l'Université de Saint-Boniface et dans mes cours, je pense que plus de 20 à 25 pourcent de mes étudiants sont issus des écoles d'immersion. Ils sont issus de couples exogames, sont issus des communautés philippines. Et pour moi c'est extrêmement encourageant de voir cette évolution-là.

Entre autres, aussi, toujours dans la liste des éléments qui me permettent d'appuyer cette loi, je pense qu'on a une ministre responsable de la francophonie qui va jouer un rôle actif dans l'affirmation, l'encouragement et l'appui à la francophonie dans toutes ses dimensions. On aura un secrétariat, un conseil consultatif qui sont—tout ça, c'est inclut dans la loi. Et aussi je pense de l'élément collaboration avec les communautés, le renforcement des partenariats, les instances gouvernementales y compris aussi les municipales. Hein Matthieu, n'est-ce pas?

Je peux donc, en conclusion, je ne peux que recommander que la loi soit adoptée par l'Assemblée législative à l'unanimité. Je pense foncièrement que c'est une très bonne loi dans son essence et dans son esprit. Elle contient des dispositions que d'autres provinces nous envient déjà. J'y vois une normalisation. D'autres parleront de réconciliation avec nous-mêmes et avec notre histoire qui ne nous a pas toujours été très favorable. Il nous appartiendra comme collectivité d'envisager notre avenir avec confiance. Je n'aurai assez—jamais assez de mots pour remercier encore une fois la ministre responsable de la francophonie, monsieur Pallister d'avoir passé aux—à l'acte, dans la continuité de la voie qui avait été déjà entamée par Selinger et bien avant Selinger, d'autres personnes, je pense que c'est dans la continuité, et par conséquent, j'admire cette convergence de vues, l'esprit de collaboration constructive qui nous permettront d'accomplir un autre grand pas dans notre histoire collective.

Et le jour où la loi sera adoptée, je n'ai aucune raison d'en douter, je pourrai bien rappeler mon ami de Sénégal pour lui annoncer que c'est un grand jour pour la francophonie manitobaine, pour le Manitoba et aussi pour le Canada.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

Translation

Good evening everyone, honourable members of the Legislative Assembly, ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Ibrahima Diallo and I am originally from Senegal, a country in West Africa.

I came to Manitoba as an immigrant in 1984, so 32 years ago. I am currently a professor in the faculty of science at the Université de Saint-Boniface. I was also dean of the faculty of arts, science, business administration and social work for ten years from 2000-2010. I was very involved in the francophone community of Manitoba. I was a trustee with the DSFM, which was established in '94, and I also sat on the board of Abri Marguerite and Francofonds. I was also president of the Manitoba Immigration Council. I am currently Honorary Consul of Senegal in Winnipeg and I chaired the national table on francophone immigration with the FFAC. And obviously as well, I think it is important to mention it, I sat on the board of the SFM in 1988-89. I subsequently also had the privilege of being the first African chair of that same board from 2006 to 2011.

I believe it is important to mention these things because I do not represent any one organization in

particular, but I have been witness to the francophone community's evolution since I started living in Manitoba. I would like to take this opportunity to warmly thank our Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs, Ms. Rochelle Squires, Premiers Brian Pallister and Greg Selinger, as well as Jon Gerrard and all MLAs, regardless of political affiliation, who were very open to this bill and engaged in the debate in an inspiring, encouraging and constructive manner.

I also wish to thank the chair of the SFM, Jacqueline Blay, President and CEO Daniel Boucher, and all board members who, I have no doubt, made every effort to ensure that this matter moved forward. I believe, it is important to mention 10 predecessors. The list is long. I do not want to keep you here until midnight, beginning with Louis Riel, Duff Roblin, Ed Schreyer, William Pawley [phonetic], Gary Filmon, Gary Doer, Georges Forest, Roger Bilodeau, Léo Robert, Maria Chaput, even the clergy, the Metis and many other community stakeholders who all, in their own way and in their specific context, contributed to advancing the French fact in Manitoba.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in these public hearings further to the tabling of the bill entitled The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act.

Before I continue, I would like to take a very personal look back. As I indicated earlier, I came to Manitoba following the great language crisis that shook the province in 1982-83. In 1983, I was still in Senegal and preparing to immigrate to join my wife and daughter here in Winnipeg. A Senegalese friend I met in Dakar and who had come for a brief visit to Quebec, issued a warning to me. He said: "You are going to Manitoba, you know it is dangerous for a francophone to live in Manitoba." He had in fact seen in the news at the time that there was a debate on the status French should have in Manitoba. The debate was raging and included how francophones were treated and he reminded me, as if to put me on my guard, that not only was I African, I was also a francophone and going to the West. I will let you draw your own conclusions. And today, it has already been said, in 2016, how things have changed, how things have evolved, what good news I've heard here.

During the annual general meeting in October 2007, members of the francophone community—I gave you the list on the sheet I submitted to you—passed a resolution requiring the SFM to take the steps

necessary to secure legislation on French language services, a condition essential to providing linguistic security for the community, its institutions and much more. The community was mature, confident that it could move from the survival mode for the French language to full-fledged living in French, given the many gains made over the years. And there are obviously many representatives here this evening, including the DSFM, Université de Saint-Boniface, Accueil francophone, an organization that works with immigrants. In '88-89, when I talked about immigration even at the SFM, it was not an issue, and it has now become a very, very important issue. Health and social services, early childhood education, Festival du Voyageur, CDEM, World Trade Centre Winnipeg, Pluri-Elles, Francofonds, Cercle Molière, Centre culturel and many other community organizations too numerous to mention, as well as our youth who are key stakeholders in this dynamic community.

Our community has indeed changed, and for the better. With its spirit of resilience, the community has stood fast. An increasing number of francophone immigrants from around the world have come to settle here. More and more students whose mother tongue is not French study our language, attend immersion schools and our university and contribute to enhancing and expanding our presence.

I came to speak, for all of these reasons. With regard to The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, I wish to affirm from the outset that I subscribe wholeheartedly to the fundamental principles laid out in this bill. The title of the bill appeals to me on a number of levels. The words support, enhancement and Manitoba francophonie not only reassured me but delighted me.

This legislation will not only consolidate the gains made and provide the linguistic security I referred to, it will also support our community's development through positive measures. There is a similarity with part VII of the federal Official Languages Act. It will also put us on an equal footing with other provinces that passed legislation on French language services a number of years ago including Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

I must also point out that this debate has taken place in a climate of calm, in which all political parties, regardless of political affiliation, have worked together for the greater good of the francophone community and the province.

* (19:50)

Why am I supporting this bill? The bill deals with a number of critical elements: recognition of a community and its language, the active offer of services, support for the community's development, the francophonie, a modern and inclusive definition of the francophonie that accurately reflects who we are. As is the case for thousands of immigrants from Africa, French is not my first language. My mother does not speak French. My father learned French when he enlisted in the French army to go to war. I learned French at school as do the tens of thousands of students in immersion schools in our province or anglophones who have chosen to study it. I teach at the Université de Saint-Boniface and, in my classes, I think more than 20 or 25 per cent of my students come from immersion schools. They are the children of mixed marriages, and come from the Filipino community. It is extremely encouraging to see this evolution.

Among other things included in the list of elements that make it possible for me to support this bill, I believe we have a minister responsible for la francophonie who will play an active role in affirming, encouraging and supporting the francophone community in all aspects. We will have a secretariat, an advisory council that are all included in the legislation. I am also thinking of the element of co-operation with the communities, the reinforcement of partnerships, and government bodies, including municipal governments. Isn't that right, Mathieu?

In conclusion, I can only recommend that the bill be passed unanimously by the Legislative Assembly. I fundamentally believe that it is very sound legislation in essence and in spirit. It contains provisions that other provinces are already envious of. I see it as a form of normalization. Others may refer to a reconciliation with ourselves and our history, which has not always been positive. It will be up to us as a community to approach our future with confidence. I do not have the words to thank the minister responsible for la francophonie once again, and Mr. Pallister for taking action and continuing on the path set out by Selinger and well before Selinger, other individuals, I believe it is a continuation, and as a result I admire this commonality of views, the spirit of constructive co-operation that will enable us to take another great step in our collective history.

The day on which the bill is passed, as I have no reason to doubt it will be, I can call my friend in Senegal to tell him it is a great day for Manitoba's

francophone community, for Manitoba and for Canada.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup, Monsieur Diallo.

I really appreciate your perspective on the French language crisis here in Manitoba as that does precede my time in this province. And I also really appreciate your words and your perspective as a relative newcomer coming to Manitoba from Senegal and I really thank you for your perspective and I look forward to ongoing dialogue with you. Merci.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Are there any further questions?

Thank you very much for your presentation.

I will now call upon Madeleine Arbez, Francofonds.

Do you have any written materials for distribution?

Ms. Madeleine Arbez (Francofonds Inc.): Yes.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Arbez: Merci. Bonsoir. Good evening.

Je suis Madeleine Arbez, directrice générale de Francofonds, la seule fondation communautaire du Manitoba français. Permettez-moi de vous remercier pour l'occasion de vous faire part des commentaires et de l'appui de la fondation du projet de loi 5, Loi sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine.

Vous allez sans doute entendre des messages clés que vous avez déjà entendus de toutes les autres présentations qui fait preuve de notre appui de cette loi important. Nous aimerions reconnaître et remercier la ministre pour son appui et pour avoir posé ce geste de grande importance à la communauté francophone du Manitoba. Nous remercions aussi comme de raison le premier ministre Brian Pallister pour son appui et celui de son gouvernement, le député de Saint-Boniface, monsieur Greg Selinger, pour sa direction et son appui à la communauté ainsi que tous les membres de l'Assemblée législative du Manitoba.

Alors, je vous parle de Francofonds un peu brièvement et pourquoi nous sommes ici ce soir. Francofonds est le bailleur de fonds des activités francophones et du français au Manitoba. La fondation prélève de l'argent et distribue des subventions et des bourses qui appuient des projets qui agrandissent l'espace francophone et augmentent les occasions où l'on peut vivre, jouir et nous exprimer en français au Manitoba à perpétuité.

Francofonds appuie les organismes, dont il y en a plusieurs qui ont présenté ce soir, et des groupes de la communauté francophone. Nous appuyons aussi autres groupes anglophones et autres, qui désirent offrir de la programmation francophone pour les francophones, les francophiles, les écoles—des étudiants des écoles francophones et d'immersion du Manitoba et ainsi de suite.

Francofonds aura 40 ans en 2018. Présentement, la fondation, qui est comparable à Winnipeg Foundation mais pour les francophones au Manitoba, gère un capital de 7.5 millions. Depuis sa création, la fondation a distribué, ou plutôt investi, plus de 3.8 millions de dollars en subventions et bourses pour des activités et des groupes qui travaillent, célèbrent ou jouissent du français au Manitoba. 50 pourcent de ces argents ont été distribué dans des communautés rurales au travers du Manitoba et 50 pourcent à Winnipeg.

Francofonds gère 189 fonds de dotation. Ces fonds appuient diverses communautés dans la province telles que La Broquerie, Lorette, Saint-Georges, Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Sainte-Agathe, Sainte-Anne, Winnipeg et j'en passe. Nous gérons aussi plus de 600 000 dollars en fonds de dotations scolaires pour les écoles francophones dans nos centres ruraux et urbains et plusieurs autres fonds. Nous espérons et notre vision est d'appuyer les écoles d'immersion, les nouveaux arrivants, les Métis francophones et autres groupes importants.

Francofonds est un membre des Fondations communautaires du Canada. C'est un mouvement qui stimule la vitalité locale grâce à 191 fondations communautaires aux quatre coins du pays. Ce réseau national aide aux Canadiennes et aux Canadiens—pardon, j'ai mis les femmes premières—à se bâtir des collectivités fortes où il fait bon vivre, travailler et s'amuser.

Aujourd'hui, en tant que fondation—la seule fondation communautaire de la francophonie et du français au Manitoba et comme bailleur de fonds, Francofonds appuie le projet de loi 5, Loi sur l'appui

de l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine, déposé par la Ministre responsable des Affaires francophones, madame Squires, à l'Assemblée législative pour les raisons suivantes : rapidement, les principes du projet de loi englobent les valeurs importantes à la communauté et au mouvement communautaire au Canada, tels que : une reconnaissance de l'importance de la communauté francophone et du français au Manitoba; deuxièmement, une définition inclusive de la francophonie qui comprend des citoyens et citoyennes qui parlent le français et/ou ont une affinité avec la langue, la culture, le patrimoine francophones au Manitoba; la loi encadre des principes de collaboration proactive entre le gouvernement du Manitoba et la communauté francophone; la loi est dynamique et progressive, et reconnaît qu'une communauté bien appuyée évoluera et que son progrès engendrera autres besoins potentiels qui sont bénéfiques pour tous les citoyens du Manitoba, la province et le Canada; et dernièrement, elle stimule la vitalité francophone et renforce nos communautés fortes grâce à la mise en place d'acquis ou de biens et de services qui nous appuient dans notre croissance.

* (20:00)

Finalement, comme le projet de loi 5, la mission de Francofonds est effectivement d'appuyer l'épanouissement du français à perpétuité et nous sommes engagés à collaborer avec la communauté et la province du Manitoba pour le bien de la communauté francophone et du Manitoba à perpétuité.

Merci.

Translation

Thank you. Good evening.

My name is Madeleine Arbez and I am the executive director of Francofonds, the only community foundation of Manitoba's French speaking community. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to express the foundation's comments and support for Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act.

You will no doubt hear key messages that you've already heard in other presentations, which will illustrate our support for this important legislation. We would like to acknowledge and thank the minister for her support and for taking this action of great importance to Manitoba's francophone community. We also wish to thank Premier Brian Pallister for his

support and that of his government, the MLA for St. Boniface, Mr. Greg Selinger, for his guidance and support to the community, and all members of Manitoba's Legislative Assembly.

I will speak briefly about Francofonds and why we are here this evening. Francofonds is the funder for francophone activities and French in Manitoba. The foundation raises funds and distributes grants and bursaries to support projects that expand the francophone presence and increase opportunities for francophones to live, enjoy and express themselves in French in Manitoba for the long term.

Francofonds supports organizations, many of which gave presentations here this evening, and francophone community groups. We also support anglophone groups and others who wish to provide French language programming for francophones, francophiles, schools—students at francophone and immersion schools in Manitoba.

Francofonds will mark its 40th anniversary in 2018. Currently, the foundation, which is comparable to the Winnipeg Foundation but for Manitoba's Francophones, manages assets of \$7.5 million. Since it was created, the foundation has distributed, or rather invested over \$3.8 million in grants and bursaries for activities and groups that work, celebrate or enjoy French in Manitoba; 50 per cent of these monies are distributed in rural communities throughout Manitoba and 50 per cent in Winnipeg.

Francofonds manages 189 endowment funds. These funds support various communities in the province such as La Broquerie, Lorette, St. Georges, St. Jean Baptiste, Ste. Agathe, Ste. Anne and Winnipeg to name only a few. We also manage over \$600,000 in school endowment funds for francophone schools in our rural and urban centres as well as a number of other funds. We hope and our vision is to support immersion schools, newcomers, francophone Metis and other important groups.

Francofonds is a member of Canada's Community Foundations. It is a movement that stimulates local vitality thanks to 191 community foundations across the country. This national network helps Canadian women and men—I'm sorry, I mentioned women first—build strong communities in which it is enjoyable to live, work and play.

Today, as a foundation—the only community foundation for the francophonie and for French in Manitoba and as a funder, Francofonds supports

Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, tabled by the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs, Ms. Squires, in Manitoba's Legislative Assembly for the following reasons: briefly, the principles of Bill 5 include the values that are important to the community and to the community movement in Canada, such as the recognition of the importance of the francophone community and of French in Manitoba; secondly, an inclusive definition of the francophonie that includes citizens who speak French and/or have an affinity for the language, and the francophone culture and heritage in Manitoba; the legislation sets out principles of proactive co-operation between the government of Manitoba and the francophone community; the act is dynamic and progressive, and acknowledges that a well-supported community will evolve and its progress will spark other potential needs that will be beneficial to all Manitobans, the province and country; finally, it stimulates francophone vitality and strengthens our strong communities by securing gains, goods or services that support our growth.

* (20:00)

Lastly, like Bill 5, Francofonds' mission is in fact to support the development of French in perpetuity and we are committed to co-operating with the community and the province of Manitoba for the long-term well-being of the francophone community and the province

Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Ms. Squires: Merci Madame—merci beaucoup, Madame, pour votre présentation.

Translation

Thank you very much for your presentation.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you again for your presentation.

I will now call upon Régnald Régnillard—sorry, I'll get there. Régnillard. Je m'excuse.

Translation

I'm sorry.

English

Do you have any written materials for distribution?

Please proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Régnald Régnillard (Private Citizen): Bonsoir, Monsieur le Président, membres du comité.

Je m'appelle Régnald Régnillard. Je parle en mon nom personnel ce soir, et je peux vous assurer que ma présentation ne va pas être trop longue : quatre à cinq minutes au plus.

J'ai une formation de juriste et je suis impliqué dans la communauté francophone depuis de nombreuses années, soit au niveau national ou encore provincial. D'ailleurs, j'œuvre depuis des années dans le domaine des droits linguistiques et de la promotion de l'accès à la justice en français au Canada, en plus d'être membre de divers conseils d'administration d'organismes francophones, y compris plus récemment au conseil d'administration du Centre culturel franco-manitobain.

Je peux vous assurer qu'en règle générale le Projet de loi 5 a été, selon moi, très bien accueilli par la vaste majorité des francophones que je côtoie à travers de mes différents contacts et aussi à travers de mon travail que je suis appelé à faire.

Je peux aussi vous mentionner, et je pense c'est important, c'est l'impact que ce peut avoir dans les autres provinces, parce que moi, je travaille au niveau national et c'est pas rare que j'ai des gens qui vont au téléphone et qui vous disent : « Qu'est-ce qui se passe au Manitoba? » Alors les impacts, qu'est-ce qui se passe au Manitoba, le projet de loi est surveillé à l'extérieur des frontières du Manitoba. Alors c'est non seulement provincial, mais c'est bel et bien national et, souvent, qu'est-ce qu'on voit c'est lorsqu'on a un projet de loi ou des éléments qui sont intéressants dans une province peuvent être repris dans d'autres provinces, alors c'est pas négligeable, l'impact que ça peut avoir à l'extérieur du Manitoba.

Je voudrais souligner trois points forts par rapport au projet de loi. Le premier point fort, c'est justement que le projet de loi accorde une reconnaissance symbolique et juridique importante à la place du français et à la communauté francophone au Manitoba. Et ça, ce n'est pas rien. On le voit dans le projet de loi, on le voit avec la présence des gens ce soir quelle sorte d'impact que ça peut avoir et l'importance de cette reconnaissance-là.

D'ailleurs, je tiens à souligner, puis-je suis content que personne d'autre qui l'a mentionné, mais, en 2016, ça fait 100 ans, il a eu une certaine loi qui avait adoptée en 1916 qui interdisait l'enseignement du français, qui s'appelait la loi Thornton. Alors, c'est quand même 100 ans plus tard, c'est un énorme changement, et en terme historique, moi, je suis un historien aussi, j'aime bien les choses historiques, je tenais à souligner ça aussi que depuis 100 ans, il y a eu une modification et un changement évidemment radical au Manitoba.

Deuxième point fort que je voudrais souligner, c'est la question que le projet de loi ne se limite pas aux services, mais bel est bien inclut ou comprend les politiques et les programmes. Et les services en français, c'est important. Les programmes et les politiques et les programmes, c'est absolument essentiel pour assurer le progrès, l'épanouissement, justement, des communautés francophones, et la communauté francophone du Manitoba n'échappe pas à ça.

D'ailleurs, si vous avez déjà suivi certains des débats au niveau national, la Loi sur les langues officielles, la partie 7, qui a été modifiée durant les débuts de 2000, il y avait toute une question par rapport à l'importance de l'épanouissement et puis de la question des politiques et des programmes.

Troisième point et le dernier point que je voulais faire en terme d'éléments clés pour le projet de loi, c'est que le projet de loi, à mon avis, a énormément d'éléments clés, si on veut, pour que la communauté francophone du Manitoba puisse faire des progrès importants au cours des prochaines années. On peut parler entre autre du pouvoir réglementaire qui est très large dans la loi. On peut parler de l'examen obligatoire de la politique sur les services en langue française et, aussi, de la mise sur pied d'un comité consultatif.

Alors, ça c'est des choses qui vont permettre à ce projet de loi de donner—mettre de la chair sur les os et d'être capable de faire progresser, justement, beaucoup de ses éléments-là. Je pense que c'est absolument important de souligner ça, cet élément-là, dynamique, que j'appelle de la loi ou du projet de loi qui est proposé.

En dernier lieu, et puis il y en a d'autres qui l'ont mentionné, mais c'est que le projet de loi, à mon avis, est pas seulement un bénéfice pour les Manitobains de langue française mais c'est vraiment un bénéfice pour l'ensemble des Manitobains, parce que s'il y a une communauté francophone forte au Manitoba,

c'est à l'avantage de l'ensemble de la communauté manitobaine et aussi, je dirais même, canadienne.

Alors, pour toutes ces raisons-là, moi j'appuie fortement ce projet de loi-là, puis j'ai bien hâte qu'on l'adopte et ensuite, qu'on lui donne vie.

Alors, merci.

Translation

Good evening, Mr. Chairperson, members of the committee.

My name is Régnald Rémillard. I am speaking on my own behalf this evening, and I can assure you that my presentation will not be too long, four or five minutes at most.

I have a legal background and I have been involved with the francophone community for many years both nationally and provincially. I have been working for many years in the field of language rights and the promotion of access to justice in French in Canada, as well as sitting on various boards of francophone organizations, including more recently the board of the Centre culturel franco-manitobain.

I can assure you that in general Bill 5 has been, in my view, very well received by the vast majority of francophones I have dealings with and through the work I do.

I can also tell you, and I believe it's important, about the impact this can have in other provinces, because I work at a national level and it's not rare to have people call and ask me what's going on in Manitoba. So the impact of what is happening in Manitoba, the bill is being watched beyond Manitoba's borders. So it's not only provincial but in fact national and, often what we see is that when there is a bill or features of a bill that are interesting in a province, they may be copied by another province, so the impact outside Manitoba can be significant.

I would like to highlight three strong features of the bill. The first is precisely that the bill provides important symbolic and legal recognition to the French language and Manitoba's francophone community. And that's not negligible. We see it in the bill, we see by the presence of the people here this evening, what kind of impact it can have and the importance of this recognition.

I would also like to point out, and I am pleased that no one else has, but in 2016, it has been 100 years since a certain act was passed in 1916 abolishing French as a language of instruction, known as the

Thornton Act. So, it's still taken 100 years, it's an enormous change, and in historical terms, I am also a historian, I like a historical perspective. I would also like to point out that, over 100 years, there has been change and obviously radical change in Manitoba.

The second strong feature I would like to address is that the bill is not limited to services, but actually includes policies and programs. And services in French are important. Programs and policies—and programs are absolutely essential to ensure the progress and development of the francophone community, and Manitoba's francophone community is no exception.

If you have followed certain debates nationally, part 7 of the Official Languages Act was amended in the early 2000s, there was a discussion with respect to the importance of the development and the matter of policies and programs.

The third and last strong feature of the bill I wanted to deal with is that in my view it contains many key elements, if you will, so that Manitoba's francophone community can make important progress in the coming years. Regulatory powers for example are very broad in the act. There is also the mandatory review of the French Language Services Policy and the creation of an advisory council.

So these are things that will allow the bill to provide substance and allow progress to be made with respect to many of these elements. I believe that it is absolutely important to underscore that, the dynamic element I would call it, of the act or proposed legislation.

In closing, and others have mentioned it, but it is that the bill, in my view, provides benefits not only for French speaking Manitobans but is also very beneficial for all Manitobans, because if there is a strong francophone community in Manitoba, it is to the advantage of the entire Manitoban community and I would also even say the Canadian community.

So for all these reasons, I strongly support this bill and I look forward to seeing it passed and then being given life.

So thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

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

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup, Monsieur Rémillard.

And we share a love of history, and I, too, am hoping that this bill will have a very positive impact not just in the province of Manitoba but right throughout our great country.

Merci beaucoup.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Are there any more questions for the presenter?

Thank you very much for your presentation.

I will now call upon—[interjection] Oh, sorry. There are two people that will not be presenting: Monsieur Raymond Kazadi, who is No. 10, and No. 12, Jean-Louis Pehe, will not be presenting this evening.

Monsieur Alphonse Lawson.

Do you have any written materials for distribution?

Please proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Alphonse Lawson (Private Citizen): Je me présente Alphonse Lawson. Je suis présent aujourd'hui pour remercier le comité et à faire un témoignage personnel en appui à la loi 5.

D'abord j'ai été personnellement émerveillé, très séduit et remarquablement enthousiaste d'apprendre que la loi 5 a été proposée par le nouveau gouvernement.

La première fois quand j'ai rencontré le premier ministre Brian Pallister, il me parlait de la vision qu'il a pour les francophones. J'avoue que j'étais un peu sceptique. Et le—son premier geste de proposer comme candidat à l'élection un ancien président la Société franco-manitobaine qui est d'origine africaine nous a émerveillés. Et vu que on a appris tout et le contraire de ce que les Conservateurs n'avaient pas cette sensibilité, n'est-ce pas, pour la francophonie. Mais nous a—nous sommes aujourd'hui devant ce fait, cette loi que vous proposez au premier pas de votre mandat, en un délai absolument impressionnant. Nous sommes très émerveillés par ça. On tenait à venir ici à vous féliciter et à vous applaudir.

Cette loi fait de nous aujourd'hui aussi des francophones. Nous avons fait toutes nos études en français, mais selon la définition de la loi ici au Manitoba sur la francophonie, nous ne sommes pas des francophones. Mais avec cette loi, avec le fait que son caractère inclusif, ça reconnaît non seulement notre histoire, ça reconnaît non seulement

notre parcours, ça reconnaît également nos compétences parce que si vous faites toutes vos études dans une langue et que vous arrivez dans un pays et que cette langue n'est pas votre langue et que vous devez apprendre une deuxième langue, ça prend du temps, ça prend beaucoup d'énergie pour l'intégration.

Aujourd'hui je suis au Manitoba. Mes enfants vont à l'école en français grâce aux combats que les francophones ont faits depuis des années, depuis des siècles. Nous nous épanouissons en français. Nous allons voir nos médecins en français. Cette vie en français est possible justement à cause non seulement de l'histoire, du parcours, du travail qu'a fait les francophones, mais aujourd'hui de ce que ces leaders qui ont de la vision ont pu se mettre en place et ce qui nous permet de rester au Manitoba. Sans cela, ce serait plus difficile de vivre ici en français, d'avoir des études en français, la santé en français et le travail en français.

Alors je suis là pour vous dire tout simplement que vous avez un témoin vivant, n'est-ce pas, la loi pouvant parfois être théorique, mais il y a des—ça touche des gens, ça touche des vies et ça fait progresser les gens qui sont heureux de contribuer à bâtir un Manitoba plus heureux, plus épanoui.

Je vous remercie.

* (20:10)

Translation

My name is Alphonse Lawson. I am here today to thank the committee and to express my personal support for Bill 5.

I would like to begin by saying that I was impressed, delighted and remarkably enthusiastic to learn that Bill 5 had been tabled by the new government.

The first time I met Premier Brian Pallister, he talked to me about his vision for Francophones. I'll admit that I was somewhat sceptical. And the—his first gesture to endorse as a candidate for the election a former president of the Société franco-manitobaine who is African amazed me. And given that we have learned the contrary to Conservatives not having a sensitivity, as it were, for the francophonie. But today, we have before us, this legislation that you are proposing so early in your mandate, within a very impressive timeframe. I am totally amazed by it. I absolutely wanted to come here to congratulate and applaud you.

This legislation recognizes our status as francophones. We did all of our studies in French, but according to the existing law here in Manitoba regarding the francophonie, we are not francophones. But with this new act and its inclusive nature, it recognizes not only our history and our journey it also recognizes our skills because if you do all your studies in a language and you come to a country and the language is not your language and you have to learn a second language, it takes time, it takes a lot of energy to integrate.

Today I am in Manitoba. My children go to school in French thanks to the struggles waged by francophones for years, for centuries. We are thriving in French. We see our doctors in French. Living in French is possible precisely not only because of the history, the journey, the work done by francophones, but also because of what their leaders with vision have been able to put into place today, and that is what is allowing us to stay in Manitoba. Without this, it would be more difficult to live, study, access health care and work here in French.

So I am here simply to tell you that you have a witness, a living witness. The legislation is sometimes a bit theoretical, but there are—it affects people. It touches lives and it helps people who are pleased to contribute to building a Manitoba that is happier and more fulfilled.

Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation. C'est correct.

Translation

That's fine.

English

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

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup, Monsieur Lawson.

Really appreciate your words and thank you for your presentation and your very unique perspective.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Are there any further questions?

Thank you very much for your presentation.

I will now call upon Bernard Lesage, Division scolaire franco-manitobaine.

Do you have any written materials for distribution to the committee?

Mr. Bernard Lesage (Division scolaire franco-manitobaine): Yes.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Lesage: Chers membres du comité, merci beaucoup pour l'opportunité de vous parler ce soir.

C'est au nom des élus de la Commission scolaire franco-manitobaine que je présente ce soir quant au Projet de loi 5 portant sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine.

Dans un premier temps, nous aimerions vous féliciter du dépôt de ce projet de loi qui vient renforcer les acquis et les droits de la dualité linguistique canadienne. Ce projet rassembleur établi, selon nous, les assises sur lesquelles la communauté éducative francophone pourra développer son plein potentiel.

Il y a plus de vingt ans naissait ici, au Manitoba, la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine. Plus qu'un symbole de fierté, l'éducation en français était nécessaire à perpétuer non seulement la langue de l'un de ses peuples fondateurs de notre pays, mais tout autant les us et coutumes de cette population francophone qui, au fil des années, sans perdre ses valeurs ni ses racines, a vu son identité changer. Et ce changement, nous le voyons comme étant un pas vers un Manitoba bilingue, inclusif et chaleureux qui embrasse les deux langues officielles dans un souci d'équité.

Ce projet de loi nous apparaît donc comme une force positive qui renforcera le partenariat gouvernement-communautés-écoles et permettra, nous l'espérons, un rayonnement de cette spécificité unique qui représente la communauté francophone.

Dans un second temps, nous comprenons qu'un projet de loi de cette envergure mérite grandes considération et réflexion, et c'est-à cet effet, nous vous remercions de l'occasion qui nous est offerte de déposer auprès du comité d'audience nos commentaires et réflexions pour ainsi faire valoir la voix des onze commissaires scolaires élus représentant plus de 5 000 élèves.

En page 4, au niveau de la définition donnée à la francophonie manitobaine, nous aimerions simplement soulever qu'il existe une certaine dichotomie quant à la définition proposée et celle que l'on retrouve, et que la division scolaire utilise au quotidien, dans la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés, soit l'article 23. En fait, nous sommes à l'aise

avec la version contenue dans ce projet de loi tant et aussi longtemps qu'il n'a pas préséance légale sur la politique d'admission d'élèves dans nos écoles.

En page 8, sous la rubrique « Conseil consultatif », nous comprenons l'importance de mettre sur pied un conseil consultatif. Cela dit, nous aimerions attirer votre attention à l'onglet d), onglet auquel nous aimerions proposer deux changements : a) Au moins huit membres de la francophonie manitobaine, dont six provenant de facto des secteurs d'activités suivants : éducation, santé, immigration, économie, arts et culture. Se grefferaient à ses six secteurs deux autres membres : un provenant du rural et un dernier membre communautaire variable selon les besoins de la communauté. Un second changement proposé, toujours avec l'idée en tête d'être en unisson avec le premier amendement proposé, ce serait que les membres provenant des six secteurs soient nommés par les organismes qui les composent, et non par la Société franco-manitobaine. Loin de nous ici l'idée de retirer le rôle fiduciaire des mains de la SFM. Au contraire, il s'agit plutôt de garder en tête que chaque secteur est composé de multiples organismes et qu'au point de vue d'objectiver le processus, qui de mieux que les organismes eux-mêmes pour élire un représentant qui siègera au sein de ce conseil consultatif? Nous croyons aussi que ce système serait plus adéquat, plus équitable et qu'il, dans une certaine mesure, forcerait les organismes à ouvrir les canaux de communication et travailler ensemble a priori.

En page 10, sous la rubrique « Plans obligatoires », nous voulions simplement poser une question de clarification. Lorsqu'il est écrit : « Chaque entité publique est tenue d'élaborer et de soumettre au ministre une proposition de plan stratégique », nous voulons simplement nous assurer qu'il s'agit d'organismes qui ne relèvent pas déjà d'un ministère. Ça peut paraître banal comme question, cependant dans le cas de la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, puisqu'elle relève du ministère de l'Éducation, elle doit déjà légalement soumettre un plan stratégique et un plan opérationnel. À cet égard, nous ne voyons pas l'utilité d'en soumettre un second.

Finalement, en page 17, nous aimerions voir ajouter sous « Secteur de l'éducation » : l'article 23 de la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés.

En conclusion, en mon nom et au nom des commissaires de la Commission scolaire franco-manitobaine, je tiens à vous féliciter d'avoir introduit

cette nouvelle loi qui permettra l'essor de la francophonie. Je réitère notre appui à votre projet et nous vous sommes très reconnaissants de l'occasion qui fut présentée de témoigner de nos petits soucis.

Merci pour votre écoute. Je prendrai des questions s'il y en a présentement. Merci.

Translation

Members of the committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you this evening.

I am presenting this evening on behalf of the trustees of the Commission scolaire franco-manitobaine regarding Bill 5 respecting the support and enhancement of the francophone community.

We wish firstly to congratulate you on tabling this bill that will consolidate existing achievements and strengthen rights pertaining to Canadian linguistic duality. We are of the view that this unifying bill establishes the foundation on which the francophone educational community will be able to achieve its full potential.

The Division scolaire franco-manitobaine was established over 20 years ago here in Manitoba. French language education was more than a symbol of pride, it was necessary to perpetuate not only the language of one of the country's founding peoples, but also the ways and customs of the francophone population that through the years has seen its identity change without losing its values or roots. We see this change as being a step toward a bilingual, inclusive and welcoming Manitoba that embraces both official languages in an effort to achieve greater equity.

We see the bill as a positive step that will reinforce the government-community-school partnership and, we hope, make way for the continued dissemination of the Francophone community's unique character.

We also appreciate that a bill of this scope deserves significant consideration and reflection, and it is—in this regard, we thank you for the opportunity given to the eleven trustees—representing over 5,000 students—to submit their views and comments to the committee.

With regard to the definition of Manitoba's Francophone community on page 4, we simply wish to point out that there is a dichotomy between the proposed definition and that found—and used on a daily basis by the DSFM—in section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In fact, we have no objections to the definition in the bill

provided that it does not have legal precedence over the student admission policy in our schools.

We understand the importance of establishing an "Advisory Council", as provided on page 8. This being said, we would like to draw your attention to subsection (d) to which we wish to propose the following changes: (a) at least eight members from Manitoba's Francophone community, six of whom would de facto come from the following sectors: education, health, immigration, economic development, arts and culture. Two additional members would be added to these sectors: one from a rural area and another "community member-at-large" as the community's needs dictate. The second proposed change, which would be consistent with the first proposed amendment, would be that the members from the six sectors be appointed by the organizations within those sectors and not by the Société franco-manitobaine. It is not our intent to dilute the SFM's fiduciary role, on the contrary. It is rather a matter of bearing in mind that each sector is made up of many organizations and that from the standpoint of objectifying the process, who better than the organizations themselves to elect a representative to sit on the advisory council. We are also of the view that this system would be more appropriate and equitable and would, to a certain extent, force the organizations to open the channels of communication and work together from the outset.

Under the heading "Plans required" on page 10, we would simply like some clarification. With respect to the following: "Every public body must prepare and submit to the minister . . . a proposed . . . strategic plan", we simply wish to ensure that these are entities that do not already report to a department. This matter may seem trivial, however, in the case of the DSFM, given that it reports to the Department of Education, it is already subject to the obligation of submitting a strategic and operating plan. In this respect, we do not see the usefulness of submitting a second plan.

Lastly, on page 17, we would like to see section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms added under the education sector.

In closing, on behalf of the trustees of the Commission scolaire franco-manitobaine and on my own behalf, I wish to congratulate you on introducing this new bill that will allow the francophonie to thrive. I wish to reiterate our support for this bill and our appreciation for the opportunity to express our minor concerns.

Thank you for listening. I'll take questions if there are any. Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

Do members of the committee have any questions?

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup, Monsieur Lesage.

I do want to confirm that the DSFM is right in their understanding, and that section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms regulates minority language education rights in the province. Bill 5 provides an interpretation of Manitoba's francophone community as it is to be understood for the purposes of The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, and only that. We respect the Charter rights to education in French, and it is not the intent of government to impact those rights with Bill 5.

With respect to the changes to the advisory council composition, we will take that under consideration and to confirm that DSFM does not have a requirement under this legislation to submit FLS plans.

Mr. Lesage: I gather there was no question in that.

Ms. Squires: No.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Monsieur Lesage?

Mr. Lesage: Oui?

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Selinger?

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): Avez-vous eu la chance à discuter votre recommandation pour la consultation et l'implication des autres organisations avec la SFM encore?

Translation

Have you had the opportunity to discuss your recommendations for the consultation and the involvement of the other organizations with the SFM yet?

Mr. Lesage: Oui, j'ai eu la chance de parler, je dirai, informellement avec certains membres de la communauté, mais par contre, lorsque l'ancien gouvernement avait déposé son projet de loi, nous avons eu la chance de parler avec la SFM justement sur ce que nous proposons.

Translation

Yes, I had the chance to discuss I'd say informally with some members of the community, however when the former government had tabled its bill, we had the opportunity to talk to the SFM specifically about what we are proposing.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: If there are no further questions, thank you very much for your presentation.

* (20:20)

I will now call upon Gisèle Saurette-Roch, Réseau action femmes MB-Manitoba. Je m'excuse.

Translation

Pardon me.

English

Do you have any written materials?

Ms. Gisèle Saurette-Roch (Réseau action femmes Inc.): Yes.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Saurette-Roch: Bonsoir à tous et toutes, Monsieur le Président, Madame Squires.

Nous saluons les membres du comité et toutes les personnes qui se sont rendues ce soir pour cette consultation communautaire.

Nous félicitons madame Squires et le gouvernement de la province du Manitoba, pour leur engagement à faire épanouir et développer la francophonie manitobaine si tôt dans leur mandat.

Je me présente, Gisèle Saurette-Roch, une femme engagée qui fut aux réunions de la fondation de Réseau action femmes et de Pluri-elles Manitoba au début des années 1990. Je suis membre de nombreux organismes francophones et anglophones qui luttent pour l'égalité, pour une plus grande justice sociale, y compris la lutte contre la pauvreté, contre la violence, pour une plus grande accessibilité, en appui aux familles, aux enfants, aux aînés et à la jeunesse.

J'ai eu la chance de travailler dans une agence qui offrait les services aux familles à Saint-Boniface, Saint-Vital, dans le sud et sud-est du Manitoba pendant presque 30 ans dans divers rôles de travailleuse sociale. Tant mieux que les directeurs avaient un souci de l'importance d'offrir les services dans le respect de la culture des communautés, d'habitude en allemand et en français. Je faisais de mon mieux pour offrir des services en langue

française aux communautés francophones, y inclus l'affichage, la publicité pour nos programmes, la communication aux familles et l'animation d'ateliers en français. J'ai été membre du Conseil consultatif communautaire pour les Services en langue française en santé et services sociaux qui avisait—qui était avoisière aux employés du service public dans le plan de développement des services en langue française. On travaillait le gabarit pour l'implantation d'une politique de services en langue française dans les agences privées et les entreprises, organismes qui souhaitaient l'implanter.

Je me sens honorée d'avoir été invitée de participer à l'implantation des services en langue française. On m'a conféré des responsabilités pour l'épanouissement des services en langue française au sein de mon agence. Enfin, je suis—je fus invitée à discuter avec le DG et Juge Richard Chartier à ce moment-là, lorsqu'il étudiait les besoins de la francophonie manitobaine pour son rapport, des besoins particuliers dans les services sociaux. Alors vous comprendrez que cette loi 5 me tient beaucoup à cœur personnellement et professionnellement.

Je suis—si je suis ici au nom de Réseau action femmes, c'est que je suis membre du CA depuis presque six ans et puisque cet organisme est porte-parole des femmes francophones du Manitoba. Je veux vous signaler que à la page, après mes feuilles ici, il y a un—quelques énoncés de notre mission et tout ça, et c'est ça. Je veux juste signaler que sous le premier texte on dit que depuis sa fondation en 1980, Réseau action femmes contribue à l'avancement des femmes francophones du Manitoba par l'entremise de la communication, de la sensibilisation, de la revendication et de la concertation du réseautage. Réseau action femmes est la voix des femmes francophones du Manitoba. C'est par des actions politiques et de—que nous agissons.

Alors, je continue. Je me sens—alors dans ce rôle, je me sens interpellée à contribuer notre perspective féminine et féministe. Nous vous invitons à examiner notre mandat et notre mission dans le texte qui est rattaché au document.

Vous savez que le Canada a signé et ratifié la Convention pour l'élimination de toutes formes de discrimination à l'égard des femmes en 1982 et son protocole facultatif le—de cette convention le 18 octobre 2002. Ceci fut réalisé après une consultation avec toutes les provinces et territoires, afin que les provinces et territoires soient bien engagés à faire avancer la condition féminine. Les

instruments dans ce document font que les provinces et territoires s'engagent à faire une évaluation de toute loi, politique et programme d'après une analyse comparative des genres, afin de s'assurer que les femmes ne subissent pas davantage de contrecoups si la loi, la politique ou le programme était adopté. S'il s'avérait que les femmes subiraient des effets négatifs, il faut apporter des amendements afin de réduire leur impact négatif.

Alors des exemples qui ont déjà eu lieu ici, c'est que on n'a pas adopté une loi sur le salaire minimum à deux vitesses. Ça aurait été minable pour les femmes. La loi sur la famille, les enfants et la famille, aussi a été passée à la loupe pour s'assurer que les femmes auraient autant de droits et d'équité que possible. Il y a plein d'exemples, et on vous invite à faire de même.

Alors, pour ce qui est des services en français, la loi 5 affecte beaucoup les femmes et les familles. Nous savons que la transmission de la langue maternelle est encore la majeure responsabilité de la maman. Et il y un document de Francozone, notre association nationale, l'Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne, qui a un programme particulier pour appuyer les familles exogames surtout, mais c'est utile à toutes et tous. Alors, ça parle des—que c'est quelque chose comme 38 pourcent, voyons, je l'ai ici. C'est deux fois plus, quand un parent est francophone dans une famille, si la maman l'est, les chances que les enfants soient—aient français comme langue maternelle est le double que si c'était le papa. Des réalités. Alors, nous reconnaissons que c'est vraiment important.

Afin d'appuyer ces efforts, nous avons besoins des appuis d'organismes francophones tels que les centres préscolaires. Et nous félicitons les efforts de la DSFM d'intégrer des centres préscolaires dans leurs écoles communautaires. Nous sommes une communauté robuste et dynamique. Nous trouvons que le français est une valeur ajoutée. Nous pouvons accueillir des gens de pays anglophones ainsi que de pays francophones. Il est important que ces personnes se sentent accueillies et qu'elles puissent trouver leur place dans le marché du travail, dans nos organismes et la communauté. Les femmes, culturellement, sont souvent isolées dans leur foyer à s'occuper de leur famille. Elles sont les dernières à s'inscrire dans les programmes pour trouver de l'emploi, dans des cours de langue. Il faut beaucoup de ressources pour leur permettre de—à ceux qui arrivent avec des familles. Le plus vite qu'elles peuvent s'intégrer dans le marché du travail, le plus

tôt qu'elles contribueront au développement économique et culturel de notre province.

Les femmes et leurs enfants sont les gens qui utilisent le plus souvent les services de santé et de services sociaux. Il est important de développer davantage l'accès aux services en langue française afin que ces nouveaux arrivants, mais toute autre Manitobains, Manitobaines provenant des pays francophones puissent être desservis le plus efficacement. Félicitations aux régies des services de santé qui développent des services bilingues et l'ORS de Winnipeg qui assure non pas seulement les services en langue française mais aussi une banque langagière afin de mieux répondre à la population métropolitaine si diverse, qui fait la fierté et la vitalité de notre province.

Puisque le Manitoba compte de plus en plus sur une main-d'œuvre provenant de l'extérieur, il est important que nous ayons des programmes d'éducation et de formation afin de permettre à ces nouveaux arrivants de se former dans la langue de leur choix, celle avec laquelle ils sont le plus familier tout en apprenant d'autre—l'autre langue officielle. Il y a une communauté importante de personnes qui ont été scolarisées en français dans les écoles d'immersion. Puisque nous avons un bassin important de personnes bilingues, nous avons une occasion formidable de la mettre en valeur dans notre province, aux plans culturel, économique et communautaire.

S'il-vous-plaît, tenez compte des besoins des femmes et des familles dans l'élaboration de votre plan stratégique pour le développement et l'épanouissement de la langue française dans notre province. Nous sommes heureuses que madame Squires ait le mandat de la condition féminine aussi bien, et patrimoine—culture et patrimoine. Comme nous l'avons déjà affirmé, nous serons—nous sommes prêtes à travailler avec elle sur ces dossiers.

Alors, quand l'État répond aux besoins des femmes et de leurs familles, toute la population en ressent les effets bénéfiques.

Merci beaucoup de l'attention que vous nous avez accordée. Merci.

Translation

Good evening everyone, Mr. Chairperson, Ms. Squires. Our greetings to the members of the committee and everyone in attendance here this evening for this community consultation.

We congratulate Ms. Squires and the government of the province of Manitoba, for their commitment to enhancing and developing Manitoba's francophone community so early in their mandate.

My name is Gisèle Saurette-Roch and I am a committed woman who attended the inaugural meetings of Réseau action femmes and Pluri-elles Manitoba in the early 1990s. I belong to many francophone and anglophone organizations fighting for equality and greater social justice, against poverty and violence and for greater accessibility, in support of families, children, seniors and youth.

I had the opportunity to work in an agency that provided services to families in St. Boniface, St. Vital, and in southern and southeastern Manitoba for nearly 30 years in various roles as a social worker. Fortunately, the directors had an appreciation for the importance of providing services that took into account the culture of the communities, usually German and French. I did my best to provide services in French to the francophone community, including signage and advertising for our programs, communication with families and facilitating workshops in French. I was a member of the French Language Health and Social Services Advisory Committee that advised—that played an advisory role in assisting civil servants in developing French language services plans. We created a template to be used by private agencies, businesses and organizations that were interested in developing and implementing a French language services plan.

I feel honoured that I was invited to participate in implementing French language services. I was given responsibility for French language services in my agency. In fact, I am—I was invited to discuss the matter with the Executive Director and Judge Richard Chartier at the time, when the latter was reviewing the needs of Manitoba's francophonie for his report, specific needs in the area of social services. So you will understand that Bill 5 is very close to my heart both personally and professionally.

I am—the reason I am here on behalf of Réseau action femmes, is that I have been a member of the board for almost 6 years and because this organization represents francophone women in Manitoba. I would just like to point out that included with my materials is a—our mission statement and other information. I would like to mention that the first text indicates that since its creation in 1980, Réseau action femmes has contributed to the advancement of francophone women in Manitoba

through communication, awareness raising, advocacy and networking, and Réseau action femmes is the voice of francophone women in Manitoba. We work through political action.

So I will continue. I feel—so in this role, I feel called upon to contribute our feminine and feminist perspective. We invite you to review our mandate and mission included in our materials.

As you know, Canada signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1982 and the optional protocol to the convention on October 18, 2002. The convention was signed further to consultation with all the provinces and territories, to ensure that they were committed to advancing the status of women. The instruments in the document require the provinces and territories to assess all statutes, policies and programs based on a comparative gender analysis to ensure that women are not disadvantaged if the measures in question are implemented. In the event that women would be negatively impacted, amendments to reduce such an outcome are required.

Some examples of how the convention has been implemented locally are: legislation respecting two-tiered minimum wage, which would have had a very negative impact on women; legislation respecting families was also scrutinized very closely to ensure equal rights and equity for women. There are many examples—and we invite you to do the same.

As for French language services, Bill 5 has a significant impact on women and families. We know that the transmission of the mother tongue remains largely the responsibility of the mother. A document prepared by Francozone, our national association, the Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne, has a program to support primarily families of mixed marriage, but is a tool that can be used by all. So it deals with—that it's some 38 per cent—I have it here. It's twice as high when one parent is francophone in a family, if it's the mother, the chances that the children speak French as a first language is double as opposed to when the father is francophone. This is a fact. So we acknowledge that this is very important.

In order to support these efforts, we need the support of francophone organizations such as preschool centres. And we salute the efforts of the DSFM to integrate preschool centres in their community schools. We are a strong and dynamic community.

We believe that French is a value added. We are able to welcome people from both English and French speaking countries. It is important for these people to feel welcome and that they are able to find their place in the labour market, our organizations and community. Women are often culturally isolated at home caring for their families. They are the last to enroll in programs to find employment or in language programs. Significant resources are required to enable them—for those arriving with families. The faster they are able to enter the labour market, the sooner they will contribute to the economic and cultural development of our province.

Women and children are the ones who use health and social services most frequently. It is important to further develop access to French language services so that these newcomers, but also all other Manitobans from francophone countries, can access services more efficiently. Congratulations to the health authorities that develop bilingual services and the WRHA that provides not only French language services but a language bank to better meet the needs of the very diverse urban population which is a source of pride and vitality for our province.

Since Manitoba depends increasingly on labour from outside the province, it is important that we have education and training programs to allow newcomers to train in the language of their choosing, the language they are most familiar with while also learning other—the other official language. There is a significant community of people who have been educated in French in immersion schools. Since we have a large pool of bilingual individuals, we have a wonderful opportunity to benefit from it in our province from a cultural, economic development and community perspective.

Please take into account the needs of women and their families in developing your strategic plan on the development and enhancement of the French language in our province. We are pleased that Ms. Squires is also responsible for the Status of Women and Heritage—Culture and Heritage. As we have already indicated, we are prepared to work with her in these areas.

When the government meets the needs of women and their families, the beneficial effects are felt by the entire population.

Thank you for your attention. Thank you.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Thank you very much for your presentation.

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

* (20:30)

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup pour votre présentation.

Translation

Thank you very much for your presentation.

English

I really appreciate your feminist perspective to this bill, and your words mean a lot to me. And I look forward to ongoing dialogue with you as we move forward.

Merci.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Are there any further questions?

Thank you very much for your presentation.

I will now call upon André Doumbè, African Communities of Manitoba Inc.

Do you have any written materials for the committee?

Mr. André Doumbè (African Communities of Manitoba Inc.): Yes, Mr. Chair, I just circulated.

Mr. Vice-Chairperson: Please proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Doumbè: Monsieur le Président, chers membres du comité, je m'appelle André Doumbè, originaire du Cameroun en Afrique, et je représente l'organisation des communautés africaines au Manitoba, aussi connue sous le nom de ACOMI.

Mr. Chairperson in the Chair

Comme vous le savez, l'Afrique compte 54 pays. C'est un continent, et parmi ces 54 pays, il y a une grande majorité qui parle le français comme langue de communication et d'affaires. Dans chacun de ces pays, on peut trouver 360 différentes langues, mais le français et l'anglais dans la plupart a été adopté comme langue de communication et d'affaires. Les deux communautés, le français et l'anglais, commutent de façon harmonieuse pour le développement général de l'Afrique. Ici au Manitoba, ACOMI a pour mandat de veiller au développement et à l'épanouissement de tout Africain au Manitoba.

Nous sommes ici aujourd'hui, Monsieur le Président et membres du comité, pour appuyer la loi—le projet de loi 5 qui vise à l'appui et à

l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine. Je ne veux pas—je vais vous donnais—puis je veux dire clore cette séance. Je vois que vous êtes fatigués. Vous avez besoin de manger, le dîner, et cetera. Je constate qu'il y a plusieurs de chaises vides. Donc je vais pas répéter ce que mes collaborateurs et d'autres ont dit en passant. Je vais être court et précis.

Au nom des membres francophones de notre association, nous vous offrons toute notre reconnaissance de nous avoir invités à participer aux audiences publiques de la loi 5 sur l'appui et l'épanouissement de la francophonie au Manitoba. Il est clair que le problème de langue est l'un des plus grands défis de nos membres en situation minoritaire, et les difficultés qui en résultent sont multiples et considérables.

Nous ne pouvions donc pas rester en marge de cette initiative sans donner notre avis. ACOMI appuie fortement et sans réserve la loi 5 sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie au Manitoba car elle est plus inclusive de par la définition qu'elle donne à la francophonie manitobaine. Elle efface de ce fait plusieurs années de frustrations qui nous ont laissé penser que nous étions une communauté à part et non une communauté à part entière.

Nous espérons et sommes convaincus que cette loi nous offrira la voie à l'accès à un plus grand nombre de praticiens bilingues dans les hôpitaux et les cliniques, une plus grande facilité à trouver un cabinet d'avocat francophone ou bilingue agréé au service d'aide juridique, la multiplication de services de traduction spécialisés soutenus par le gouvernement.

Pour toutes ces raisons et bien d'autres, nous ne pouvons que saluer notablement la venue de cette loi et recommander son adoption sans réserve à l'unanimité des membres de la législation du Manitoba.

Je vous remercie, Monsieur de Président.

Translation

Mr. Chairperson, members of the committee, my name is André Doumbè, I am originally from Cameroon in Africa, and I represent the organization of African communities in Manitoba, also known as ACOMI.

As you know, Africa is made up of 54 countries. It is a continent, and among its 54 countries there is a large majority that uses French as the language of business and communication. In all of these

countries, there are 360 different languages, but in most cases French and English have been adopted as the languages of communication and business. The two communities, French-speaking and English-speaking, live in harmony to ensure development in Africa. Here in Manitoba, ACOMI's mandate is to promote the development of all Africans in the province.

We are here today, Mr. Chairperson and members of the committee, to support the act—Bill 5 respecting the enhancement and support of Manitoba's francophone community. I do not want—I will give you—then I am the last presenter this evening. I can see that you are tired. You need to eat, have dinner, etc. I see that a number of chairs are empty. So I will not repeat what my colleagues and others have already said. I will be brief and to the point.

On behalf of the francophone members of our association, we extend our appreciation for being invited to participate in these public hearings on Bill 5 respecting the support and enhancement of the francophone community in Manitoba. It is clear that the problem of language is among the greatest challenges faced by our members who live in a minority setting, as there are many and significant hurdles.

We could not therefore remain on the sidelines of this initiative without expressing our point of view. ACOMI strongly and unreservedly supports Bill 5 on the enhancement and support of Manitoba's francophone community given its more inclusive definition of Manitoba's francophone community. It erases many years of frustration that led us to believe that we were a community apart, not a community with full standing.

We hope and firmly believe that this bill will provide greater access to more bilingual practitioners in hospitals and clinics, make it easier to find francophone law offices or bilingual legal counsel through Legal Aid, and more specialized translation services supported by government.

For all these reasons and many more, we welcome this legislation and unreservedly recommend that it be passed unanimously by the members of Manitoba's Legislative Assembly.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Ms. Squires: Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Doumbè.

Do members of the committee have any questions of the presenter?

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup.

Mr. Chairperson: Any other questions? No?

That concludes the list of presenters I have before me.

Are there any other persons in attendance who wish to make a presentation?

Seeing none, that concludes public presentations.

Mr. Chairperson: In what order does the committee wish to proceed with the clause-by-clause consideration of these bills? Mr. Wiebe? Mr. Goertzen?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: As listed on the order paper, for lack of a better word.

Mr. Chairperson: Is that agreed, to deal with the bills as listed on the order paper? Or, notice paper, sorry. *[Agreed]*

During the consideration of a bill, the preamble, the enacting clause and the title are postponed until all other clauses have been considered in their proper order. Also, if there's an agreement from the committee, the Chair will call clauses in blocks that confirm—conform to pages, with the understanding that we will stop at any particular clause or clauses where members may have comments, questions or amendments to propose.

Is that agreed? *[Agreed]*

Bill 3—The Mental Health Amendment Act *(Continued)*

Mr. Chairperson: We will now proceed to clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 3.

Does the minister responsible for Bill 3 have an opening statement?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Just briefly, I want to thank the presenters again who came to present on this bill and their suggestions and their willingness to be part of the process of forming the regulations around this bill.

I want to remind committee members, of course, that this is only the first step. Obviously, this particular bill will need significant work if it—and

when it passes the legislative process at third reading. It would require training provisions to be put in place, individuals to be designated and, of course, prior to that, the consultation that's duly been discussed here this evening. So, it's not a bill that will come to life, per se, the minute that it receives royal assent. There's a great deal of work that'll happen before that point, but of course it is the first step and a necessary step to have that work begin.

I just want to address a couple of the issues, very quickly, that are raised by members of—the presenters who came forward, in particular related to MGEU and the nurses union.

I respect the concerns about ensuring that there is safety in place. I want to re-emphasize I believe that it's always a balance. And while it was raised by the two presenters that they could—would be concerned about particular incidences that might happen, and they want to ensure that safety is paramount for those who are working within our health-care system, I agree with them. But the balance, of course, is when we have police officers that are sometimes sitting for two, three, four, five, six hours in an emergency room. That also puts lives in jeopardy back in the communities where those police officers are not attending to other duties. And so, it's not simply looking through one lens of—or one side of the lens.

Yes, there are legitimate cautions about ensuring that safety is still maintained within the hospitals, but we know that it has an effect on safety right now, by having our law enforcement officers tied up in places that they necessarily shouldn't be and not back in the community protecting those who might need protection.

And so, it can't be looked at just simply one side of the scope. Having said that, the presentations were thoughtful, were helpful and will be followed up on in the way that they should be followed up on.

* (20:40)

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. Chairperson: We thank the minister for his comments.

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

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Yes, I just wanted to take this opportunity, as well, to thank the members of the public that took the time to come down to the

Legislature and give us, I think, some very valuable information.

You know, not to say that some information is more valuable than others, but it's certainly always appreciated when members of labour can come and speak on behalf of their members. And we know that they're certainly watching this legislation very closely, so we very much appreciate that they've taken the opportunity to lend their expertise and their views to the committee tonight.

I also wanted to commend the minister on his commitment, both in his closing statement and also in his comments to the presenters, to work with them and, I think, to—I heard to also work with the front-line workers who are dealing with these issues on a day-to-day basis. And I think that's really key to making sure that this legislation works for everyone. And, again, I don't want to downplay the important work of the AMM and the presentation that they brought to today's proceedings, but I think we, as the minister said, need to strike that balance. And I think that's the most important, key element of this piece of legislation.

So I'm pleased to hear that the minister is willing to undertake that work and follow up with those key stakeholders, continue to consult with them and make sure that this fits with the needs of their membership and addresses a very serious problem in our law enforcement community as well.

So, with that, I'll close my comments.

Mr. Chairperson: We thank the member for his statement.

We will now proceed with clause by clause.

Clauses 1 and 2—pass; clauses 3 and 4—pass.

Shall the enacting clause pass?

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): To the minister, one of the points that was raised by both—two interventions tonight was whether personnel would be properly trained to handle high-risk situations, and if all of the people are transferred away from people that are trained to do that as their primary—peace officers, their primary function into the hands of other people, who will make the decision whether the transfer should be accepted or not? Because we could have a situation, from time to time, as you know, where ERs get crowded, and there might be some risk there that the staff, even if trained, might feel overwhelmed. Who will have the call on

whether the patient can be transferred? Will it be the health institution or the police department?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: I thank the member for the question. I think it's an important question. There's a number of aspects that it pertains to.

First of all, just in terms of training, the member's right. The training program that has to be put in place will have to address a number of different issues. It's important to remember that there are already people within the system, of course, who have specific training in dealing with issues of mental health.

Within my own community, of course, there's a crisis stabilization unit. There are other communities that have that. There are individuals within the crisis stabilization unit who take specific training, of course, because of the nature of the individuals that they are dealing with. So there are training components that already exist.

I also don't want to minimize the discretion that police officers still have. Police officers always have discretion when it comes to activities that they undertake, and simply because they take in somebody into an institution and they may have the ability to make a transfer, I don't think that it would be mandated that, of course, they have to. Discretion still exists for them if there are no individuals who are appropriate to do the hand-off to an institution, or if they for some reason feel that it would not be in the best interests of either the institution or the individual.

Mr. Selinger: Thank you for the answer.

Will the health-care institution have the right to refuse a transfer if they feel they are not equipped at that time to handle it?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: No, that's a good question. I mean, I think we'll take that, you know, under advisement in terms of the regulations.

You have to remember—and the member will know that not every institution will likely have the trained individuals. As it is now, I believe, there's only one hospital in Winnipeg that would have what we'd call security, per se. And so I don't foresee, as much as it might be desirable, that every institution will have—or every community will have individuals who will have taken the training and be able to participate in the program like this.

But, certainly, the protocol in terms of who has the last call is important, although I would—again, I

believe police will always have discretion in terms of when they've taken somebody into custody, they should have the discretion on the release of that individual.

Mr. Selinger: My final question. When you do your consultations with the folks that are presented tonight and others, will you raise this issue of who will have the final say on receiving a patient at a health-care institution or other institution, and if they feel they're not equipped to handle that patient at that time, will you have a discussion about who will have the final say?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: Yes, we'd have to have that appropriate discussion, for sure.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I appreciate where we're coming from with the introduction of this act, and I think all the presenters here tonight were certainly cognizant of the reasons for it. Their concerns, or some of their suggestions, were about how the consultation process is going to roll out, who's going to be involved in it, the length of time for that.

So that's my first question, I guess, is: Have you envisioned who all is going to be involved in that, and what's the process that individuals or groups of individuals who want to partake in that process can get involved in it?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: So I would envision that the relevant staff within the department would certainly undergo, in terms of putting together, a consultative list of who should be involved with those consultations; it's obvious it would involve people from the Manitoba Health community, would involve people from law enforcement, and if there are others who have an interest—obviously, we've heard from some of the front-line workers, including the nurses tonight; we'd want to hear from them as well.

I think, you know, likely we'd want to have some discussions with them about the kinds of training they see involved. Obviously, I think, law enforcement would have some suggestions on that as well, based on their experience. Probably from the front lines, such as the nurses like we heard them today, they would have—I think it was offered, a better perspective on what's happening in a real way and in real time on the floor of emergency rooms or other places where individuals are being brought in, and that's the kind of upfront advice we're going to have, for sure.

Mr. Lindsey: It certainly suggests that there's any number of—be it nurses, MGEU, possibly CUPE or other workers' groups, as well as mental health people. We need to make sure that there's a balance on that consultation process between big-city hospitals, rural hospitals, northern hospitals, so that all the different aspects are captured in there.

And, along that same line, I'm not sure what you would envision or see as staffing levels that may come into play with this. I recognize that it's tying up RCMP officers or police officers that need to be out doing other things but recognizing that some of the health-care facilities already—the medical staff that's at an emergency room is already stretched pretty thin with these additional duties and responsibilities. How do you—how does that get captured in the process to make sure that we're not overtaxing those individuals? And they have the right at some point to say, hey, wait a minute, you got to stop, you can't leave—so is that all part of the consultation process, or is—

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: Yes, and we obviously want, I think, to—in consultation with the RHAs do some analysis on terms of what resources exist in the different communities. There may already be some pre-existing resources that don't involve hospitals currently that could be tapped and that just simply couldn't be used because of the inability of the law to allow them to use it, so we would want to do a resource analysis in terms of which communities have what resources, which RHAs feel they have resources that either exist currently within the hospitals or within the communities.

* (20:50)

Mr. Lindsey: This is a closing comment. I guess the devil is always in the details of how the regulations get formatted so that all people that are going to be involved, be they the police, the health-care professionals, or the individual that's being brought in, are comfortable with the system that gets built to make sure that everyone's welfare is best looked after.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen: No, I mean I understand that, and obviously we want to have a consultation process that is balanced and is broad as reasonably possible. I also don't want to have, you know, paralysis by consultation. The member will know, being involved in many different things, you can consult endlessly and you find good things in endless

consultations, but you also get nothing done if you never stop consulting.

So it is also there a balance of trying to ensure that we have the right breadth of individuals who have been consulted, certainly from a broad variety of communities, but we also have to get on with the act at some point, too, and so that's—as a minister I have a responsibility to ensure that the act moves forward at some point as well, after a reasonable and fair amount of consultation.

Mr. Chairperson: Enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

**Bill 5—The Francophone Community
Enhancement and Support Act**
(Continued)

Mr. Chairperson: We will now proceed to Bill 5.

Does the minister responsible for Bill 5 have an opening statement?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs): Merci à la communauté d'être présente ce soir.

Translation

Thank you to the community to be present tonight.

English

It speaks to the importance of this bill, not only for the francophone community but for all of Manitobans, to have you come out this evening and make your presentations.

I would like to express my gratitude for the work that the Francophone Affairs Secretariat has done in the past few months to make this bill a reality, and I'd especially like to thank Mélanie Cwikla for her tireless and ongoing dedication and efforts to support the francophone community, and for all of your efforts I truly, truly, thank you.

I also want to thank Société Franco-Manitobaine for their support and collaboration through this process. This is the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the francophone community, and I'm very honoured to play a role in writing this new chapter.

Merci beaucoup.

Mr. Chairperson: We thank the minister.

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

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): Oui, j'aimerais remercier la ministre pour son—sa responsabilité de mettre ce projet de loi en avant nous très tôt dans le mandat du nouveau gouvernement. C'est une initiative très positive, un geste très positif pour la communauté, je crois.

J'aimerais reconnaître et remercier la communauté aussi pour leur patience depuis plusieurs années, plusieurs décennies. En 1890, ils ont décidé que le français n'était pas légal dans la province du Manitoba. En 1916, ils ont aboli les écoles confessionnelles, et maintenant on est dans une période de réconciliation. Nous avons la chance de mettre en place un reconnaissance égale pour la communauté, un programme proactif et positif pour la communauté, un partenariat entre la communauté et le gouvernement et les officiaux dans le gouvernement de faire les choses positives pour la communauté. Je crois c'est un bon modèle pour la communauté francophone. C'est un bon modèle pour les autres communautés qui cherchent de préserver leur langue, leur culture et leur histoire dans la province du Manitoba.

So, ce soir, à mon avis, c'est une soirée historique. Je crois on doit le mettre en place avec un consensus de la législature.

Translation

Yes, I would like to thank the minister for her—her role in tabling this bill very early in the new government's mandate. It is a very positive initiative, a positive gesture for the community, I believe.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the community for its patience over the last number of years and decades. In 1890, they decided that French was not legal in the province of Manitoba. In 1916, they abolished denominational schools, and now we are in a period of reconciliation. We have the opportunity to put into place equal recognition for the community, a proactive and positive program for the community, a partnership between the community and the government and officials in the government to do positive things for the community. I believe it is a good model for the francophone community. It's a good model for other communities who are seeking to preserve their language, culture and history in the province of Manitoba.

So this evening, in my view, is a historic evening. I believe we should pass the bill with the consensus of the Legislature.

English

We are entering into a historic period of reconciliation tonight that overcomes some of the injuries of history to the community, and I think it will be a very good model for other communities that have gone through suffering of losing their language and their culture as well. So I think we have good model here that will stand up well in the future.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairperson: We thank the member for his statement.

We will now proceed to clause by clause.

Clause 1—pass; clauses 2 and 3—pass; clauses 4 and 5—pass; clause 6—pass; clauses 7 and 8—pass; clauses 9 and 10—pass; clause 11—pass; clauses 12 through 14—pass; clauses 15 through 17—pass; clauses 18 and 19—pass; clauses 20 and 21—pass; schedule A—pass; schedule B—pass; preamble—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

Mr. Chairperson: I'd like to thank everybody for presenting tonight and for everybody who attended, it's great. I have to remind everybody that in getting involved in at the end and clapping is not allowed, but I guess it's too late now, so I can't do anything about it.

The hour now being 8:57, what is the will of the committee?

Some Honourable Members: Committee rise.

Mr. Chairperson: Committee rise.

COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 8:57 p.m.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Re: Bill 3

Thank you for the opportunity to provide some brief comments on Bill 3: The Mental Health Amendment Act.

The Manitoba Federation of Labour (MFL) is Manitoba's central labour body, representing over 100,000 working women and men in Manitoba, from both public and private sector workplaces, including many from the health care sector.

We have some concern that in changing the way in which involuntary patients are accompanied through the mental health system, the safety of patients and health care professionals may be compromised.

Up to now, Peace Officers have played the vital role of helping to ensure the safety of all in these challenging situations.

We understand that it is the government's intention to allow persons other than Peace Officers to accompany involuntary patients. We would like to ensure that patient and worker safety is maintained throughout, recognizing that volatile circumstances can sometimes present themselves. Proper training and appropriate authority will be essential for whoever is charged with accompanying involuntary patients. We believe that the current system using Peace Officers works well.

We urge the government to consult closely with health care unions in determining appropriate measures to ensure worker and patient safety remain a top priority. As recent media stories have reminded us, the consequences of failing to prioritize safety can be tragic.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kevin Rebeck

President

Manitoba Federation of Labour

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings
are also available on the Internet at the following address:

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>