

Second Session – Forty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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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
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SELINGER, Greg	St. Boniface	NDP
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Point Douglas	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I'd like to see if you could seek leave of the House to call Bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act (Silver Alert).

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to consider concurrence and third reading of Bill 214 this morning? [*Agreed*]

**CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS—
PUBLIC BILLS**

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

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): Good morning, Madam Speaker.

I would move, seconded by the member from Dawson Trail, that Bill 214, The Missing Persons Amendment Act (Silver Alert), reported from the Standing Committee on Private Bills, be concurred in and now be read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Isleifson: Two applauses in one morning, that's a good way to start the week. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I certainly don't need to take a lot of time to talk about Bill 214 and some of the changes that we want to see come in and some of the legislation that I'm bringing forward. I think it's important to know, when we look at what has transpired since I first introduced the bill, was a lot of feedback from

community-minded organizations, various groups. I've received a number of letters and emails supporting the bill from as far away as Alberta and into some areas of the US as well.

I think it's important that we realize that what Bill 214 does is it simply provides an opportunity to assist the—a police service in going out and bringing quicker awareness to the public when a person, an adult with a cognitive impairment, goes missing.

I know—and I just want to read a couple things. One thing on CBC News, a Mr. Victor Johnson, whose mother, Bessie Johnson, had wandered away from her home in Riverbend in 2014, was quoted on CBC as saying that he thinks it's a good idea of a faster, more widespread message, and this is a good one—so, again, support from someone who has gone through the anguish of having someone missing that we're certainly trying to help move a lot faster in getting things done.

Another quote I want to use which was on CTV News was the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba's CEO, Wendy Schettler, who supports the bill and was obviously one of the people that I had met with previously, Madam Speaker, to put the bill into play. She quotes, the longer a person with Alzheimer's disease is missing, the more likely they are to be injured. We have to figure out ways for them to be found more quickly. And when we look at Bill 214, that's exactly what it is; it's about getting information out to the public as soon as possible.

I know there was a couple of questions from the opposition going through the whole process, and I want to acknowledge that. One of the members had asked: Why is legislation required on a silver alert when it was not required for an AMBER Alert? Very good question, and simply, an AMBER Alert is preceded by a crime. When someone is abducted, when a child is abducted, there's a crime in place; therefore, legislation is not required to initiate an AMBER Alert.

Just yesterday, I believe, in Ontario, they issued an AMBER Alert, and because of that alert, the person was found very quickly. And, again, the toddler that was with this gentleman was safe, so that's a good thing. So, it just goes to show that when you have issues in place—or, pardon me—when you

have systems in place to deal with issues like this, they're very beneficial.

One of the other concerns that the opposition had had, and I've heard this concern before when I've done some looking at other jurisdictions, is: Does it take away from other missing persons cases?

When we look—and again, I'm going to refer to the AMBER Alert, in the history of Manitoba, the AMBER Alert has never ever been used, and that's a good thing. It's also a good thing that we have it in place; 2016, there were 9,700 missing people reported in Winnipeg alone, and in 2015, 8,800 people missing in Winnipeg alone. A lot of them are children, but there are some adults in there, obviously. And, again, having a silver alert will not take away from the fact that we need to increase our efforts in helping find all missing peoples regardless of their condition.

I do want to read into record, and I will table, an email that I received this morning, and, again, just before I read it, the—one of the gentlemen that helped put this bill together with me—and I really got a lot of information from him—was the chief of police from Brandon, Chief Ian Grant. And I know I'd mentioned it before, but I want to mention again that Police Chief Grant was seconded by the government of the day to write bill—or to write The Missing Persons Amendment Act. So we have the author of the bill itself supporting changes to the bill to include a silver alert.

And what he says here is, this legislation will make The Missing Persons Act stronger and will assist the police in their efforts to find persons, adult who have gone missing who have a cognitive disability. When anyone goes missing, it is very hard on the family and friends. It is especially troubling when people may be suffering from a cognitive disability. There have been many examples across Canada and in Manitoba where persons who have a cognitive disability have gone missing. This legislative tool will assist the police of this province as they set about to try and find people missing under such circumstances. Again, I congratulate you on your efforts—well done—Ian Grant, city of—police chief in Brandon.

So, again, you can see, Madam Speaker, that there is support for this bill. It is something that is needed. There is nothing of its kind like this in Canada at the moment. There's a variation in BC, which is a little different, and I know they are

looking at our bill, as well, to try to move it forward again.

* (10:10)

In closing, Madam Speaker, I want to just—it's nothing I have to table. I got an email here—not an email—pardon me—just a little letter here from All Seniors Care and it has to do with other items in my constituency, but she just 'lites'—writes a little hand note on it. It says: Love the silver alert, brilliant. So we actually have—and you can certainly—I only have one copy, but you can make copies if you like. Again, it just shows that there's support out there not because it's something that we want, it's because it's something that we need in this province, to look after those as our population ages.

So I'll leave it with that, Madam Speaker, and, again, I thank you very much for your time.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): I'm please to speak at third reading of Bill 214. Our opposition caucus is prepared to support the bill of the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson).

I suppose, for the member for Brandon East, the work really begins now, as he's about to discover as he tries, now, to turn to his own government to try to get some resources to make sure that this bill does everything that he hopes it will.

This bill amends The Missing Persons Act to permit the police to work with broadcasters and others to alert the public when a vulnerable person or another adult with a cognitive impairment is missing. And, as I had said at second reading and, I believe, at committee: in truth, police services are doing this already. The Brandon Police Service, the Winnipeg Police Service, the RCMP are already doing what we think is the right thing. They're contacting broadcasters and they're making sure that word gets out. I know that this bill will specify certain kinds of information that can be released. In truth, we're already seeing that. If someone suffers from dementia, Alzheimer's or another condition, that usually is part of the public notice that's given, I expect because the families are consenting to that information going out because they want the person to be back home.

So, that being said, if this is going to provide more attention, if there are to be more eyes and ears out there in the community—in the general community when someone—an adult goes missing, then the bill, I hope, will be a good thing.

Now, I do say there's more work to do for the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson) because simply passing the bill without some effort from the government will not actually accomplish everything I believe the member for Brandon East truly wants to have happen. And I did speak about the AMBER Alert system. I just want to put a few words on the record just as a guide to the member for Brandon East.

It was our government that put in place the programs and services to make the AMBER Alert program effective and ready to go in Manitoba. And, of course, we all know over the weekend there was an AMBER Alert issued just a few kilometres outside of Manitoba's boundaries with someone who, coincidentally, apparently is a resident in Brandon, who abducted a child. The AMBER Alert in Ontario was notified and it was actually a lot of police officers who had been assisting with trying to find a missing child in Rushing River park in Ontario who actually spotted the person and were able to stop him and return the child safely.

For those kinds of programs to be effective there's got to be work done, and each organization has to be aware of the respective roles and responsibilities. And although we hope AMBER Alerts won't be necessary in Manitoba very often—and, frankly, that silver alerts won't be often required in Manitoba, we want to make sure that there's proper co-ordination and co-operation between different regulatory bodies, the different jurisdictions, different organizations and, of course, making sure that the media understands exactly what their role is. Media sometimes tend to—they tend to get very excited. I suppose as good community citizens they're trying to be helpful. We just want to make sure that when media outlets are involved, that they're providing the right information at the right time, and they're then providing the updates if somebody is found, if something changes to make sure that they have protocols in place to make sure that information is there.

With the AMBER Alert system, all police agencies in Manitoba now have an operational AMBER Alert policy. It is easier for the larger police forces, for the RCMP, Winnipeg Police Service, Brandon Police Service to be able to have those protocols and have them made certain. More of a challenge for smaller, municipal forces to make sure that that information is there, so in the unlikely event that something happens in their community there is someone in that agency that has access to the

information, that has access to the contacts and knows exactly what to do. So, if someone in the town of Rivers, for example, goes missing, we want to make sure that the municipal police force in Rivers has the opportunity to have that information to make sure they're getting the right word out to media in Brandon, to local media in southwestern Manitoba, to the CBC to make sure that those supports are as effective as possible.

So I hope that that will be possible. Again, this bill will pass this morning and that's great. It will receive royal assent very soon. We just want to make sure that we lend our voices to the member for Brandon East to make sure that his government is actually prepared to put the necessary resources into making this bill effective. And, so far, the record has been concerning when it comes to matters of seniors, of health, of protecting our vulnerable adults. We do have some deep concerns, so we'll join the member for Brandon East and, hopefully, this system will work as well as it possibly can.

I take the member for Brandon East at his word that the folks who do the AMBER Alert do not believe there is any issues or concerns. I'm prepared to accept his word on that as we move ahead and pass this bill today.

So, those are my comments, Madam Speaker. I look forward to hearing what other members might have to say on this bill and, again, I'll stand with the member for Brandon East if he needs to shake up his own Cabinet and Premier (Mr. Pallister) to make sure that this bill is going to be as effective as it can be.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I just wanted to commend the member for Brandon East for introducing this bill. I think it's a great step in protecting our senior citizens and those who are most vulnerable in our province.

I can attest to a couple of times where I've had the blessing to happen to find elders who have gone missing in the southern community, and it was great, the response of the 311 number that we now have, the 511 number as well I used, and they were pretty quick to come and check out the individual and ensure that the person was taken care of, and I think that going forward, if we have this, it would be on our—it behooves us to ensure that such a system in—is in place for our most vulnerable. They have built this world that we now live in, and I think we owe them a

debt of gratitude, and I believe that this is one way to show the respect that they deserve. And I thank you for giving me the time to speak on the bill.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): It's certainly a pleasure to rise this morning in this House as the critic for the opposition caucus for seniors and to just put a few words, once again, on the record with regards to Bill 214.

As members in the House here have alluded to, I think the opposition caucus is prepared to support this particular piece of legislation and just take the opportunity to not only commend the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson), but also just point out the process by which this bill has now arrived here before us this morning. And I think it's worth noting that during the debate, when this bill was brought forward—I had to look very far back in my calendar to find the initial discussion of this, but it was at the beginning of March, I think, that this piece of legislation came forward—and at that time it was brought forward to the House, there was some discussion, some debate, a question period, of course, was undertaken. And I know that the member for Brandon East then went back to the drawing board and did some work to talk to law enforcement, to seniors groups, to reach out, to actually get some support from the community with regards to this bill.

I also know that this came before the—a committee of the House, where members of the public had an opportunity to have their input, and now we have an opportunity to bring it back here before the House for some further debate. And so I just wanted to put on the record that I think there was some value in making sure that this piece of legislation hit all the marks, I think, that the member opposite wanted it to hit.

And just to echo the words of the member from Minto, who now, you know, who said very aptly that now this is the—where the work begins in terms of not only reaching out further to law enforcement, to broadcasters who would be responsible for getting the message out in the case of a silver alert, educating the public on what exactly that means so that members of the public are able to respond appropriately, but, again, also lobbying members of the government Cabinet and others to now put in place those resources which, I think, are so necessary to actually accomplish what is now being asked of first responders and others.

* (10:20)

You know, this is, again, a good example of an opportunity for us as legislators to bring attention to an issue. But, as anybody who has worked in community development or worked with community groups, oftentimes there are good ideas, there are good, solid paths forward. But it's only when the resources flow from the government that they're able to actually have the kind of impact that they wanted to have. And there's certainly—you know, our government's, you know, put a lot of emphasis and attention to helping seniors have the resources that they needed to not only, you know, age in place and be successful in that way, but also to put in the resources to surround them to allow them to have a sense of community and a sense of support that is so very necessary as seniors get older.

We know that our province is an aging province, as is the rest of Canada and North America. And Manitobans are living healthier. They're living longer. They're continuing to, as I said, want to live in their own communities and have that sense of community. And so that's where investing in and improving health care—and that includes mental health and all the supports that come with it—are so very important.

We know that it was an NDP government that established home care in Manitoba over 40 years ago, and I think that was part of the first step in allowing seniors to have a sense of community, to allow them some independence. That was the path, and now what we need is to further enhance that ability for them to do that. And that's where programs like this can help surround them and support them in the case of individuals who go missing. We know that we—of course—had the Home Care Leadership Team, which laid out the plan to improve our universal, publicly funded home-care system which we believe would serve Manitobans better into the future and more than doubled the funding to allow that home care to be the kind of program that would allow seniors to live in their homes longer and be more independent. We doubled that funding from over—for, sorry, from just under \$150 million to over \$330 million.

The other aspect that this bill touches on is the need for more personal-care-home beds. And we know that investment there is—it not only impacts the ability of seniors to live happier and healthier lives, but also reduces the impact on our health-care system as members are able to live in their—in assisted living and in personal-care-home beds longer—and, again, just having that opportunity to be

as independent as possible at every step of the way with the safety net, with the safeguards that a bill like this would provide. We made supportive housing a real cornerstone and a real focus where allowing for affordable alternative to personal-care homes for low-income seniors where we added more supports was part of that matrix that allowed seniors to have different options no matter how they were able to access the system.

We also, of course, focused on our Provincial Elder Abuse Strategy where we established that 24-hour seniors abuse support line for support and counselling to help seniors who are experiencing abuse get the help that they need and access those resources that were already available. We created the regional elder abuse response teams that helped vulnerable seniors access the supports that they needed close to their homes, and we created the Safe Suite Program to provide a safe place for older adults who are leaving abusive relationships.

So all of these supports, Madam Speaker, again, allowed seniors to be as independent as possible, to allow them to live in their communities as long as possible. And then this would be another step in allowing them to have that safety net if someone does go missing, that there is an ability to communicate that, get that message out as quickly as possible to the public. But now we hope that law enforcement, we hope that first responders, we hope that the word can get out there and the public can get engaged because, really, that's where this bill is going to either have success or not.

And so I started my words—again, I had to look back; it was in March when I spoke the last time at second reading to this bill—by saying I think this is part of a continuum—part of a conversation that is certainly worthwhile in this House, but with the larger public.

And I look forward to having that conversation as we go forward in this government's term to see the resources, to see where the actual investment in seniors is going to come from. We hope that it is significant—that it doesn't just begin and end with this one bill seeking some input from the public but also that the government is able to support those seniors. And those seniors' organizations are doing amazing work.

And so we will continue to be watching and waiting for those kinds of pieces of legislation that come forward. And I do hope that there are others

that are here to speak to this bill, but I do look forward to seeing it move forward.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

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

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

I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, wondering if you could canvass the House to see if there's leave to call it 11 o'clock.

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

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 16—Declaration of Indo-Manitoban Heritage Week

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

The resolution before us this morning is the resolution Declaration of Indo-Manitoban Heritage Week, brought forward by the honourable member for Southdale.

Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Rossmere,

WHEREAS Indo-Manitobans represent a significant population having been located within the Province of Manitoba for over a century; and

WHEREAS the Indo-Manitoban community has made tremendous contributions to the growth and development of Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the Indo-Manitoban population's contribution to the growing diversity of Manitoba communities and workplaces has been celebrated; and

WHEREAS declaring the week of August 15th as Indo-Manitoban Heritage Week represents an opportunity to recognize the contributions made by Indo-Manitobans to the province's economic, political and cultural fabric.

THAT BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba acknowledge the Indo-Manitoba community and urge the provincial government to establish the week of August 15th as Indo-Manitoba Heritage Week.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Southdale (Mr. Smith), seconded by the honourable member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba acknowledge the Indo-Manitoban community and urge the provincial government to establish the week of August 15th as Indo-Manitoban Heritage Week.

Mr. Smith: Madam Speaker, it is truly an honour to rise in the Legislature today to introduce this important resolution.

This inspiration to introduce the resolution came as I reflected on my own grandparents who immigrated to Canada some 60 years ago, not speaking a word of English and having to find their way in a culture that they were not accustomed to. But through their hard work, determination and especially their perseverance, they and their community became not only accepted, but became an integral part of Manitoba's cultural and political landscape.

In much the same way, it is our goal on this side of the House to ensure that the success of the Indo community is celebrated here in our province, so that our children and grandchildren will not forget the hard work and sacrifices that have been made so that Indo-Manitobans, like groups who have settled before them, become part of the cultural, economic and political foundation in Manitoba. In other words, the Indo community is very much a part of our cultural mosaic, no different than groups who have settled years before them.

Growing up, I have to admit that my interaction with the Indo community was limited. However, over the years, especially as more people immigrated to Canada from India, I began to develop a more full appreciation and understanding of the community. During my time in high school and university, a number of my friends were Indo-Canadian, and over time as I got older, I began to appreciate and understand this amazing culture.

It was truly when I visited India that I began to appreciate the actual complexity and diversity of the Indo culture. I had the great honour of visiting a

number of historic sites and monuments, whether it was the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the Taj Mahal in Agra, the Red Fort in New Delhi or the tiger refuge in Rajasthan that I truly understood the appeal of India's culture, its diversity and its raw, natural beauty of the countryside.

* (10:30)

It is my hope to return to India and visit the southern parts of the country to fully be immersed in India's charm. It is also my hope that members of this House have the opportunity to visit India and experience the amazing country that it is. But equally important this morning, Madam Speaker, I hope that all members of this House recognize and support this resolution so that we as a province can celebrate the rich culture that the Indo community brings to our great province.

Manitoba is a province that was built by a number of different groups immigrating to our province over the past 147 years. Whether it's Ukrainian, Polish or Mennonite immigrants that settled our prairie landscape, they all came here for a better life. Not only did they create a better life for themselves, they also helped forge a better life for all Manitobans. These groups left their homeland bringing with them a strong work ethic, resilience and an entrepreneurial streak that built our province. In fact, Madam Speaker, I know that many MLAs in this Chamber are either first- or second- or even third-generation Canadians. It's rare in Manitoba to not have relatives or close family members who have immigrated to our country.

It was my grandparents who were the last of our family to immigrate to Manitoba, fleeing both war and persecution in Ukraine as their homeland was invaded by Nazi Germany and also occupied by the Soviet Union. As young adults barely leaving their teenage years behind, they came to a strange new land, a country that was vastly different from their homeland they once knew, and Canada quickly became their beacon of hope. To them, it became a land of opportunity, a land of freedom and a land that offered them much-needed security. Coming to Canada was the best thing that ever happened to them and they continue to share this sentiment today. Their newfound home in Manitoba gave them the opportunity to build a better life for themselves and their family. But in coming here, they and many others did far more than that. They helped build our province, Madam Speaker, providing their children and grandchildren with opportunities that they could

only dream of. They built a prosperous and diverse province that many of us now take for granted.

Today, people around the world envy Manitoba's cultural plurality. Our families have come from different parts of the world, yet remain united with a common identity that we are all Manitobans, that we're all Canadians. Through this common identity we freely celebrate each other's cultures. If you look no further than Folklorama, then you'll see the strong support for pluralism in our province. This is truly an amazing 'complishment' for Manitoba, where a diverse group of people from all over the world can maintain both their heritage while keeping a common identity. I am incredibly thankful that my grandparents had the opportunity to immigrate to Manitoba where generations of our family have enjoyed the opportunities of this province. It's my hope that as people from around the world continue to immigrate to Manitoba they, too, are able to create a better life for families and contribute to our cultural mosaic.

Many of us who'd be surprised to learn that Indo-Manitobans have been in our province for over a century. The first significant wave of immigration of Indo-Canadians began around 1904, and most of the workers who immigrated ended up working in the fishing, forestry or railroad industries.

According to the 2011 census, Indo-Manitobans account for 2 per cent of the population, but that figure has undoubtedly grown over the past five years since Indo-Canadians are one of the fastest-growing communities in the country.

Statistics Canada—according to Statistics Canada, the number of immigrants from south Asia grew 74 per cent from over 314,000 in 2001 to over 547,000 in 2011, with India being the top immigration-source country. Today, you will find Indo-Manitobans in many walks of life, different occupations and living in various parts of our province, both urban and, now, increasingly rural.

Indo-Manitobans have reached out beyond their immediate circles and have become actively involved in the community at large whether it's participation in United Way, CancerCare or many other 'philthrantic' causes. Over are the days where one or two occupations defined the community. Today Indo-Manitobans are entrepreneurs, they're doctors, educators, civil servants, nurses, politicians, just to name a few. In fact, it'd be difficult to find occupations or industries that do not contain members of the Indo community. In other words,

Madam Speaker, Manitobans of Indo origin have become a part of our social, economic and political fabric.

The Indo diaspora is a diverse people coming from various ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. There are people who are Punjab origin, those of Tamil origin, there are Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians and many other religious affiliations. This resolution calls on the Manitoba government to recognize Indo-Manitoba heritage week for all Manitobans of Indo descent, this, regardless of their culture or religious differences.

In many ways, Madam Speaker, the Indo community's diversity is similar to that of Manitoba and Canada's pluralism on a whole. We are united by common and shared values but continue to celebrate each other's cultural and religious differences.

Today, I call on Manitobans to honour the Indo-Manitoban community by recognizing Indo-Manitoba heritage week. I have chosen the week of August 15th, since this corresponds with both 'indi' Independence Day and, here in Manitoba, the second week of Folklorama. And what better way to recognize the Indo community than to do so on one of the most important days in India and during one of our province's largest cultural celebrations.

Manitoba's a unique province and we have the unique opportunity to recognize Manitoba's entire Indo-community during the week of August 15th. Now, other provinces around the country have done similar things. However, they often differentiate based on religious affiliation. This resolution, however, will recognize Indo-Manitobans as a whole, notwithstanding the religious and cultural diversity within the community. It doesn't matter if you're Sikh, Hindu, Christian or Muslim, you are part of a dynamic and growing community that has become an instrumental part of Manitoba's rich cultural diversity. And like most new Canadians, the Indo community has experienced its share of challenges in coming to a new country.

Madam Speaker, I do call on the government of Manitoba and all legislators here in the Chamber today to support this very important resolution.

Thank you.

Questions

Madam Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first

question may be asked by a member from another party, any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties. Each independent member may ask one question and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I just want to honour and say congratulations for bringing this resolution forward and I would ask the member: Does his government recognize that immigration contributes positively to Manitoba's multiculturalism and diversity?

Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale): I do thank the member for the question.

Absolutely, we do believe that—on this side of the House, that this province, in fact, was built by immigration and we—part of the reason we're doing this today is to honour the Indo community and their contributions to our province, both economically, politically and socially.

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): I, too, want to reiterate that I think this is an excellent resolution and I appreciate the member coming forth with this great idea and I look forward to celebrating the week this August.

Can the member inform the members of this Chamber why addressing Indo-Manitoban heritage is so important?

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

Well, as I said earlier, the Indo community is one of the fastest growing ethnic cultural groups in the country and in Manitoba, so I believe that in order to help Indo-Manitobans fully become part of our cultural and social fabric here in Manitoba, this is an important piece of the—of doing just that. So, again, I want thank the member for the question and, you know, welcome everybody here in the gallery today that have come to support this important resolution.

Thank you.

Ms. Fontaine: I would ask the member whether or not his government recognizes that the additional \$500 fee to the PNP program will have a negative impact on attracting newcomers that are actually—that this resolution is trying to actually honour—bringing into Manitoba.

Mr. Smith: I do appreciate and thank the member for the question.

* (10:40)

You know, first of all, this resolution is about honouring the Indo community, notwithstanding anything else that may be before the Legislative Assembly, but then again, we do have 15,000 people who have a expression of interest to come to Manitoba, and we know that changes to the PNP program have been done so to help expedite that very process.

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): Yes, I thank the member for bringing forward this resolution, but my question is that Indo-Canadian community is—majority of them are in the taxi industry. Will not Bill 30 will wipe out all the savings of the Indo-Canadian community? Would the government—will take that bill back?

Mr. Smith: I do thank the member from The Maples for that question.

As I said before, this resolution is about honouring the Indo community in this province and their contributions that they have made, notwithstanding other legislative initiatives that might be before the floor. I know that the member himself comes from India; he came from Punjab. I had a chance to visit Punjab a few years back, and it was a very amazing experience for me. But, again, to the member for Maples, this is about honouring the Indo community and their contributions to the entire province and our cultural mosaic as a whole.

Thank you.

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): Can the member share with us what various stakeholders have been saying about the benefits of an 'Indio'—sorry—an Indo-Manitoban heritage week?

Mr. Smith: I thank the member from Rossmere for the question.

The Hindu Society of Manitoba supports this resolution to declare the week of August 15th as Indo-Manitoba heritage week. Over the past 60 years, beginning with a couple of pioneers in 1948, we have grown to our present stage where second and even third generations are making their presence felt in both public and private spheres in this province, the Hindu Society of Manitoba.

I have a number of—support from different stakeholders: the Manitoba Islamic Association, the Sathya Sai Baba centre, Hindu Society of Manitoba and the India Centre, just to name a few.

Ms. Fontaine: So I just want to go back to, again, the \$500 application fee for the PNP program.

So I understand what the member is trying to do, to officially recognize our Indo-Canadian relatives here in Manitoba and, certainly, I think that that's—we're all on side in respect of that. But, at the—on the other hand, you can't recognize them just in words but then actually put the conditions in place that actually severely reduce and restrict the number of Indo-Canadians that we actually have in Manitoba, or newcomers that come to Manitoba.

So does the member agree that the \$500 application fee unfairly burdens newcomers coming to Manitoban?

Mr. Smith: I'd be happy to answer that question. I thank the member from St. Johns for asking the question.

Like I said, first of all, this resolution is about recognizing the Indo-Manitoba community here in Manitoba. With respect to the PNP, that new fee has actually reduced and eliminated the four-year backlogs, so—helping more people like Indo-Manitobans and other cultural groups come to this province.

So, again, I thank the member for the question and remind the House today that this is about recognizing the Indo-Manitoba community here in Manitoba.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): I'd like to thank the member for Southdale (Mr. Smith) for bringing forward the resolution. It's a great idea, and our caucus will be supporting the resolution.

But I'd like to ask that, in light of Asian Heritage Month, will your—will the government be bringing forward more resolutions for all of our Asian ethnic groups here in Manitoba?

Mr. Smith: I thank the member from Burrows for the question. Again, this is a resolution that's—right now, as we speak today—focused on the Indo community as a whole in Manitoba.

I'm not going to be able to speculate as to whether or not other resolutions like this will come forward. They are private members' resolutions at the end of the day, so it's up to private members to do so. For my sake and purposes right now, we are here to introduce and honour the Indo-Manitoba community, many of whom are in the gallery here today, and to support the amazing contributions they've made to our province economically, socially and politically.

Mrs. Guillemard: I just—I know that the member had touched on the reasons of why the week of the

15th is so important for recognizing the Indo-Manitoban community, and I just want to know if he could expand on some of those reasonings and share with us some of the special and unique features this culture brings to us.

Thank you.

Mr. Smith: I do appreciate the question from my colleague.

The week of the 15th—well, August 15th is India Independence Day. It's one of the—if not the most important days in the country of India, and I think it's a great honour to be able to bestow a heritage week on a community that is celebrating their independence at the same time as we, as Manitobans, are celebrating our cultural diversity here through Folklorama.

So, again, I think it's very important to be able to recognize this Indo community, especially on the week of August 15th where they have been celebrating two very important days in the month of August.

Ms. Fontaine: I also just want to acknowledge everybody that's in the gallery today and say, on behalf of the NDP caucus, welcome.

For my colleague, I—you know, we know that Manitoba is actually home to world-class cultural events like Folklorama and Festival du Voyageur.

How does the member see that the cuts to arts and culture, will it have a negative impact on organizations and festivals that actually promote Manitoba's cultural diversity, including programs servicing and festivals servicing Indo-Canadians here in Manitoba?

Mr. Smith: I want to thank the member from St. Johns for the question.

You know, we on this side of the House are very supportive of all cultural groups in this province. You know, just last year we—our first year in office, I can't speak for every member, but I went to every single Folklorama pavilion except one. So, you know, I think that does show a strong support for cultural communities here in Manitoba.

And, of course, you know, I want to thank, again, the great members from the Indo community who have joined us here today and have taken time out of their busy day to come and show support for this important resolution that I think will honour

them and the incredible contributions they have made to Manitoba.

Madam Speaker: The time for questions has ended.

Debate

Madam Speaker: Debate is open.

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): Madam Speaker, I would like to add a few words to this resolution.

First of all, I appreciate the member for bringing this resolution forward.

This resolution is regarding for—the culture of my motherland. Such celebration every year will help to reduce some pain of missing my birthplace. You never forget the place where you were brought up, enjoyed your childhood and developed friendships to last forever.

This resolution also gives us the idea to expand further to the immigrants from other countries. People have immigrated from all over the world. If we start celebrating all those cultures we may have two or three celebrations every week, so we will have every week a place to go and enjoy different cultures.

No culture will survive unless its language survives or it is revived. I brought forward the idea of a third compulsory language in the school system, and we discussed it with the minister—or I discussed it with the minister a few times. I know the minister is kind of agreeing, but the concern about the funds and other curriculum. And—but I think to understand other cultures, extra funds would not be hard to follow. It helps.

*(10:50)

I can remind: one time I was doing door knocking, and I was—at that time I was also emphasizing that a third language could be brought into schools, and he said, why taxpayers' money should be spent over there. So I emphasize it's not the—only people who born over here. They pay taxes. We people who come from other countries, we pay our taxes too. We have the right to have those kinds of issues to be dealt with.

So I think it's very important that a compulsory third language is brought into the school system so whenever our children will know our language, they will be able to understand our culture, where we come from. And they will be better equipped to go back to other countries to have business dealings.

And we—all Manitoba—all Canada will benefit from that. And, in a way, I feel—although I appreciate Southdale—member for Southdale (Mr. Smith), but also I feel a little bit my idea has been stolen and—because I brought forward this idea, and I emphasize that Minister of Culture will declare that Sikh heritage month, April—Sikh heritage month, because BC has done it, Alberta has done it, and maybe we should do also that.

And—but I think, I would not say the minister have bad intention, but maybe it slipped off her mind. I know in future she will do something about it. And so I think that will be other idea to bring forward. I wouldn't say on the basis upon religion I know, but I don't think Sikhism is only a religion. It's a political system. It brought equality and men and women. It emphasizes equality of men and women. It emphasized equality in different castes, and I think it also emphasized of democracy. When tenth guru first baptized those five Sikhs who were ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of human rights, and then he asked them to baptize him. So first he was leader, then he became their follower. So as that—there is some instance when that guru, against his own will, had to obey the order of the five beloved ones.

So introducing Sikh heritage month is not only introducing some of the religious ideas; it also—one have to understand Sikh religion is also emphasizing equality of religions too. They don't say only Sikh religion better than the other; they say all religions are good, but Muslims should be good Muslims, Hindus should be good Hindus. Similarly, Christians should be good Christians, and other religious people, they should be good.

So this is kind of idea, that's why I was emphasizing so we can have Manitoba Sikh heritage month and—but this is a great idea. It's not that—I said, if we celebrate every country's culture over here, and we will know better than any other places, and we will have better diversity and we will have a better understanding. Sometimes, when we don't have understanding of the other cultures, we misinterpret their cultural values. And I am victim of those kinds of discriminations.

So, on the other hand, I think—when we say on one hand: well, look at the taxi industry. Would these people of this House do anything to the farmers like that? Would they wipe out their savings? And the East Indian community, those savings are being wiped out. So it—this is kind of—on one hand, we are

appreciating here the East Indian communities' contribution, but on the other hand we say no, you don't deserve to be equal to the—anybody else.

So don't take me wrong. I really appreciate Southdale member's resolution. At least he gave us chance to discuss this issue and expand further what we can do to make this a better culture, a more diverse culture. And so we can—and that way, we can understand each other and we can understand other peoples' culture. And only—that way is not only my way is the right way that other people—that way is not right. So once we understand this way, it will be a far better society. We already have a great country in the world, but we still can improve. Still there is discrimination. Still there is misunderstanding. To improve on those—on issues, and we can make this one of the—even further of the best country in the world, and I really, again, appreciate my brother of Southdale, and also I appreciate Eastern community to come over here and at least see what happens in the House and how we disagree, how we agree—being disagreed and appreciate each other efforts.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): I'm very honoured to put some words on the record today about this declaration of Indo-Manitoban heritage week. I may, I wish to acknowledge the guests, many of them friends, in the gallery this morning. It's—I have some notes, but I also have a full heart because as many people know, I've attended—I've been to India twice. Interestingly, in January of 1997 was my first visit to India, and then in January of 2007. And so this January 2017, I kind of had the itch to go back, but alas, it wasn't meant to be, and here I was in Winnipeg—very pleased to be here, but also noting that it's been the January of the years ending in seven that have taken me to India for two decades running, and this year not so much.

But, anyway, I want to put some comments on the record about this week and honour the Indian people, honour their contribution to our great province, and make some comments about them which I would like to put on the record. I think one of the first things that strikes anybody about Indian people—and one hesitates to generalize, but I think in my experience such generalities as I'm about to make are well-founded—is their graciousness, their warmth and their demeanour of hospitality and kindness.

More than once, during the campaign, as I was knocking on doors, I was welcomed into the home of

an East Indian family. It would often start as a drink, maybe some juice or something, but before I could help myself, I was surrounded by other treats and sweets and samosas, and I wised up pretty quickly because I had so many other doors to get to, but I felt bad often denying the kind offers and invitations of hospitality. And that's because this is not put on; this is a wonderful quality of the Indian community, that they are just naturally warm and hospitable. I had a friend with me one time, and this was early on when I didn't know any better. We stayed there—we stayed in a certain home for no small amount of time and really were blessed by the generosity of these people.

I also want to comment about the hard-working nature of the Indian people. I know, as a school principal, there were many East Indians who would come to the school that I was responsible for, possibly some of them here today, I'm not sure. But they valued education, and I recall that as well from my times in India. In fact, I recall, on one occasion, I was—I travelled on the back of my friend's motorcycle into an old fort, actually an ancient fort, and people were still living in this walled—I had—it's not quite a city, but this walled community—and I as I met people inside that fort, one thing that struck me was their dedication to education. And coupled with that was their dedication to aspire to roles of influence and roles of significance.

* (11:00)

These were people whose—young—who—young people who were in their teens. And they aspired to be doctors, they aspired to be lawyers, they aspired to be engineers. And they were studying and taking those things seriously, and that is an admirable quality. My son just had his ninth birthday party and we had a house full of nine-year-olds, which was rather exciting to say the least. But several of them were, of course, of—from India or from Indian families. And, again, just thoroughly blessed to have—to count these people as friends.

I want to tell a story about one of my visits to India which I find amusing and I think others may as well. We were in Mumbai recently—at that time had changed its name to—from Bombay to Mumbai, and we had to take a train and I'd never taken a train in India before. I'd never taken a train in Mumbai before and so the people who were with us were saying that you take the next train. So the train came and to my astonishment this train was full. Now, when I say full, I don't mean full like you would think full if you were thinking of a full bus here in

Winnipeg or even a full train here in Winnipeg—maybe you've been on an airplane and you've heard that the flight is full. That's not the kind of full I'm talking about. There were people on the roof of this train. There were people hanging out the doors of this train—not just two or three, 20 or 30. Limbs hanging out the door of this train and, suddenly, as the train came to a stop, what seemed like hundreds of people poured out of all the doors and, in a surprisingly mingling of people coming and going, hundreds poured into the train cars. And I stood there in sheer disbelief at the spectacle of people pouring out and people pouring in. And I realized this was impossible. We couldn't get on this train, and I stood there frozen and perplexed and bemused at this amazingly full train.

The train pulled out of the station and my friends said to me, why did you not get on the train like we told you to? And I replied to them what seemed blatantly obvious to me, that—I said, well, of course, I didn't get on the train because couldn't you see, the train was full. And they started to laugh and giggle at me, which is not the first or last time that would happen. And they said no, no, no. The train wasn't full, the train was normal. Now, the next train, you're going to get on the train.

And so I watched as the next train came in and to my amazement that train was equally full. Hundreds of people in these cars, and I thought, now, this this strange. Because now we have two very full trains and I was wondering what to do, and I felt a hand pressing my back and suddenly I felt another hand pressing my back and I decided I would go with it. And I took a step forward and I got one foot off the ground and I got another foot of the ground, and I don't think my feet touched the ground because I was pushed and jostled and, suddenly, I found myself standing inside this dark train car. It wasn't dark because the lights were off; it wasn't dark because there were no windows. It was dark because there were people everywhere and you couldn't see out.

And that was my introduction to the train system of Mumbai and a very fond memory, an exciting memory, and I do hope that my own children can one day go to India.

This resolution, though, does send a message. It's good to reminisce. It's good to honour and acknowledge, but this resolution is intended to send a message of honour, to send a message of respect, to send a message of welcome. And these are the

sentiments that we feel as we discuss this today. These are the feelings that provoke us to such a resolution and to support that. And you might think, well, that's obvious—of course you want to say those kinds of nice things. But, actually, sadly, it's not obvious. Sadly, racism is not something that has vanished from our society and, certainly, we could talk about that. I'm not wanting to belabour that point except to mention that we are a government who wants to send a message of welcome. We are private members who want to send messages of acceptance and of love and of warmth to our Indian friends.

There have already been numerous comments put on the record by the member introducing this bill, but we see that India has contributed in about the last 10 years—I'm talking of 2006 to 2015—well over 300,000—in fact, 323,000 people to our nation. That is staggering. I mean, that's about half of Winnipeg. That's a big number.

And so, we would be remiss to not acknowledge such a contribution not just in numbers, but in culture and in warmth and in industry and in economy and in hard work and last but not least, in friendship.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): I thank the member from Southdale for introducing to this House this private member's bill declaring August 15th as Indo-Manitoban Heritage Week. We on this side of the House supports this bill, and we thank you for bringing it up. And we thank our guests who are here with us this morning. Thank you for taking the time to hear us and visit with us, and hope you can come back again and see how this House is functioning, how we take turns debating important issues and also how we here in opposition are taking seriously our role as Her Majesty's loyal opposition in having—in getting this Conservative government to account.

Madam Speaker, Indo-Canadians have made significant contributions to Manitoba, and it has strengthened our province's business, health care, education, sustainable development, justice, arts and culture as well as agricultural sectors. You will not miss—if you're in Manitoba, and anywhere in Canada, for that matter, you won't—there is no place in Canada where there are no East Indian medical doctors or nurses or real estate agents or educators as well as business people. They—the contribution of

East Indian immigrants, and now Canadians, and even new Canadians, have made our country and our province the thriving and the economic boost or economic strength that it is now today.

On a personal note, I feel very privileged and grateful for the friendship I've had with many, many East Indians. In the place where I live, Filipinos and East Indians are neighbours—in many of my relatives and friends, the same situation. And so, our lives, my personal life, is especially quite affected by my friendship and my family's friendship with many East Indians.

I have a niece whose partner is an East Indian and they're doing quite well. They just bought a new house in South Pointe. And then, little did we know, we were surprised when my daughter, who is taking up further studies at U of T, told us that she is dating an East Indian guy.

* (11:10)

And so one time the guy came over to visit and, of course, we have to welcome him. And we found him—and still find him—a very nice young man. He was well brought up by very loving, well-educated parents. He's an only child. And who knows? In the coming years, I will have an East Indian grandchild, a boy or a girl. So that's the closeness that I have with East Indian folks.

And, of course, the member from The Maples, I consider him a very close friend. We were both elected in 2007. I came to know him and his family, and I found them a very good family, one that I would really covet to be friends and, who knows, even relatives. But—so my daughter calls Mohinder his—her East Indian Uncle.

Madam Speaker, I—as I've said, I thank the member from Southdale for bringing this resolution. However, I am saddened by the fact that this resolution intends to honour East Indians, intends to acknowledge their contributions and intends to welcome more immigrants from that country; however, we find the \$500 fee imposed on apply—on applicants to the nominee program to be inconsistent with honouring—with this PMR. If this PMR welcomes new immigrants, especially of East Indian descent, why make it harder for them to apply? Even before—they're coming with skills. They're coming with their education. They're coming with their work ethic. Why will you—why will your government make it hard for them to come in and apply by

adding that \$500 fee? They haven't even settled here and yet, just like what some people are saying, they're being taxed right away.

And then, right now, Madam Speaker, we're—every day here in this House we're reading a petition signed by many, many, many East Indian Canadians and new immigrants, and they're decrying the—that bill that this government has introduced because they're making it very difficult for them to make a living. As many have said, we came here; we want to contribute not just the resources that we have, but we want to contribute our culture. We want to make this the province that is truly, truly diverse and multicultural. But Bill 30 would make it very difficult for many, many East Indians who are now in the taxi service, because once the taxi service is deregulated, their livelihood will be affected.

Already, under the present system, there are mechanisms if there are complaints. There are—there's a process in place already to address whatever complaints or issues that there are. But to put—to introduce Bill 30, that is singularly putting hardship on the majority of the members of one particular diverse community is rather disappointing and quite hurtful.

We want to honour East Indians and we want to thank them for their contribution, yet this government is making it difficult for many of their members to live or raise a family, make a living and contribute to the Manitoba society.

So, Madam Speaker, we will support this PMR and I thank the member, but please consider; I ask the members of the Conservative government to consider when you're welcoming, when you're praising, when you're saying we thank you, we welcome you, don't introduce a bill or don't introduce a fee that will put hardships on these very people that you're welcoming. Let's be honest. Let's be truly sincere with the words that we say. Let's walk the talk. We want to honour the East Indian immigrants, the newcomers, the citizens who have contributed so much to this province and to this country, but let's not—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): A few short weeks ago we had an opportunity to speak about Asian Heritage Month, a month that has been celebrated for nearly 40 years, and this year marked 15 years since the Government of Canada signed an official declaration to designate May as Asian

Heritage Month. We recognize the celebration because it's an opportunity to acknowledge the very rich history of Asian Canadians and their amazing contributions to our economies and to the growth and prosperity that has been shared with all of us here.

I'd like to commend the member for Southdale (Mr. Smith) for bringing forward this resolution of declaring the week of August 15th as Indo-Manitoban Week. It is very time-appropriate considering it's Asian Heritage Month. Our Indo-Canadian community has contributed enormously. We share countless celebrations whether that be Diwali or Vaisakhi, the amazing wedding ceremonies and parties and first birthday celebrations.

We also need to celebrate our India Centre for Academic, Business and Community Excellence and the partnership between India Association and the University of Winnipeg. Madam Speaker, this past December I had an opportunity to tour some post-secondary institutions in India, and they are incredibly impressive. I'm so thrilled by this partnership. And the work ethic and education that Indo-Canadians bring to Manitoba is inspiring and motivating,

I'm going to refrain from sharing all my personal experiences and stories because I would like to have the resolution passed this morning. But I know that I wouldn't be sitting here today as an MLA if it wasn't for the Indo-Canadian community. So I'm incredibly thankful and I will continue to work hard, whether that be through immigration, through bills such as Bill 30, holding the government accountable, doing what we can for the Indo-Canadian community.

I'd like to thank our guests who came out today who are up in the gallery, and our party will be in full support of this resolution.

Thank you.

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): I am happy to put a few words on the record for this private member's resolution honouring the contributions, the history, the diverse cultural mosaic of the Indo-Manitoban heritage and culture.

Madam Speaker, we're talking of over a hundred years of influence in our communities, not only at the community level, the city level, the provincial level, and the entire country—the contributions in their volunteerism, their ability to come together as a group and include those around them, including in my community of Fort Richmond. We have a

thriving Indo-Manitoban community in my constituency, and I have been fortunate enough to be welcomed into many homes and shared many spicy meals which I was told that they had milded down the ingredients for me, but I still ended up in tears—delicious food but I couldn't help but well up with tears. And I have grown in my tolerance of spicy foods, but not quite up to the level of some of my dear friends.

* (11:20)

Madam Speaker, I may not have visited India like my colleague from Southdale and my colleague from Rossmere, but I certainly do have my own experiences as a foreigner in a different land. I spent a year and a half in Czech Republic and my heart goes out to all those who have left their home countries, come to a new land to learn not only how to interact with the communities, learn the laws, learn how to be involved and include others. It is an intimidating experience to have to start over from the ground up, and I certainly do acknowledge and honour all those who have been through that experience. And I commend you all for having the fortitude, the adventurous spirit to come to a new land and to be a part of this excellent fabric of Canada.

Madam Speaker, we are Friendly Manitoba. I like to believe that that slogan stems from our indigenous peoples of Canada, who first included us and welcomed us as European settlers throughout this land's history. And I think that we picked up on that lovely sentiment, and we have to perpetuate that. We are a welcoming and compassionate province and country, and it is through that care and concern for others globally that we have created a safe haven right here in Canada that makes us the envy of the world. And really puts on—puts us on the map as a place that people want to come and be a part of.

My experiences with the Indo-Manitoban community have always been very warm and welcoming. The hospitality that has developed through their culture and through their obligations to help others along the path, Madam Speaker, has just been a wonderful experience for me and for my family.

This private members' resolution, Madam Speaker, reveals that the Indo-Manitobans are no longer new immigrants, but rather, full Canadians; a part of this country and this province's fabric. So my question, Madam Speaker, is: Why not celebrate a

group who understands the value of community, the rewards of hard work, and the beauty of friendly Manitoba?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I want to say that I'll be the last speaker and we're intend to pass this resolution.

I want to congratulate the member for Southdale (Mr. Smith) in introducing the resolution, and also thank all the guests in the gallery who are here today. And I just want to 'echuse'—echo some of the concerns of the member for Logan (Ms. Marcelino), and the leader of our party, where she pointed out that, you know, it's not a great way to show appreciation here to be bringing in the \$500 fee on the PNP program. And it's even less a show of appreciation to be bringing in bills like Bill 30, which is being called today for debate later on—The Local Vehicles for Hire Act—which, in effect, is going to take the value of a cab owner's business and cut it, you know, maybe in half or less.

And this is all at a time when the government is fully supportive of what the federal government is doing as far as the Canadian-European free trade agreement—the CETA agreement—is concerned, where the dairy farmers of Quebec are being compensated for their loss in value of their milk quotas on their farms because of what's happening to them. So, if it's good for the dairy farmers of Quebec, why isn't it good for the taxi cab drivers of Manitoba?

So we think that this government was a little too quick in introducing this bill and that they should reconsider it. They did it without consultation adequately with the taxi people. They should withdraw this bill, and that would be the—I think, the fairest way to deal with it. Other than that, they should look at compensation as is being done under the Canada-European trade agreement.

And with those comments—because I'll be making a lot further comments on this bill, whether it's called later today or another day—I want to encourage the Legislature to fully support this private members' resolution.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

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

I declare the resolution carried.

Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader): If we would've clapped for two minutes, it wouldn't be necessary, but I think we're a couple of minutes ahead of schedule. I'm wondering if you could canvass the House, see if there is leave for us to call it 12 o'clock.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to call it 12 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

CONTENTS

ORDERS OF THE DAY		Questions	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS		Fontaine	2332
		Smith	2332
Concurrence and Third Readings—Public Bills		Guillemard	2332
Bill 214—The Missing Persons Amendment Act		Saran	2332
(Silver Alert)		Micklefield	2332
Isleifson	2325	Lamoureux	2333
Swan	2326		
Klassen	2327	Debate	
Wiebe	2328	Saran	2334
		Micklefield	2335
Resolutions		F. Marcelino	2336
Res. 16—Declaration of Indo-Manitoban Heritage		Lamoureux	2337
Week		Guillemard	2338
Smith	2329	Maloway	2339

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