

**First Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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The Honourable George Hickes  
Speaker*

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Ninth Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	N.D.P.
BOROTSIK, Rick	Brandon West	P.C.
BRAUN, Erna	Rossmere	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
BRIESE, Stuart	Ste. Rose	P.C.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
HOWARD, Jennifer	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSON, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
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MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
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OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Carman	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
ROWAT, Leanne	Minnedosa	P.C.
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	N.D.P.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

The House met at 10 a.m.

## PRAYER

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

## SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

**Bill 207—The Elections Amendment and  
Elections Finances Amendment Act**

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll start with Bill 207, The Elections Amendment and Elections Finances Amendment Act.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), that Bill 207, The Elections Amendment and Elections Finances Amendment Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing my colleagues from the New Democratic Party stand up and speak on this bill. I believe that this is a bill ultimately that would assist the public in knowing what's being investigated by Elections Manitoba.

As of today, it is against the law for Elections Manitoba to report on what's happening with regard to its investigations. You know, The Maples case is an excellent example of why it is that we need to change the system. It would be interesting to know why the government of the day would not support this particular bill. At the very least, I would encourage the government to allow the bill to come to a vote. If you don't support the bill, if you don't believe the public have a right to know what Elections Manitoba is up to or what it's investigating, then vote against the bill. Have the courage of your convictions, Mr. Speaker, is what I would appeal to the government, the NDP. Have the courage of your convictions and allow the bill to be voted on. I, for one, and the Liberal Party support the need of Elections Manitoba to have to report on the investigations it is conducting.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP are very much aware of an allegation, the very serious allegations against this

government and in particular the chief of staff within the Premier's (Mr. Doer) office and it chooses—*[interjection]* you know, I anticipate that there would be heckles of apologizing and resign and so forth, but if only they knew the truth. If only their leader would allow them to open their minds on the issue in terms of what's happened in The Maples, it would be a dangerous thing because you'd probably have a mutiny within the NDP caucus, and that's the reality of the issue. That is the reality.

It's only because this leader, the Premier of our province, does not want to have an open accountable system that this government will not allow this bill to even be voted on. It's the issue of perception. *[interjection]*

The Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) says how do I know. Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe because of the lack of courage of this government, they will adjourn debate. There is no way they will allow this vote to occur. I believe that to be the case. I hope that the Member for Selkirk or this government will prove me wrong and actually allow this bill to be voted on.

Why is it an important bill? I'd like to review the example of The Maples. What happened in The Maples?

**An Honourable Member:** We'll never know.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Well, actually, this Chamber does know. We have a very good sense, but what we would like to do is we would like to have the public or allow the public to know what has actually taken place. I see we have a good number of seniors in the gallery, and I'd like to let them know in terms of what actually had taken place or what has alleged to have taken place.

Last year I was sent a letter and in that letter—and it came to me after a number of rumours. We were hearing that the chief of staff from the Premier's office, and it was rumours, that the chief of staff had met with an NDP wannabe candidate in The Maples constituency and offered that individual candidate, allegedly, offered that candidate a job if he chose not to run.

This candidate felt that he was being intimidated and bullied from the Premier's chief of staff. In fact it was—

**An Honourable Member:** Louder.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Oh, I know the Minister of Immigration doesn't like whenever I speak inside this Chamber. The truth hurts, Madam Minister. Listen and listen good and represent your constituents the way you should be representing them with an open mind.

But the reality of the issue is this individual who met with the chief of staff wrote a letter. Well, I raised the issue and the Premier (Mr. Doer) ducked the question, wouldn't answer the question. Then shortly after, I believe it was sometime in December, maybe possibly late November, I'd have to actually check the dates, I received a copy of the letter, and the copy of the letter that was dated September 12 was mailed to the Premier of our province and it comes from Kaur Sidhu. Kaur Sidhu is the one that sold all the memberships in anticipation that he was going to be able to win the nomination.

Let me refer directly to some of the things he had written:

I am seeking the nomination in The Maples in 2006. Nomination date has been postponed, and I am being bullied to withdraw my name and support Cris.

It goes on: He strongly said, and this would be the chief of staff, said to Mr. Sidhu, he strongly said that I should say to Ms. Mia Rabson from the *Winnipeg Free Press* report if she interviews me that I am, Kaur Sidhu, not running. This is another example of intimidation and bullying. Mr. Balagus also offered me a high profile board position to enhance my profile in a deal for not running against Cris. This is an example of corruption and bribery.

Mr. Speaker, this letter was signed by Kaur Singh Sidhu and I love the comment he puts on just before his signature: Diehard NDPer. This is someone that's trying to be a team player, trying to get the Premier (Mr. Doer) to do the right thing and address what took place in that particular meeting.

\* (10:10)

Well, Mr. Speaker, the government would say, well, this is just one letter; it's just one letter; that's all it is. Well, we have a witness that was in the meeting that even went further to say that that individual even knew the job that was being offered.

It was a political appointment to a Winnipeg regional health care authority or one of the health boards.

Well, we believe that these allegations and the lack of the Premier to be able to address the allegations justifies the need to be able to have some form of a public investigation, something that's open to the public, something that allows the public to be able to pass judgment on what actually had taken place.

Mr. Speaker, we believe it's of a serious nature and that the Premier does have that responsibility, that Elections Manitoba would be doing a favour to all Manitobans by being able to report on what took place. But it's illegal for Elections Manitoba to do so because the legislation that governs Elections Manitoba makes it illegal for them to disclose any aspect of an investigation. They can't even tell you that they're investigating a matter.

I believe that this bill would enable Elections Manitoba to report on it. All I hear from the government is, apparently there was a letter and apparently that letter said something to the effect that there was not enough evidence to prosecute. Well, Mr. Speaker, that does not clear the person in question. In fact, during the Estimates I asked the Premier, would he stand in his place and say from his perspective that his chief of staff did nothing wrong, that he would clear his own chief of staff, and the Premier didn't even answer the question, wouldn't even come to the fore and say that his chief of staff has done nothing wrong. I asked the Premier to show me one piece of paper, any piece of paper, one piece of paper that clearly shows that the chief of staff has done nothing wrong.

Mr. Speaker, once again, the Premier (Mr. Doer) is unable to substantiate any action that he has taken as the Premier of this province. Yet when you look at the severity of the allegations that have been made against this government, against the Premier's chief of staff, I believe that the public has a right to know what has actually taken place.

That is why I believe that this bill is worthy of support, and I ask the government not to adjourn debate but at the very least to have the courage of their convictions and allow the bill to be voted on. If you believe that Manitobans have a right to know what Elections Manitoba is investigating, then vote for the bill. If you don't, at least speak and tell us why you don't believe that Manitobans have a right to know what Elections Manitoba is investigating. I believe they have the right. The public does have the

right to know, and I ask this government to allow the bill to come to a vote, allow the bill to go to committee, so that the public will have the opportunity to speak to this very important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I leave it now to my colleagues and I would welcome the Minister of Immigration to say anything intelligent on the record. Thank you.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I'm taking a close look at Bill 207 here that the member's introduced, and my conclusion that I draw from the intent of his bill is that he does not trust Elections Manitoba to do a valid investigation. The member should know that there were reasons why these provisions were put in the bill when it was introduced and passed in this Legislature, and perhaps he and his party voted for the bill at the time; I'm really not sure.

But one of the fundamental reasons why this would be the case, to the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), would be that he should be aware that the parties are constantly filing complaints against one another. I've spoken to members opposite who are not even aware that their PC Manitoba group there, through their law firm, are just churning out complaints constantly about members of the Legislature. So we understand that when these complaints are made, that Elections Manitoba has the right to and the responsibility to investigate the complaints, and if there's something to the complaints, then action will be taken.

But what the member's asking for is he wants to second-guess them. He wants to be able to find out all the complaints that they're looking at—

**An Honourable Member:** Micromanage.

**Mr. Maloway:** —and micromanage them so that his opponents in the next election can run around and make hay and misrepresent frivolous complaints that were made against him, for example.

Let me show you how silly some of those complaints can get. In the last election, we had some complaints that were made in northeast Winnipeg about signs not carrying the "Authorized by Official Agent." They sent, at taxpayers' expense, the investigators out to look into this, and they check all the signs and, sure enough, it's on there.

Probably what happened, the best we can figure out, is that a piece of wood was nailed over the sign. When your sign gets knocked down, often enough, you put it up in a more secure fashion and eventually

it's got big strong timbers supporting it. They just may have happened to cover up "Authorized by," but the "Authorized by" was on the sign.

The member wants Elections Manitoba to have this information public so that the opponents can run around and misrepresent and say, well, you know, the incumbent is not following the election rules, making a big mountain out of a molehill.

The member has a right to make complaints, and probably he does, about everything he sees wrong about this or any other case. He's done so, and the investigation has been done. Well, Mr. Speaker, he's just not happy with the results of the investigation. The investigators decided against his case, and he's not happy. So now what he wants to do is change the law so now he can go on a real fishing expedition here against every other member, but what he doesn't realize is that what goes around comes around. He may find opponents in his own riding in the next election going on a fishing expedition against him and making all sorts of frivolous complaints. How would he like that?

This is a protection that was put in the law to protect him. He's one member in the Legislature, and we didn't want to see him being run out of town, having false accusations made against him for things that may not be true. We put this in to protect the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), and now he doesn't like it. He wants to change it.

Mr. Speaker, we have done a number of things since we've been elected to make it easier for people to vote in Manitoba. We've removed restrictions from advance polling so that anyone can vote in advance for any reason. We've increased the number of locations of advance polls, the days on which they can be open. We've enabled super polls so that people can vote in advance at convenient locations. This is an extremely interesting concept where you can go to a Polo Park Shopping Centre and vote in any riding in the province. That is making voting extremely easy.

The only thing I can think of more efficient than that would be some sort of Internet voting situation, which has been looked at, has been tried, in the Democratic primary, I believe, in New Mexico three or four years ago. There have been Internet voting schemes set up, and that is something that we should probably pilot in Manitoba at some point, particularly when we get to the point of a secure system. Probably you will not have a situation where you will be able to vote from home any time soon,

but certainly being allowed to vote on the Internet but in a polling station. You'd still have to go to a polling station to vote, but using the Internet to vote I think, should be tested.

We could have tested it a couple of years ago in a couple of by-elections we had. I was advocating that. Sooner or later that will come about, and we will be able to. The idea here is to have almost a hundred percent participation if you can get it. The idea that you'd win an election just because some people stayed home is really not healthy for democracy. Ideally, we would have a hundred percent of the people voting.

Mr. Speaker, we've extended absentee voting to students and public employees who are outside the province. We've established a greater number of dedicated polls within apartment blocks. The residents don't have to leave to vote. That the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) should like because he's got a lot of apartment blocks in his area.

\* (10:20)

We've decreased the number of people in a polling subdivision so that people don't have to travel as far to vote, particularly in northern Manitoba and rural areas of the province, in order to have greater voter participation. We've expanded the range of information that can be used to identify electoral boundaries. We've provided the Electoral Boundaries Commission ultimate decision-making power over the designation of electoral boundaries, not the Legislature.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in terms of how one would actually controvert an election, the Member for Inkster should know that when it comes down, when the rubber hits the road in a controverted election situation, the only grounds that you can actually controvert an election would be that if the number of people that voted illegally materially could affect the outcome of the election. If we took Inkster as an example, if the election in Inkster was at the end of the appeal process a four-vote spread, the only way one could controvert that election would be if you could find five people who voted illegally. That's the only way.

We've had instances in the past where people are running around coming up with all kinds of defamation of candidate provisions, and the signs are not right, and there's intimidation here and intimidation there, and all sorts of other extraneous arguments, the judges have said that you will never,

never controvert an election on those grounds. The only way you can controvert the election is to find the number of people who voted illegally had to be materially relevant to the situation. So if it was a four-vote spread, you had to find five people. If it was a hundred votes, where are you going to be able to find 101 people who were not Canadian citizens who voted? It's not going to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I have a lot more to say about this particular bill, Bill 207, that the member has introduced, but I will allow the next speaker to make comments on this bill. Thank you.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill 207, The Elections Amendment and Elections Finances Amendment Act.

This is an important bill for this House to consider because we, fundamentally, in this Legislature, need to have the openness, the transparency, to ensure that investigations are being done well.

Mr. Speaker, it is not perhaps that we don't trust Elections Manitoba. It is that we don't trust the NDP, and we have many reasons for not trusting the NDP.

There was, I think, a U.S. president, and I may not have agreed with a lot of his other views, but he emphasized the importance of trusting but verifying. Certainly it is true that if you don't have the background material to verify that things have been done properly, then the result is that it raises questions about how things were done. It raises questions about whether a proper investigation was done. We need to have the ability to verify, to see first-hand what was done in terms of an investigation. There needs to be a level of transparency and openness in government, in Elections Manitoba, in The Elections Act, in The Elections Finances Act above and beyond what we have now.

I would put the case, Mr. Speaker, of the investigation in the 1990s which dealt with a situation of alleged vote-rigging in the Interlake. There was an Elections Manitoba report done at the time and, sadly, that report turned out to be wrong. It was a failed investigation, as we all know from the subsequent public inquiry, at great expense, which had to happen because the initial investigation was not done properly.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if Elections Manitoba then had had to produce a report, talking about who had been interviewed, talking

about the details of what the investigation had done and reporting on the findings, then it would have been immediately apparent that Elections Manitoba investigators had not even talked to some of the very important and relevant players in the 1990s around the vote-rigging scandal in the Interlake which the Member for the Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff), as we know, knows all about. You should be supporting this bill. If anybody should be supporting this bill, the MLA for the Interlake should be standing up and supporting this bill. He knows. He may not speak to it, but he knows probably better than anybody else why this bill is so important.

If you have the openness, then all can judge whether a reasonable investigation was done, whether the relevant people were talked to as part of the investigation, what the results of the findings were. It is a question of law. It is a question of ethics. We need to have openness, a Liberal-style government, an open government rather than this hideaway, secretive NDP approach to democracy in this province.

The problem—and here the MLA for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) talks about, well, what if there are silly complaints brought forward? Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that those who make silly complaints will be readily exposed once the situation and the procedures become transparent. It will be immediately apparent to everybody who are making silly complaints. I suspect there will be a lot more in the NDP party than others. Is the MLA for Elmwood trying to cover up his own frivolous complaints and not have them exposed? Right now we don't know what he's complaining about, but I would suggest—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Member for Elmwood, on a point of order?

**Mr. Maloway:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I want to point out to the member that I have made no complaints of any kind. The complaints have been made against us and they were frivolous complaints.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Points of order should not be used for a means of debate. The honourable member does not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for River Heights has the floor.

**Mr. Gerrard:** You know, there makes my point exactly, Mr. Speaker, that if all the investigations had to be exposed, then it would be revealed that the MLA for Elmwood is not making frivolous complaints and we would know that on the record. Right now we have all these suspicions and innuendoes because everything's been so secret. We're trying to help the MLA for Elmwood by having things open and transparent. *[interjection]* Where is his office? Where is the MLA for Elmwood's office? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable member.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Part of the situation, Mr. Speaker, is that right now an individual can go to the media with a complaint unless you have the capacity for Elections Manitoba to openly investigate and report on what is found. The innuendoes and rumours and things that are printed in the media can have a life of their own, can run away. You've got innuendoes and frivolous complaints.

\*(10:30)

Once you have proper reporting, we're going to have a system of openness and transparency that's going to be helpful to everybody, that's going to remove this layer of secrecy, innuendo and hideaway stuff. It will make things more open, and that is what we are looking for. We believe that there needs to be a fundamental change in this province away from secrecy and to much more openness, certainly, that we have had in the past.

It is important when we're dealing with circumstances like the investigation in The Maples—*[interjection]* this investigation in The Maples, but we hear that there may have been a report done, but we have no documented evidence for that. We hear that this report may have said certain things, but we have no documentation for it. You know, this is a recipe for problems. No, it is a problem for Elections Manitoba. It is a problem for the elections commissioner. It is a problem for all who are involved in the democratic process.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that it is time to change this to have a more open and transparent reporting, and that open and transparent reporting of what's happened, what's been investigated, will certainly be a step forward because it will able ordinary citizens to judge the merits of a case because they have the background information, the information to be able to make that judgment.

Those who would like to keep things secretive or hide them away are just wrong; this is a recipe for continuing problems. I think if we suggest in the Liberal party—and the Tories appear to be silent on this bill—no, the Tories did—no, you guys didn't speak at all. We hope that the Conservatives will speak and what we would like is to move and we hope that we have the support from the members of the Conservative Party, as well as others in this House, in this effort. Thank you.

**Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Labour and Immigration):** You know, I really wasn't going to put any comments on the record in regard to this bill, but I received an invitation from the MLA for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) to put some intelligent comments on the record and I thought it was probably important to do that.

I think it's quite interesting that the MLA for Inkster, who abuses his legislative privilege to attack people in this House consistently, that aren't even members of the Chamber, and I'd just like to make sure that everyone in the House knows that in the last—this is usually what he does, Mr. Speaker. When he can't make an intellectual argument with any basis, what he does is he attacks people.

The last few days, I've spent quite a bit of time with the MLA for Inkster talking about our immigration program and how important it is to Manitoba. Oh, now he's making fun of me from his seat because, you know, he doesn't really want to talk about substantive issues. He just wants to skirt over stuff all the time, but I think it's really, really important, Mr. Speaker, that he has been referring to me as, tripping down the yellow brick road, and you know, being on this fanciful whatever it is.

Well, I just wanted to make the record clear that I think he's referring to me as Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, and you know, Mr. Speaker, well, I actually, I'm quite thrilled actually to be portrayed as Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*. I think she's a heroine. I think she did an incredible thing. She led a group of people—[interjection] Yeah, she's brave. She beat the witch, and, you know, I think it's way better to be compared to Dorothy than the scarecrow, because if you think about it, the scarecrow wanted a brain. I think, maybe, if that was something that he was comparing me to, I would be concerned, but I'm quite delighted to be compared to Dorothy.

Now, the MLA for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), I really can't believe he stood up and gave us a lecture on openness and transparency. This has got to

be a first for this Chamber to hear that coming from the MLA for River Heights. This is a member that participated in a federal government that elevated graft and corruption to new heights all across this country, raised it to an art form.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for River Heights, on a point of order?

**Mr. Gerrard:** Yes. I think that this is a most grievous misstatement to imply that I was participating in graft and corruption. This minister is just absolutely wrong. She should clean up her language and make sure that she's not—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for River Heights, I would like to caution all members to pick and choose their words very, very carefully. When making a reference directly to an individual, that is not within our rules.

What I was listening to was more of a general comment. That's why I let it slide, but I would pick my words very, very carefully.

The honourable member does not have a point of order. It's a dispute over the facts, and that's a caution to all members.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Allan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a high regard for the position that you hold in this House, and I will most certainly choose my words very, very carefully. Thank you.

So back to the MLA for River Heights and his colleague from Inkster. You know it's really quite interesting. Once again I think what they're talking about is openness. They're talking about transparency, they're talking about trust, and I think they're talking about keeping commitments.

I recall—I'm pretty sure the MLA for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) made a promise to Manitobans that he would resign if he wasn't right about this particular issue, and I think this is a matter of trust. I think that when you make that kind of a statement you have the responsibility to keep your word to Manitobans, but he has not done that. I think what all of us in this Chamber would like to see is we would like to see him keep that commitment because he is basically making statements that attack consistently people



who are not members of this Chamber. There was an independent study done in regard to this particular issue, and unfortunately he doesn't like what the response was.

So now what he wants to do is he wants to change the law. I think as legislators we should have some respect for the processes that are around us, particularly the processes that are independent of us in the Legislature where we have people that are highly regarded and respected and we have respect for those processes. I think at some point we have to stop the political rhetoric. I think what we have to do is recognize that being here in these jobs is a gift, and we have the responsibility to be respectful in regard to some of the work that is done by people around us that are highly, highly regarded. There are processes in place so we can get those kinds of investigations and reports done so that we can be responsible politicians and legislators and make good public policy.

I know this is probably going to come as a huge surprise to the Liberals, but I don't think we're going to be supporting this bill. But we do appreciate the dialogue. We're all here today just to reassure the MLA for Inkster that we are waiting for him to keep his word. We're waiting for him to keep his word in regard to the commitment that he made, and we think that he should be an honourable member and keep his word not just to legislators but to the people of Manitoba. Thank you.

\* (10:40)

**Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the opportunity to participate in the debate this morning. I had not had the intention to do so. However, the comments by the honourable Minister of Labour (Ms. Allan) has inspired me to participate.

The Minister of Labour said that we all have to be respectful of those individuals. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid to say that the honourable minister has been not only disrespectful to the immigrant labourers that have come to Manitoba but to stand up and say that that is what she believes in, is respect, then I now believe that she will be bringing forward legislation, in fact, based upon her comments this morning, to alleviate the situation where the current legislation denies workers the democratic process.

Right now under the current legislation one can be unionized under—

### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration, on a point of order?

**Ms. Allan:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I think that the MLA for Portage la Prairie is completely and totally off topic. He is talking about an issue that has absolutely nothing to do with this bill. If he would like to speak to this piece of legislation, we'd be more than happy to hear his comments.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on the same point of order?

**Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Official Opposition House Leader):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, clearly the Member for Portage la Prairie was referring to the speech that the Minister of Labour was giving with respect to this bill, and if he's not relevant, she wasn't relevant either.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration, she does have a point of order. Relevancy is very, very important here. I was waiting and listening very carefully, and I'm sure the honourable member was just going to tie his issue to 207, The Elections Amendment and Elections Finances Amendment Act. So I'll give the member an opportunity to do that.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Faurshou:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, I've got to compliment you on your perceptiveness, that I was just about to do so.

As the Minister of Labour (Ms. Allan) stated, one must be respectful and understanding and open to those that have concerns, and we have before us a bill this morning that is intended to do so. We do have before this Legislative Assembly independent offices, Elections Manitoba and the Chief Electoral Officer being one. This particular bill does indeed add to the openness and accountability and allows for those individuals that have been privy to events that they believe are of a concern to the open and democratic process that we all pride ourselves on here in the province of Manitoba.

So I would like to compliment the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for bringing forward to the Legislative Assembly the act that we are now having the opportunity to debate, because I don't know of anyone with a number of years of experience in elected office, whether it be at the provincial, federal or municipal levels, that has not experienced some

areas that we have concern with, and this bill affords the opportunity for investigations to further substantiate or effectively dismiss the concerns that we might have in an open and democratic process.

It is legislation that will not add delay or complications to frivolous—or as the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) states, silly accusations. It does and will provide for investigation of legitimate concerns in persons' own minds and will not be used to complicate or attempt to discredit individuals involved in the democratic process.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I will conclude, and I hope that the democratic process to which the government has even incorporated into their party name as respecting democracy, will recognize the need for the democratic process to continue here in the province. I very much look forward to the Minister of Labour and Immigration's (Ms. Allan) introduction of legislation that will afford all persons here in the province of Manitoba the decision making through a democratic process. Thank you.

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** It's a pleasure to speak today on the bill brought forward by my colleague, the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). Mr. Speaker, I just listened patiently to the Member for Portage la Prairie. I didn't hear him reference the Monnin report or the investigations that were concluded by the—I guess he apparently ran out of time, to talk about the background about what happened when his own party was investigated for vote-rigging in the Interlake. I'm sure that maybe their next speaker will be able to stand up and explain what happened there.

But I'm always happy to talk about elections, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the one just concluded this past May that saw this government be re-elected with a bigger majority, third majority in a row, and I think the largest number of seats in the history of the province. I'm always pleased to remind my colleagues of that.

I've sat over here, and I've listened to many of the members over the past number of years, and leading up to this most recent campaign, of course, they were calling for an election. Repeatedly they said, let's have an election, and I blame a few of them over there for what happened to their own party because the Premier (Mr. Doer) listened to them, called the election, and their party was reduced in seats from 20 down to 19. It's interesting we're still hearing that today from them, where they're asking

for us to call another election. So, they want to be decimated as a political force in this province, Mr. Speaker, and you're seeing that happen with the Conservative Party here in Manitoba.

I'm also interested in referring to, of course, our friends from the Liberal Party, and the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Allan) quite accurately pointed out about the record of the Liberal leader. It's a record of scandal, Mr. Speaker, of cutbacks, of mismanagement when he was a member of the federal Parliament. He didn't represent Selkirk-Interlake, he represented Portage-Interlake, but I was familiar with him being in the general area as a member of Parliament. I don't recall him having any great achievements in our particular area, other than losing \$40 million or so in the strand board plant in Elie, when I recall he was saying he was going to turn straw into gold. That is his record as a federal member, his record in a leadership position, though he claims that under a Liberal government everything's going to be rosy.

But I think Manitobans, they recognized his record, they recognized where the Liberal Party was coming from this past May, and, Mr. Speaker, they voted that way. Of course, once again, we see they're here in the Legislature with two seats, and they appear, by all the most recent polls, to be going nowhere, and that is a reflection upon the Liberal leader in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, we're always eager, as I said, to talk about elections. We have done a number of things recently to improve voting in this province. There's been a slight increase in participation in this past election campaign. We notice across Canada, of course, regrettably, there's been a decrease in voter participation. Part of it, I believe, is because of allegations that are made by the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), where he's out there attacking Elections Manitoba.

\* (10:50)

We see this case here—and I like the Member for Inkster, but he could do the honourable thing, as he promised he would do if his allegations weren't proven correct; that he would, in fact, resign. That's a bold, bold promise to make and perhaps it was a hollow promise. We know that Sheila Copps did it over the GST issue. Her party promised to get rid of the GST. Of course, they failed. They did not live up to that promise that they made. But Sheila Copps resigned, and she ran again and she got re-elected. So I throw that up to the Member for Inkster (Mr.

Lamoureux). He could resign, as he promised he would do, and he could run again. But we're waiting to see—we realize that his allegations were false. Elections Manitoba proved that, Mr. Speaker, so passing bills like this I don't think will enable them to do a better job. I think they've done their work.

You know, the Member for Inkster is—*[interjection]* Well, Mr. Speaker, we're waiting for the Member for Inkster to fulfill his promise that he made to Manitobans earlier about his allegations, these allegations and rumours, because he won't—we're going to believe, hopefully, that he'll do the honourable thing.

But, as I said, we've done a number of things as a party to improve voter turnout. We've removed restrictions from polling stations. In my own area, for example, we went from having 40 polls up to 45 polls, which will allow smaller polls—I believe the restriction now is up to 300 voters; before it was 400 voters, so the polls are smaller. But there are more polls that allow people to travel less distances to vote on election day, and I think we've accomplished that. I notice there was an increase in voter participation in this last election in my constituency, as there was throughout the province. It's still lower than we would hope, and I think we have, as a party, and as a government, and as a legislature, continue to work on ways to getting more people engaged to increase the voter turnout. But we've done a number of things.

There's going to be later on, starting next year, of course, a review of the boundaries that, as well, will have impact upon voter participation based upon where people live, Mr. Speaker, and I think—encourage people to get involved in that to make further changes to increase participation. But I don't think supporting this bill will increase voter participation or engage more people in the electoral process, so I don't think we'll be supporting it at this time.

**Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James):** I move, seconded by the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen), that debate be now adjourned.

*Motion agreed to.*

### House Business

**Mr. Hawranik:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, on House Business, I would like to table for concurrence, Wednesday, tomorrow, October 17, that following Routine Proceedings we'll call the following ministers in concurrence: the Premier (Mr. Doer) and

the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Mr Mackintosh).

**Mr. Speaker:** For the information of the House, following Routine Proceedings, the following ministers will be called in concurrence on Wednesday, October 16: the Premier and the Minister of Family Services and Housing. *[interjection]* The date for that will be Wednesday, October 17.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** Now we will move back to debating. We've adjourned debate on 207, so now we will move to Public Bill 208, The Elections Amendment Act, in the name of the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard).

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you might canvass the House to see if, in fact, we would be able to move on to the second portion of private members' hour, given that there are four minutes left, and we can move on to the next resolution, to call it—*[interjection]* Yes, to call it 11 o'clock, so we can go on to the resolution. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to call it 11 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

### RESOLUTION

#### Res. 6—Beverage Container Deposit System

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour now being 11 o'clock, we'll move on to resolutions, and the resolution that we'll be debating is Beverage Container Deposit System.

**Mr. David Faurchou (Portage la Prairie):** I appreciate the opportunity to rise today in debate of the Beverage Container Deposit System resolution.

I would like, though, to begin by asking leave of the House that before reading into the official record, we dismiss the first four WHEREASes in the printed resolution and commence with the "WHEREAS in Manitoba the industry-managed system . . . ."

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there agreement of the House to delete the first four WHEREASes for the resolution Beverage Container Deposit System? Is there agreement? *[Agreed]*

Now the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie will move the resolution as is, with the deletions out.

**Mr. Faurchou:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce into the Legislative Assembly the resolution, Beverage Container Deposit System,

moved by myself, seconded by the honourable Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire),

WHEREAS in Manitoba, the industry-managed system for beer can and bottle recovery has proven that a deposit-return system can be successful; and

WHEREAS a beverage container deposit-return system would reduce litter and increase recycling of beverage containers currently sent to landfills; and

WHEREAS a beverage container deposit-return system would provide an important means of fundraising for charitable and not-for-profit community groups; and

WHEREAS a beverage container deposit-return system is a cost-effective means of protecting the environment to the benefit of all Manitobans.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider implementing a comprehensive beverage container deposit-return system in Manitoba.

**Mr. Speaker:** Before moving the motion, I would just like to ask the Member for Portage la Prairie, on the third WHEREAS where it says, "WHEREAS a beverage container deposit-return system could provide an important means of fundraising for charitable and not-for-profit community groups;" you used the word "would" instead of "could." Could we get agreement to have it as printed? Agreement? *[Agreed]*

*WHEREAS in Manitoba, the industry-managed system for beer can and bottle recovery has proven that a deposit-return system can be successful; and*

*WHEREAS a beverage container deposit-return system would reduce litter and increase recycling of beverage containers currently sent to landfills; and*

*WHEREAS a beverage container deposit-return system could provide an important means of fundraising for charitable and not-for-profit community groups; and*

*WHEREAS a beverage container deposit-return system is a cost-effective means of protecting the environment to the benefit of all Manitobans.*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider implementing a comprehensive beverage container deposit-return system in Manitoba.*

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurischou), seconded by the honourable Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire),

WHEREAS—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

\* (11:00)

**Mr. Faurischou:** It is a privilege for me to bring to debate in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba this very, very important resolution. It has been brought forward by myself for a number of years now, but as you can appreciate, there is a system that we employ here at the Legislative Assembly that provides for an order to resolutions presented by individual members, and it is the first time that I've had the opportunity to have this particular resolution presented to the House.

The reason for the modifications this morning is that I would like to bring to the attention of the Legislative Assembly that Ontario in February of this year actually brought forward and passed legislation that now sees the collection and return of deposit on all wine and glass liquor bottles. It is something that I believe we need to see here in Manitoba as well, and that's why I've brought this resolution to the floor today.

Also, too, I want to recognize the second WHEREAS, that on June 5 of this year, the Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines (Mr. Rondeau) did indeed introduce a program to see the collection and the disposition of electronic hardware that has been collecting over the years. It is a great pleasure that I recognize that we now have a program, at least in its infancy, to see that e-waste components are being dealt with here in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, also the third WHEREAS dealt with the Tire Stewardship Board and their challenge to recycle tires here in the province of Manitoba. I would like to recognize the honourable Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Briese) who volunteered his services to work co-operatively in establishing an industry-run tire recycling program here in the province of Manitoba. It is the hope of every member and motoring Manitoban that the newly revamped industry-run tire recycling here in the province of Manitoba does run smoothly, efficiently and cost-effectively.

Now, dealing with the beverage container deposit system, I want to say that the government has had a lot of time to work on this. They've told us that they are looking at a very encompassing and all-inclusive recycling program here in the province of Manitoba, yet, year after year after year, there continues to mount, not only the litter on our roadways and in our parks and elsewhere we see beverage containers but, also, into our landfills sites. One only needs to visit any landfill site run by any municipality in the province of Manitoba, and one can attest to that fact.

*Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

Here in the province of Manitoba, even though we have had an environmental levy to provide recycling programs throughout the province of Manitoba, we still remain at a low percentage. In fact, only 43 percent of the aluminum cans and 35 percent of our glass bottles are returned for recycling here in the province of Manitoba. This, I will say, is in stark contrast to our neighbours to the west. Saskatchewan, because of their implementation of a deposit and return of program there, now see 94 percent of their aluminum cans returned and recycled, and 88 percent of their glass beverage containers returned for recycling.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is indeed vitally important if we want to see an environmentally friendly deposit, return and recycling of our beverage containers here in the province of Manitoba that we urge the government to get on with it and to effectively bring forward legislation that would provide for this vitally needed and proven program.

I don't want to belabour the fact, but something has to be said. We are languishing at dead last in another category. I know there have been other colleagues on this side of the House that have mentioned that Manitoba is dead last in other areas, but I want to focus primarily on this fact. The fact is that Manitoba, outside of its recycling through a deposit-return system for beer bottles and cans; does not have any other deposit-return program for any other products here in the province of Manitoba, and that is a shame. It really, truly is. To be the only province in Canada left without legislation providing for a beverage container deposit return system is not something that we should be proud of.

Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, I know my time is very short in debate. I look forward to the other members debating this particular resolution. I want

to encourage all members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly as individuals, as elected individuals, that we show leadership and support this resolution. We can all hold our heads high when we go back to our communities, our constituencies, to face the people that have put their faith and trust in us, to show leadership and bring forward legislation that will, indeed, see a brighter, more environmentally friendly province, one that we can be proud of.

I know that members on the government's side of the House have given indication that they are going to take a political tactic this morning to talk this resolution out, so that it'll never see again the light of day. I think that that would be shame. I'm standing before you today, Madam Deputy Speaker, asking that all members of this House to take a good look at the resolution as it's been presented to the House and say why not support this resolution, and that way then we can be proud and look our children in the face and say that we did something today that will make a brighter future for Manitoba, one that we can all be proud of. Thank you.

**Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Competitiveness, Training and Trade):** Madam Deputy Speaker, I'm very pleased to put a few words on the record on this resolution. I'm pleased to see that the member opposite removed four parts of the original resolution. The reason why they were removed, I understand, is because things are happening in this. We will continue to move forward on this important area.

I think that the concept of recycling is important, but the concept of recycling in a broad context dealing with lots of issues is far, far better than recycling one product one way. So when we're looking at a comprehensive plan, a broad plan that deals with waste reduction and recycling comprehensively, that means you don't just deal with one item, you deal with all.

So I refer the member opposite to the comprehensive system we have now which in Winnipeg it's the blue box system. What it is is that by having a system where all people can put all items within the blue box, then that means that more people are able to recycle. They don't have to take their items to different depots. They don't have to dispose of different items different ways. It's a simple, proven concept that people can participate and are participating in.

I find it interesting, just recently, I read a report where our recycling activity is up 7 percent just in the city of Winnipeg. That's very, very positive.

But when the member opposite says, do something, I'd refer to the whole concept of household hazardous waste and e-waste. We've just put a regulation out for comment through the Department of Conservation, and we just finished the same sort of regulation with tires.

What we're trying to do is get people to be responsible for the items they put out into the system. So, in other words, it's a polluter-pay principle. I know the members often yell about the triple p, but they often aren't referring and advocating for a pollution-pay principle; they are talking about something where they do something totally different.

So, in this case, what happens is, if in the e-waste right now, if you have a cellphone and you want to recycle the cellphone, what's happened is the cellphone manufacturers got together, formed a consortium. A person can take the cellphone and all around the province we have depots through MPIC and a number of government offices. You put the cellphone into a plastic bag, put it into a box, and it is recycled. There's no fee on it; there's no cost to it. In fact, what's happened is all the manufacturers got together and solved that issue of recycling used cellphones and not having the cellphones hit the landfill sites.

\*(11:10)

In the recent past, we've just finished an e-waste collection process. What we were trying to do is see how much electronic waste, used electronics, were out there and ensure that they were deposited appropriately, disposed of appropriately, and when possible even reused. And so what we did was we did a collection around the province. I believe there were about 15 sites where people could drop used electronics off at. They did. In fact, we've got about 300 tonnes of e-waste materials collected so far, and they're still processing it.

And I'm pleased to say to the House, this was a comprehensive system of collecting e-waste. It's gathered from around the province. It wasn't just a city-centric system, and what we did was we got the waste, and the stuff that could be reused is being reused. I'd like to inform the House we have computers for schools, libraries and communities which actively reuse computers so that when they've done their useful life in their initial purchase place,

what happens is then they go to community groups that can use them for another couple of years, and then they go to schools or different groups that can use them, and then they're disposed of appropriately. So the 300 tonnes was very positive.

So we are moving it forward. But we're not moving it forward in one little view. We're looking at it comprehensively. I think that what you have to do is, whenever you're looking at reduction of waste, it's not just one answer. The members often come up with a simple thing for a very, very complex problem, and I'd like to say thank you to the member opposite because he did bring up an issue, and what we want to do is we do want to recycle more. But we also want to reduce waste. We want to make sure that we look at the packaging, the amount of packaging. We want to look at other options.

What we believe is that with governments working with industry, communities, different individuals, different associations, we can come to a group, because one of the things that we have as a very strong advantage in Manitoba is we're used to working together. We're used to co-operating. We're used to functioning to solve problems. And so when you look at the Product Stewardship Initiative, that's exactly what it is. It's industry and individuals and governments and business and everyone working together to solve a common problem. And the problem is to make sure things are recycled, the amount of waste is reduced, and when it is no longer at the useful life, then it's disposed of appropriately so we don't have environmental issues in the future.

I'm pleased that my department in Green Manitoba is working with the Department of Conservation to make sure that these types of projects go forward. We do have a household hazardous waste depot system. We're moving forward in tire recycling through the Tire Stewardship Board. We're moving forward in electronic waste and household hazardous waste, and there are other moves that we'll do in the future. I'm pleased that we're doing that, and we are also pleased that we're doing it with the industry, with businesses and organizations.

So I invite the member opposite to come, get a briefing from my department, to tell us how we're moving forward in the future with Green Manitoba and with the Department of Conservation on this important issue.

**Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Conservation):** I'm very pleased to be able to rise here today to speak

on this resolution brought forward from our friend from Portage la Prairie. I want to say that as the critic for Conservation for a number of years, I always knew I could count on the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou) to bring a positive view forward, to bring forward suggestions that are productive and constructive. So I see this private member's resolution along those terms as well, and I commend the member for that approach.

I want to point out that what the member calls for is something that should not be seen as a one-off or not be seen too narrow. I appreciate his advice on this, but we have to do better than that in this Legislature. We have to, and we've undertaken, on the advice of Manitobans, a broader look at recycling in this province, not just recycling, but reducing in the first place, recycling and reusing. We have to get a handle around the amount of stuff that's being produced in the first place.

I'm just going to get a little bit of a bug off of my chest. This Christmas, it'll happen all over again, as it has the last several Christmases. I will be unwrapping a parcel that Santa Claus has brought for my 5-year-old and he'll be sitting next to me wanting me to hurry up and get this parcel unwrapped, and in the meantime, I will be digging my way through about 40 pounds of Styrofoam and plastic and cellophane and tin ties and screws and you name it for one little toy. We have to start reducing the amount of packaging. We have to start reducing the amount of excess material that is contained on electronic devices. We have to get control of that from the beginning.

So we just can't look at this as a recycling problem. If that's the only view we take, then we're going to be dealing with landfills filling up with stuff that we don't necessarily need in those landfills, and some of those things, when you look at the electronic waste, can do some damage. Lead, cadmium, other things that we don't want in our landfills. So this is a very fundamental change that we need to bring to our approach in terms of reducing, reusing and recycling. I know that the Member for Portage (Mr. Faurichou) has spoken to me about that in the past and I know that he understands that we do need to make big changes.

Now, this doesn't say that everything we've done in the past is negative, because at times Manitoba has led the nation in terms of the stewardship programs that we've put in place. My commitment is that we are going to continue to be on the leading edge and

we are going to continue to lead the nation, and in order to do that we have to substantially, fundamentally change the way we do things in this province, in this area.

We need and Manitobans have asked for a long-term, stable program, whether they talk about tires or household hazardous waste or e-waste or paper products. They don't want it just to lurch from one program to the next. They want something long term and stable that they can count on day in and day out, and that's what we're working towards.

We have accepted as a basic principle in all of these programs the extended producer responsibility model. That, Madam Deputy Speaker, means that industry, the people who are best positioned to get at the amount of stuff that we produce, that those partners of ours will be wholly responsible for placing our programs in the best possible position, not that we're going to leave them out there on their own. They will still be coming to us with business plans and we will still be talking to them about these programs and not that we will just let the market gouge consumers. We still have a role to play as government in consumer protection, but the industry partners are in the best position to make good fundamental decisions when it comes to reusing, reducing and recycling.

You know, Madam Deputy Speaker, sometimes we think we have to look far and wide, the other side of the planet to get good examples, good models by which we can learn. We have one in Manitoba that has become the model for us and for other jurisdictions here in Manitoba, and that's the way in which we recycle oil and oil filters and other products connected to the oil-recycling industry. What we have done is we have used that as the model by which we are changing the way we recycle tires and household hazardous waste and e-waste and paper and paper products.

\* (11:20)

The first one that we began to work with was tires, because a number of municipalities were contending with tire piles in their R.M.s, stacking up in their landfills. So we knew we had to move quickly on that and there were successes, Madam Deputy Speaker. We reduced immensely the number of tires being stockpiled all over rural Manitoba, and that's credit to the people that make decisions in tire recycling in that whole industry. We put in place an interim board led by Mr. Reg Toews who I think did an excellent job in moving us and transitioning us

from the old tire stewardship model to something that would work much, much better. The interim Tire Stewardship Board should get a lot of credit for the success that I think that the tire program will enjoy in the years to come.

We went forward with the draft regulation. It's always important and our act says that we have to have that the people of Manitoba have a say in the regs that we put forward. So we went out to the people of Manitoba with a draft regulation, collected their advice and then put in place a regulation based on that advice. That regulation then signalled to our industry partners exactly where we wanted to go. They came to me and I signed off a couple of weeks ago on the business plan that the new Tire Stewardship Manitoba has brought forward and will guide them as they quite properly fundamentally improve our method by which we recycle tires in this province.

We're taking that same approach with household hazardous waste, with electronic waste and with the Manitoba Product Stewardship Corporation and the recycling of paper and paper products. That model, the model of oil and the model of the process we use with tires, will again improve fundamentally and give Manitobans a stable recycling opportunity, recycling mechanism for those other products as well.

So we want to make sure that what we do is fundamental. We want to make sure what we do is based on stability for the long term. The one I'm going to quickly just talk about is how we took both a short-term and a long-term approach when it came to what my colleague was talking about with e-waste. Depots across the province this summer so that people could bring forward their e-waste, Manitobans responded admirably; they responded great. We collected nearly 300 tonnes of e-waste that would have been headed to our landfills.

From there we put forward a draft regulation so that Manitobans can have a say in not only the short-term gains that we made but the long-term, stable program that we will have in place in this province when it comes to e-waste. That's our goal; that's what we're working toward. That's what Manitobans have said to us and said to me as the minister we need, and that is the approach that we want to take.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, understanding where the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurouchou) is coming from, I'm giving him full

credit for his interest and his advice. We need to do better than that. We need to across the board fundamentally change the way in which we deliver our programs to Manitobans because, quite frankly, Manitobans are ahead of everybody else on this.

I think we need to understand how important Manitobans see reducing, re-using and recycling. It's our responsibility to put in place the mechanisms by which they can do that, not just short-term but in the long-term as well. So with those words, thank you very much for hearing me out.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden):** It's my privilege as the seconder of this bill by the Member for Portage la Prairie, the beverage container deposit, to speak about the Beverage Container Deposit System today and the fact that this bill is calling on the government to consider implementing a comprehensive beverage container deposit-return system for the province of Manitoba.

I have to just say that I appreciate the fact that the Minister of Competitiveness, Training and Trade (Mr. Rondeau) recognizes that the program—he was talking about the program and how well it was working in Manitoba. I just wanted to acknowledge as well that the Manitoba stewardship program that has been in place for a number of years was put in place by the previous Progressive Conservative government under the leadership of Premier Gary Filmon. Of course, I want to extend congratulations to Mr. Glen Cummings, the former, now-retired minister of environment from the Province of Manitoba, member from Ste. Rose constituency who has just recently retired.

Mr. Cummings was recognized even by the United Nations in regard to some of the work that he had done in regard to environmental issues and across the province of Manitoba, and his leadership amongst his counterparts of other ministers of environment across Canada. He was well respected in that regard and called upon for his input and knowledge by federal governments of all stripes in regard to the input that he was having in that area.

I want to say as well that, under his purview, there was a program put in place for tire collection around the province of Manitoba. The previous Conservative government were leaders, and recognized as leaders, in sustainable development across Canada, with a B rating in regard to those areas, as opposed to the D rating today of the present government, Madam Deputy Speaker. Part of that was to do with the package of environmental



sustainability through the collection of bottles and cans, particularly, in the province of Manitoba, and today we have a program for beer cans and bottles.

We are calling upon the government to extend that through this bill, the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurschou) and myself, to make sure that we have a container deposit-run system in Manitoba that's parallel to other provinces. We're the last one in Canada to have a program that's effective in regard to allowing these kinds of containers to be collected in Manitoba, to have a deposit system on them. It's very much proven that the deposit system works. The provinces that have shown sustainability in this are our neighbours to the west. Even Saskatchewan is collecting 94 percent of their cans and 88 percent of their glass under the kind of program that they have, while in Manitoba we're collecting only 43 percent of the aluminium cans and 35 percent of the glass containers that we have under the volunteer program that we have today.

It's just not enough incentive, Madam Deputy Speaker, to keep our environment clean and to bring it forward and that, I think, can be compared to the beverage cans and bottle deposit that we already have in beer cans and beer bottles.

So I would also want to say that the government, through the minister's own words today, recognizing the need—I'm sure the Minister of Conservation today in his comments recognizes the need to enhance this program as well. I would encourage him to have his party members in the House today support this bill in regard to having a greater reduction of waste and greater recycling throughout the province of Manitoba.

I know the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) would be very appreciative of that kind of an initiative as well, as we all would be. I certainly know that no one wants to see garbage on the sides of our roads or in our ditches and there are still those who are prone to throwing those kind of containers out of their vehicles, Madam Deputy Speaker. I certainly wouldn't condone it myself, but we see evidence of it in the ditches. Of course, if that wasn't the case we wouldn't need programs like many of our groups in rural Manitoba. I know particularly even in the city as well, the 4-H clubs in rural Manitoba have volunteer programs, as do cadets in many parts of the province in cleaning up ditches and providing some funds for them as an initiative to do that along our highways and some of our major thoroughfares. But

if we had a proper recycling deposit on those particular cans and glass bottles we would be able to have a much greater return.

I'll give you an example, Madam Deputy Speaker, as well. Before that though, I want to commend the government for keeping Mr. Briese on. The member from—and of course I'm not supposed to use their names, but he wasn't elected at that time, but the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Briese) who was a member of that, a volunteer member when the creation of the volunteer program was put in place for recycling that the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) just spoke to. He as the minister knows how valuable the Member for Ste. Rose, when he was the president of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, was, carrying on in a volunteer role in that effort. To the minister's credit, he knew a good person when he saw one. He kept him on the committee for a while even after the election, and from our side of the House we're thankful that he recognized the fine input that came from the Member for Ste. Rose and the interim board of that whole organization, the stewardship program and the tire program as well.

\* (11:30)

So I want to use an example of—my daughter was in a college in Lethbridge at one time and I found out how valuable that program was in the province of Alberta where she was at that time. Many, many students would never think of throwing those kinds of products away in the province of Alberta because it ended up being a source of revenue for them, and as college students, Madam Deputy Speaker, they made every endeavour they possibly could to clean up every bottle and can and glass container that they could get their hands on. I had personal witness to the fact that she involved me in cleaning out her apartment one day and taking all of these things to the recycle depot, and it certainly was something that they were quite proud of.

I think, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we could encourage all of our citizens, not just our young people, not just our university students, but all people in the province of Manitoba to become better recyclers, and I've already stated the examples of percentages of how effective these kinds of programs are. I think that it's a credit as well. I know under Mr. Cummings there was an oil-recycling program set up in Manitoba at that time. The irony of it is that a cousin of mine, Grant Maguire, yesterday was acknowledged in the *Winnipeg Free Press* as the

grand prize winner of an ATV for being very involved in the oil-recycling program in the province of Manitoba. So my congratulations go out to my cousin Grant for his picture in the *Free Press* yesterday in regard to participation, but I think it just shows as caring rural citizens that they have spent quite a bit of time in those areas and jurisdictions in building up the kinds of oil recycling and bottle and glass recycling, never mind the paper recycling that goes on extensively in those areas.

So with those words I would close and wish all members of this House to support this bill brought forward by the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurshou), seconded by myself, for a better beverage container deposit system in the province of Manitoba.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I'm very pleased to speak to this particular resolution today. The resolution calls on the Assembly to urge the provincial government to consider implementing a comprehensive beverage container deposit return system in Manitoba. Well, this idea is very narrow and short-sighted as it focusses only on a single product instead of a wide-ranging waste-reduction strategy.

The government has a long-term comprehensive approach to the reduction of waste from packaging and printed goods. We've been working with industry and communities to develop a strategy that makes manufacturers responsible for recovering, reducing, reusing and recycling all packaging that they produce, not just beverage containers.

Now, the members should be aware that if we didn't produce the packaging in the first place, we wouldn't have to be recycling the stuff. I recently read an article in the paper, and maybe the members did as well, where Wal-Mart is demanding a reduction in packaging in its products that are being bought from China. That's ultimately where we should be going. We should be trying, as much as possible, to reduce or even eliminate packaging that comes with products that you buy in the store. I mean, you all are aware of buying products that are sealed in plastic, and, as a matter of fact, you need a huge pair of scissors and a big knife—as a matter of fact, you risk cutting yourself getting at the product that you've just bought. They're packaged so securely and sealed.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

So, Mr. Speaker, the government has been strengthening the recycling rules. It's been working with both industry and communities to achieve our waste-reduction goals and to boost environmental protection through the strengthening of its Product Stewardship Initiative.

The Department of Conservation made a draft amendment of the act for public consultations with industry and communities in late 2006, and, in fact, the regulation includes a waste-reduction strategy for not only beverage containers but all packaging and household recyclables.

The Province has since held public consultations on this proposed regulation to bolster recycling rules in the province. As a matter of fact, the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurshou) didn't bother to voice his opinion on this issue at these public consultation sessions with other Manitobans. As a matter of fact, his caucus here in the Legislature, with the exception of the member who just spoke, have basically not been speaking on his resolution. I'm hoping that we will see more members of the Conservative caucus speak to this resolution.

One of the members who spoke before talked about the e-waste. We have a—the packaging and the printed materials just one component of the government's Product Stewardship Initiative. The consultations will also be held on the stewardship of scrap tires, household hazardous waste, and waste from electronic products. Now, during the lead-up to Waste Reduction Week, the government announced the results of our very successful e-waste roundup project that collected between 250 and 300 tonnes of e-waste at 19 depots in 15 communities across Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have situations here in Manitoba in the past where we have computers that are being recycled through schools. I know that I've certainly taken a number of pieces of electronic equipment over the years to Miles Mac and Daniel Mac schools for recycling. That is a very good choice of refurbishing computer equipment and so on, so that we get further usage of them. But the government has to move further than that because we have many more items, electronic items, cameras and cellphones and so on that should have been recycled in the past, and now action is being taken to do that. The draft electrical and electronic equipment stewardship regulation would address the growing problem of disposal of waste electronic products. The industry would be required to provide a system

for recovering products such as rechargeable batteries, televisions, computers, monitors and printers, cellphones and microwaves.

So we are seeing the government take a much, much more comprehensive approach than this particular resolution that the member is proposing.

After a year, the list of electronics would be expanded to include such products as video display equipment, VCRs, fax machines and cameras. There are probably a number of other items that would be included in there as well. The high level of involvement in the public and the key stakeholders in developing these product stewardship initiatives will ensure that they are effective and successful when they are implemented.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have talked before about having producer responsibility for the problem. The new regulation is based on the principle of producer responsibility and will require producers to act as stewards of packaging and printed papers. That is the way it should be. The producer should be responsible for this. The regulation will put the onus on producers to develop plans for sustainable management of all residential recyclables.

The importance of resource efficiency is recognized by this government. As a matter of fact, the Product Stewardship Initiative reinforces with producers the important link between product design and environment. As I mentioned earlier, if the manufacturers of the products would consider the designs in the beginning and how that relates to the packaging that they put with it, I'm sure they could come up with many, many ideas of how to reduce the packaging that would go, that eventually comes out with the product. In turn, it reinforces the idea that economic activity is closely related to effective waste management and resource efficiency.

Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, is rich with green energy sources such as water, wind, grains and geothermal heat. The government is committed to building a green economy by developing these resources in a sustainable fashion. The government has also been working continually to reduce waste and protect the environment, since waste reduction activities are directly linked with the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Manitobans recognize the importance of resource efficiency and hold protecting the environment as a priority. In the last 10 years, Mr. Speaker, Manitobans have adopted recycling as a part of their daily lives and today, the

member should know that 60 percent of all Manitobans are recycling in this province.

\* (11:40)

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is a world leader on climate change. In fact, Manitoba has become a recognized leader on climate change over the past seven years.

**An Honourable Member:** We're the last in the country.

**Mr. Maloway:** Manitoba was chosen by *BusinessWeek*—and the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurshou) is cackling and heckling, as usual, from his seat, obviously contemplating the rules to see if there is anything he can bring up on eating in the House, or speaking on a chocolate cellphone, and his high top priorities that he used to bring to this House.

Manitoba was chosen by *BusinessWeek* magazine as the No. 1 regional government in the world when it came to addressing the issue. So the member should stop his cackling and listen to what I'm trying to tell him so he'll remember it for the future.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Energy Efficiency Alliance commended the Province for leading the country in energy efficiency. In 1999 when the members were last in office, Manitoba had no plan to deal with climate change. It was ninth out of tenth in the country on energy efficiency. It had no plans for wind development; and Conawapa, a clean, new generation hydro dam, sat in moth balls.

Now in 2007, just eight short years later, Manitoba has a comprehensive action plan well underway. It's first in Canada on energy efficiency, first. Remember, Mr. Speaker, I just said that in 1999, what did I say? Manitoba was ninth out of tenth in the country on energy efficiency. Eight years later it's No. 1 in energy efficiency.

I would say that that has something, some little bit to do with the government of the day. You could argue that these things can happen just through time, regardless of what government is in power, but I don't think that would be the case here. To go from ninth out of tenth to first in Canada on energy efficiency.

Has Manitoba's first wind farm up and running—and I've mentioned this before to the member that, while his colleagues in Alberta were building wind—

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable member's time has expired.

The honourable Government House Leader, on House Business.

### House Business

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the House that tomorrow afternoon the Committee of Supply will consider a concurrence motion.

As well, I'd like to ask the unanimous consent that next Tuesday, rather than having Private Members' Business in the morning, the House would debate government bills from 10 a.m. until noon.

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been advised that in the House tomorrow afternoon the Committee of Supply will consider the concurrence motion. Okay, that's for tomorrow afternoon.

Also, is there unanimous consent that next Tuesday, rather than having Private Members' Business in the morning, the House would debate government bills from 10 a.m. until noon. Is there agreement? *[Agreed]*

\* \* \*

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West):** It's never been said that the members of this House have been prone to exaggeration, but certainly the Member for Elmwood has exaggerated the position of this particular government when it comes to the environment, Mr. Speaker, and certainly from the recycling program.

I understand that he's looking for Wal-Mart to do most of the work for that particular government, but in my particular situation, Mr. Speaker, it's the government that should be the leader in this situation.

A couple of things. First of all, I do congratulate the government. They have extended to a certain degree the programs that were put in place by a previous government with the Manitoba Product Stewardship Corporation, but they haven't gone far enough.

I heard the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) say that he wants to do is he wants to have an all-encompassing program. It has to be very comprehensive. There's no sense going baby steps, piecemeal, with certain programs. What he wants is a big ball to put together and put before Manitobans so that they now can be leaders in conservation and,

certainly, leaders in the environment. Well, that doesn't happen.

What we did, Mr. Speaker, is we started a program, a program that was very, very good, the Manitoba Product Stewardship Corporation program. We put into place an opportunity for Manitobans to start recycling, and they did. Manitobans want to be part of this program, but they need the programs put into place, legitimate, honest programs, to be put into place so that they can take part in it.

I give you an example, Mr. Speaker. We do have deposits on certain products that the industry is partnered in, but there are others. We have a hazardous waste program here in the province of Manitoba which has been accepted by almost every Manitoban. The problem is the government is not prepared to expand that program. In my own community of Brandon, we have an opportunity twice a year, two afternoons, to, unfortunately, get rid of our hazardous waste, only two afternoons a year. Now the last time that they had this hazardous waste depot in the city of Brandon, people were lined up. Cars were lined up almost constantly all afternoon, all day. As a matter of fact, people were turned away.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, people should not be turned away when they want to get rid of hazardous waste. People shouldn't be turned away when they want to get rid of their e-waste, or electronic waste. People shouldn't be turned away when they want to, in fact, embrace recycling and the environment. That's what this government is doing. They're turning people away.

What they've done is they've turned people away with respect to the beverage containers deposit system. Right now, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the fact, the fact is that Saskatchewan, in a lot of areas, not only with beverage containers but also the economy, is eating our lunch. In Saskatchewan, right now, they have, I believe it's almost a 90 percent success rate of recycling beverage containers; in Manitoba, it's less than 50 percent. Now you have to ask yourself: Why is it that they're being so successful and we're not being terribly successful? The answer is quite simple. It's in this resolution.

**An Honourable Member:** Good government.

**Mr. Borotsik:** Well, it is a good government in Saskatchewan. I would have to say that. I would say that most emphatically. It's a good government because they don't have a payroll tax. It's a good

government because they've reduced a lot of their personal income tax. It's a good government because they have a fairly substantial personal tax deduction, Mr. Speaker, but they also have, and they've done it realistically, they've said, we want to recycle. The way you do that is to make it economically viable for the people that want to recycle. We don't do it here. So people throw away their pop bottles. They throw away their liquor bottles. They throw away their wine bottles. In Saskatchewan, they don't. In Alberta, they don't.

Can we not take some sort of understanding of this particular success from Saskatchewan and put it into Manitoba's psyche? Can we not do that, Mr. Speaker? No. We're going to say, we're not doing anything. This government's not doing anything until we have everything in one big ball. Well, it doesn't work that way.

As a matter of fact, just for the understanding of this government, there are people in Manitoba, in my own constituency, who actually take their beverage containers from Manitoba, across the border—*[interjection]* Oh, trust me. You can shake your head and say it's illegal all you want, but for anything that's in place there's always a way to get around the legislation in a regulation. They do it. If you don't believe me, I can show you. You know why they do it? Because there's a refundable deposit in Saskatchewan. Isn't that something. So now we're going to be taking—by the way, this is probably the government's idea of economic development. This is probably your idea of economic development in some way, shape, or form of actually getting some money back from Saskatchewan. What a great idea, but it doesn't work.

Why don't we follow this resolution? Why don't you agree with this resolution? Why don't you accept this resolution and have a little, small, minor step for recycling? Then we'll support you on your e-recycling. We'll support you on your hazardous waste recycling. We'll support you on the other initiatives that you bring forward, but don't just throw this one away simply because you don't have the ability or the desire to start somewhere small. Do a beverage container deposit. That's a simple, little thing, and we're going to be taking a lot of trash out of the landfill. We're going to be taking some recyclables and putting them where they should be, as opposed to having our children and our grandchildren look after landfills that we don't want to look after.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would really, really ask the government to support this resolution, take a small step for the environment. Quite frankly, I know you're going to lose economic development out of Saskatchewan, but the fact of the matter is you're going to have a lot of people in Manitoba embrace this.

\* (11:50)

Now I talked about the hazardous waste. I just want to put it on the record, Brandon would like to have that hazardous waste depot extended. We would like to have more than two afternoons a year. Can you believe it? A community of 44,000 people has two afternoons a year where people can take hazardous waste. We're talking hazardous waste. We're talking waste that has no business being in a landfill. If you don't have the opportunity to dump it someplace, you're going to dump it in a landfill.

Please, have this government, have the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) extend that program so that we, in fact, can now make sure that Manitobans, and "Brandonites" particularly, can take advantage of a hazardous waste depot. That's all I'm asking. Extend it. Winnipeg has it. Winnipeg has it I believe once every month. All we're asking for is an extension of the depot.

So I would ask the Minister of Conservation to anticipate the fact that we would like to have that extension of the depot and have them put it into place.

So, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to, in closing, congratulate the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurschou) for bringing forward what I consider to be a very major resolution in a small part, but, please, support the resolution so we can get on with recycling. Thank you.

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** I'm going to try and be gentle, but that's going to be tough because having been working on the waste-reduction front now for a couple of decades, having seen a couple of different governments come and go, having seen more than a few different policies brought forward on how to fix this idea, I don't really even need to refer to the speaking notes, which are very good, that I have in front of me. Let's just take some of the words from the members opposite and scrape that green paint off a little bit and see what's underneath it.

The Member for Brandon West (Mr. Borotsik) just closed, and with all due respect, we all have our

different opinions here, but he asked why wouldn't we support the resolution and why wouldn't we pass the resolution. Well, it's very simple, Mr. Speaker, this is a dumb resolution and it doesn't deserve to be passed. I'm one of the youngest members in the Legislature. I almost feel like I'm watching *Back to the Future*, except it's Back to the Past.

The Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire) spoke in glowing terms about the leadership of former Premier Gary Filmon on this particular issue. I would just point out that at that point in time the Filmon government had basically two different policy options in front of them to deal with the enormous waste problem which citizens, such as myself and many, many others, had been calling on him to deal with for years. They finally started to do it and they could either go with the MPSC model, the Manitoba Product Stewardship Corporation, which is what they opted for. That's that little two-cent per beverage container that goes into a central pot and is then distributed to municipalities. That's the one that they ended up choosing for.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what was the other option that they rejected? Well, it was the deposit return system. It's the same thing that's now being proposed by the Member for Portage la Prairie, and to top it all off—they're speaking in glowing terms about the benefits to business and the rest of it—the reason the Filmon government rejected the deposit system was because they said it would cost business too much money.

So I'm glad to be here. It's not very often that a young member in the Chamber gets to impart some wisdom that some other members don't have, but I'm pleased to do that and happy to do it again. I'm sure I'll have lots of opportunities if the members opposite keep bringing forward these really quite boneheaded ideas.

The other dilemma that we have here, Mr. Speaker, is that 10, 15, 20 years ago when there were only two policy options on the table, fine, you pick one of those and you go with it. Well, since then there's been a lot of work done in the environmental field. I know the members opposite don't understand the environment. The Member for Brandon West

(Mr. Borotsik) was just saying, no, no, no, we can't do anything big for the environment; we just want to do little baby steps for the environment. This is not a baby-steps government, Mr. Speaker. This is a big-steps government.

It doesn't matter whether it's climate change or leadership on the east side, respect for First Nations and Aboriginal people, energy efficiency, water protection. Go down the list. We are a big-steps government and we are now directing that tenacity and approach to waste reduction. The new model, which is now being adopted across the country, is called extended producer responsibility. It's all about a polluter-pay principle expanded into a more acceptable and feasible approach for business.

Rather than government coming up with its own design system and then imposing it on everybody, government goes to a business sector, not one business, not two businesses, but an entire sector and says, hey, you have a problem in that you are generating too much waste. We want to see those waste levels come down. Let's work together so that you can design a system that you will then implement. You decide what the costs are going to be, you decide who's going to pay for it, you decide how it's going to work. We are the ones protecting the public interest who will set the standard and establish what it is that you have to accomplish.

It's this dialogue, Mr. Speaker, which has been underway for several years now very successfully on the oil reduction front for waste oil coming out of automobiles and all other types of automobiles in the—it's not just automobiles, it's large industrial tractors and heavy equipment, the whole gamut. We've now done the same thing with tires, we are doing a big step with all electronic waste, a big step with household hazardous waste and a big step for packaging waste, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have five minutes remaining.

The one-hour time limit for private members' resolutions has now expired so we will now recess and reconvene at 1:30 p.m.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, October 16, 2007**

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