

Manitoba PC Caucus Review

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March 15, 2019

ENHANCING SUPPORTS FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Proposed amendments to The Residential Tenancies Act would allow victims of sexual or domestic violence and whose safety is at risk to move out with less notice and without having to file a police report, Justice Minister Cliff Cullen and Sustainable Development Minister Rochelle Squires, minister responsible for the status of women, announced this week.

“Our government is committed to protecting victims of domestic and sexual violence,” said Cullen. “This legislation expands current protections, allowing victims to quickly move away from their abuser with the support of our victim services branch.”

Currently, tenants affected by domestic violence or stalking can end their lease with one month’s notice if they believe staying in place puts them or their children at increased risk. Tenants must report incidents of domestic violence or stalking to the police and obtain a no-contact order from the court to be eligible for early lease termination.

The amendments announced today would extend early lease termination to include victims of sexual violence. In addition, all victims of domestic or sexual violence would be able to speak with professionals like doctors, nurses or social workers, who can verify an incident occurred and confirm eligibility. A police report and no-contact order would no longer be required, making early lease termination easier for vulnerable Manitobans.

“These changes will help more Manitobans feel safe in their home,” said Squires. “We are giving more victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence the option of how they want to tell their story, and to whom. We know many women and girls do not involve law enforcement and this is not the only avenue victims choose to address gender-based violence.”

For more information about services and supports available to victims of domestic or sexual violence, visit www.gov.mb.ca/justice/crown/victims/index.html or www.gov.mb.ca/msw/fvpp/index.html.

IMPROVING SAFETY AT HOSPITALS AND OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

The Manitoba government is introducing amendments that would create a new institutional safety officer designation to better support security guards in hospitals and other public institutions with expanded authority, prescribed training and appropriate protections, Justice Minister Cliff Cullen announced this week.

“Security personnel working in hospitals, universities and government offices work hard every day to keep Manitobans safe, so we are enhancing the authority, training and skills they already have to ensure they continue to do this critical work effectively,” said Cullen. “Institutional safety officers would be responsible for the security of people and property at their facility, providing an initial response and then working with the local police agency as needed. The amendments would set out these roles, outline their enforcement responsibilities and identify where they may be a valuable addition to ensure public safety.”

The Police Services Amendment Act (institutional safety officers) would provide individuals currently working as security guards in these specified locations with the legal authority to enforce and exercise powers under provincial statutes. Their role would be modeled after similar, existing positions including community safety officers and First Nation safety officers.

“This legislation further enhances the abilities and authority of security officers at hospitals to respond to individuals who are in severe distress and pose a risk to themselves or others,” said Health, Seniors and Active Living Minister Cameron Friesen. “The role of an institutional safety officer is built on what we’ve heard from health providers and others about improvements that can be made that benefit patients, visitors and staff.”

REMEMBERING STU BRIESE



Our PC Caucus family was saddened by the passing of our friend and former colleague Stu Briese earlier this week.

First elected as the MLA for the constituency of Ste. Rose in 2007, Stu was re-elected in the new constituency of Agassiz in 2011 and served 9 years in the Manitoba Legislature before retiring from provincial politics in 2016.

Prior to his election to the Legislature, Stu served on the council of the RM of Langford for 20 years and was also very active with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, serving as a Director, Vice-President, and President with the AMM. In addition, he served for 3 years as a Director with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Stu was a valued member of our team and a mentor to many current and former MLAs and staff. He will be fondly remembered and deeply missed by all who knew him.

TAKING ACTION TO SUSTAIN THE LAKE WINNIPEG FISHERY



The Manitoba government will offer the option of voluntary Individual Quota Entitlement buy-back, and introduce new commercial and recreational fishing regulations intended to help assure sustainable fish populations in Lake Winnipeg, Sustainable Development Minister Rochelle Squires announced this week.

“We are seeing early warning signs the sustainability of fisheries resources in Lake Winnipeg is at risk,” Squires said. “By acting today, we will ensure the ability of Manitoba’s great lake to generate food, provide enjoyment and support economic growth in future.”

Effective immediately, until March 21, the province is offering a voluntary commercial fisheries quota buy-back option. Commercial fishers can make Notifications of Interest to sell their Individual Quota Entitlements (annual allowable catch) to the province. The province will then retire the purchased entitlements in order to reduce the amount of commercial catch taken from the lake every year.

More information is available at www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/fish_wildlife/fish/quota_buyback_proposed_reg.pdf. Fishers are encouraged to reach out through the contact emails and numbers provided in the linked document.

MORE CHOICE AND CONVENIENCE ON THE WAY FOR LIQUOR CONSUMERS

Legislative amendments that would expand the sale of cider and spirit-based coolers to hotel beer vendors was introduced in the Manitoba legislature this week by Crown Services Minister Colleen Mayer.

“Our government is focused on reducing red tape that holds our province back and limits consumer choice,” Mayer said. “We are proud to provide greater choice and convenience for Manitoba consumers, with more retail and product options closer to home.”

The amendments under The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Act would reduce red tape, provide greater consumer choice and bring rural community product offerings in line with urban centres where Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries (MBLL) operates retail locations.

Currently, hotel beer vendors are restricted to selling beer and malt-based coolers, and can only sell spirit-based coolers and ciders under certain conditions such as being located a specific distance from a liquor vendor.

The proposed amendments would permit all hotel beer vendors to sell cider and spirit-based coolers, in addition to privately distributed beer.

In addition, MBLL plans to extend permission to private rural liquor vendors to sell single-serve domestic beer, previously only sold by hotel beer vendors and some rural liquor vendors granted an exception.

“The changes provide the opportunity for businesses to expand their product assortment to satisfy customer demand,” Mayer added. “A greater assortment of products closer to home is good news for the Manitoba consumer.”

MANITOBA UNVEILS CULTURE POLICY AND ACTION PLAN



Following the first review of Manitoba's cultural policy in nearly three decades, the province has released an action plan that will guide the decision-making process for Manitoba's cultural and creative industries. Sport, Culture and Heritage Minister Cathy Cox announced this week.

"Our government is looking forward to working with cultural organizations, and continuing the work of creating a dynamic, flourishing sector," Cox said. "We also want to thank the many individuals and organizations that took the time to share their thoughts and comments so we can find new, innovative and effective ways of maintaining our vibrant cultural community in this province."

Consultations, which began in 2017, included round table discussions across the province with more than 200 cultural stakeholders, business leaders and other organizations. Manitobans made it clear that culture is important to them, and they wanted affordable, high quality, accessible cultural infrastructure province-wide.

The full details are available online. To view *Our Way Forward: Manitoba's Culture Policy and Action Plan*, please visit:

<https://manitoba.ca/cultureplan/index.html>.

GOVERNMENT TAKES ACTION TO IMPROVE FAMILY LAW



The Manitoba government is introducing groundbreaking, first-in-Canada legislation that would modernize the province's family law system to improve outcomes for families and children. Justice Minister Cliff Cullen announced this week.

"Our government is committed to making a difference in the lives of Manitobans by modernizing our family law system to make it less complex, less adversarial, and less damaging for families and children," said Cullen. "To move forward with this strategy, we are introducing enabling legislation and strengthening the services available to Manitobans. Modernization of the family law system will be phased in over the next two years with Manitobans acting as essential partners in designing the tools and services they need."

The legislative framework and overall approach are based on the findings of the *Modernizing Our Family Law System* report, released in June 2018, and consultations with stakeholders and citizens over the past year.

For more information, please visit:

<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=45120&posted=2019-03-12>