



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Warren Steinley, Chair
Regina Walsh Acres

Ms. Nicole Sarauer, Deputy Chair
Regina Douglas Park

Hon. Greg Brkich
Arm River

Mr. Dan D'Autremont
Cannington

Mr. Glen Hart
Last Mountain-Touchwood

Mr. Eric Olauson
Saskatoon University

Mr. Randy Weekes
Biggar-Sask Valley

[The committee met at 09:00.]

The Chair: — Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Private Bills Committee. I'll welcome the members first. We have Hon. Greg Brkich, Dan D'Autremont, Glen Hart, Eric Olauson, Nicole Sarauer, Randy Weekes, and also joining us is Nicole Rancourt.

Bill No. 903 — *The Canadian Revival Training Centre Act, 2018*

Clause 1

The Chair: — The business before the committee this morning is Bill No. 903, *The Canadian Revival Training Centre Act, 2018*. Mr. Ring, the Law Clerk, will present his report on the bill to the committee.

Mr. Ring: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning, committee members. I've examined this private bill, and I'm pleased to report that it is drawn in accordance with the rules of the Legislative Assembly respecting private bills.

I have reviewed the private bill and have had a number of meetings regarding the private bill on a variety of topics with individuals from the CRTC, the Canadian Revival Training Centre, and the Ministry of Advanced Education. As a result of these meetings and research, it came to my attention that the CRTC had been struck from the corporate registry on one occasion. It was reinstated the following year. I do not know why it was struck from the corporate registry for one year, and I did not make any inquiries as to why that occurred. It is, however, incumbent upon me to bring this information to the committee's attention.

One provision that I would like to bring to the committee's attention, to the attention of the committee members, is section 3. I have no concern with the present wording of section 3. Subsection (1) continues the CRTC as a corporate entity under the private Act. This is a standard provision that is usually included in a private bill of this nature. Subsection 3(2) is the new standard with respect to degree-granting status for colleges in Saskatchewan established by private Act.

In closing, I would only add that all entities in the province of Saskatchewan, regardless of their legal status or how they are incorporated, must comply with the provisions of all provincial statutes. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. Ring. Any questions? Seeing none, I will table PBC 6-28, Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: Report on Bill No. 903, *The Canadian Revival Training Centre Act, 2018*, dated May 7th, 2019.

We have officials from the Ministry of Advanced Education here today to present. Go ahead, ministry officials. Please introduce yourself for *Hansard*.

Ms. Bloor: — Good morning. I am Tammy Bloor. I am the assistant deputy minister of sector relations and student services with the Ministry of Advanced Education. Colleagues along with me, to my left is Alicia McGregor and to my right Michèle

Birns-Hahn.

So I'd like to offer a few comments today. And I'll try to read through them as quickly as possible, at least to have on record. So again, thank you for the opportunity to make a statement at committee this morning regarding Bill No. 903, *The Canadian Revival Training Centre Act, 2018*.

My remarks will be focused on the following three areas: (1) current government designations of the Canadian Revival Training Centre, (2) the implications for the centre if Bill 903 becomes law, and (3) implications for the centre if certain amendments are made to the Bill 903.

In terms of current designations, currently the Canadian Revival Training Centre is registered with the Government of Saskatchewan as a Category I private vocational school for Biblical counselling and pastoral care certificate program and Biblical counselling and pastoral care diploma.

The Ministry of Advanced Education has oversight authority over all private vocational schools through *The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995*, or otherwise known as the PVS Act, and actively monitors them to ensure compliance with the legislative requirements and mitigate risks to students.

This oversight authority includes but is not limited to the following: registering the private vocational school and ensuring it is financially viable and has satisfactory evidence of financial security; ensuring the private vocational school has adequate programs that include qualified instructors, adequate equipment, materials, and facilities, as well as approved enrolment contracts and protection measures that benefit the students; and lastly, setting out vocational training programs in the certificate of registration, and setting the date of expiry for the certificate itself. A private vocational school's registration must be renewed with the ministry on an annual basis pursuant to the PVS Act and associated regulations.

The centre is a private vocational school offering the Biblical counselling and pastoral care certificate and diploma programs, currently designated as an educational institution for student loan purposes under *The Saskatchewan Student Direct Loans Regulations*. With this designation, any student who is enrolled in the centre's certificate or diploma program can apply for student financial assistance.

As part of Saskatchewan's designation policy, performance measures consistent with the pan-Canadian designation policy framework are used to assess and monitor the performance of an educational institution. There are three performance measures that I'll mention: (1) repayment rates, (2) administrative compliance and student support services, and (3) student retention and completion rates.

Because the centre has a history of low enrolment numbers, the ministry is not able to release specific data related to student repayment rates or employment rates. However, I can say though that the centre historically has had below average student loan repayment rates.

The centre is also designated as a learning institution for the

international student program. With this designation the centre is able to enrol or host international students in its Biblical counselling and pastoral care certificate and diploma programs.

The Saskatchewan international student program designation framework is also guided by a pan-Canadian framework to ensure that institutions across Canada offer the same supports and meet minimum standards that each institution is expected to.

I will now speak to the implications for the centre if Bill 903 becomes a private Act. Once Bill 903 was introduced into the Legislative Assembly on November 21st, 2018, the ministry was able then to consult with its legal counsel at the Ministry of Justice. In a letter to the centre dated February 1st, 2019, the Ministry of Advanced Education confirmed the following significant implications for the centre if Bill 903 as currently worded became law.

First, *The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995* excludes from the definition of a private vocational school, a school governed by any other Act. This means that if an institution providing vocational training is governed by another Act, the Minister of Advanced Education cannot impose the PVS Act upon the institution, and the institution cannot seek the benefits of the registration under the PVS Act. The Ministry of Advanced Education considers Bill 903 to govern the centre. Therefore, if the bill is passed as currently worded, the centre would no longer be under the purview of the PVS Act.

Secondly, because degree-granting authority would be a significant new responsibility for the centre, the previous circumstances under which the centre was designated for student loan status are no longer applicable. The Ministry of Advanced Education does not grant designation status as a right. Designation status must be earned and authorized by the minister.

The centre's student loan designation would be revoked until the centre, as a new degree-granting institution, meets the criteria under *The Saskatchewan Student Direct Loans Regulations*, section 18. For example, the centre would need to operate as a degree-granting institution for at least 18 months and graduate at least one class of degree students. Further, because student loan designation is a requirement for the international student program, this designation would also be revoked until student loan designation is restored and the centre reapplies. And lastly, if the bill is passed the centre, like all institutions, will be subject to *The Degree Authorization Act* and associated regulations.

For any theological degrees in Biblical studies and theology the centre may want to confer, the centre must adhere to section 31 of *The Degree Authorization Regulations* which outlines the naming requirements for theological degrees.

Apart from these nomenclature restrictions, the government has no oversight authority over institutions that offer theological degrees. If the centre wants to confer non-theological or secular degrees, then it must first apply for authorization through Saskatchewan's quality assurance review process, which is outlined in *The Degree Authorization Act*.

The centre would also be subject to any future amendments to *The Degree Authorization Act* and associated regulations. The ministry recognizes that if Bill 903 becomes law, there is a

significant impact on the centre's continued operation as a private vocational school and on its student loan and international student program designations.

For the information of this committee, I want to point out that the ministry recognizes how student loan designation is in fact valuable and helps some students attend educational institutions. However, the ministry estimates that approximately 70 per cent of students attending post-secondary studies in Saskatchewan do not access student loans.

I will now speak to some recent communications the ministry has had with the centre regarding potential amendments to Bill 903. The centre has communicated to the ministry that it is willing to operate simultaneously under the PVS Act as a private vocational school, and under a private Act as a degree-granting institution. After further consultation with legal counsel, the ministry is of the opinion that if appropriate amendments are made to Bill 903, then the centre could operate simultaneously as a private vocational school for its certificate and diploma programs, as well as a post-secondary institution with theological degree-granting authority in Biblical studies and theology.

The PVS Act is clear though that a private vocational school cannot be governed by any other Act. As such, Bill 903 would need to be amended to focus only on the centre's operations as a degree-granting institution, subject to *The Degree Authorization Act*, and all references to the centre's private vocational school operations, such as its certificate and diploma programs, would need to be removed from Bill 903.

Essentially, the centre would be governed by the PVS Act for its certificate and diploma programs and would be governed by its private Act for its degree-granting authority. This hybrid legislative approach would be a unique situation in Saskatchewan.

There would still be the following significant implications for the centre if these bill amendments are pursued. As long as the centre continues to abide by the PVS Act, it will maintain its current student loan status, as well as international student program designation for its certificate and diploma programs only. The centre will not automatically qualify for student loan status or international student program designation for its theological degree programs in Biblical studies and theology.

Degree-granting authority is considered a material change in the operation of the centre. Because of this significant expansion in the centre's programming, the centre will still need to meet the criteria in *The Saskatchewan Student Direct Loans Regulations*, section 18, prior to its applying for student loan status for its theological degrees and Biblical studies and theology. As indicated previously, the Ministry of Advanced Education does not grant student loan designation as a right. Designation must be earned and authorized by the minister.

As outlined in the pan-Canadian designation policy framework, designation of institutions for student loans must consider student and taxpayer protection. Institutions need to provide students with adequate consumer protection and information to make informed choices about post-secondary options. Institutions must also focus on student success and retention.

An institution expanding from a private vocational school offering certificates and diplomas to an institution also offering degrees is a significant change that makes it like a new institution. It takes time for a degree-granting institution to build its administrative structure and culture to verify for students that it's capable of offering quality and sustainable programming to ensure student success.

Requiring the centre as a new degree-granting institution to deliver theological degrees in Biblical studies and theology for 18 months and graduate one class of students provides the necessary accountability to ensure that new students can be informed of choice to attend a quality institution that they can graduate from successfully.

The centre must also adhere to *The Degree Authorization Act* and associated regulations. As previously mentioned, any theological degrees in Biblical studies and theology must abide by the naming requirements in section 31 of *The Degree Authorization Regulations*. If the centre plans to offer any non-theological or secular degrees, then it must submit an application for authorization to the secretariat of the Saskatchewan Higher Education Quality Assurance Board.

In conclusion, degree-granting authority would be a significant, new responsibility for the Canadian Revival Training Centre. It is the ministry's responsibility and its obligation to safeguard the interests of students and maintain the reputation of Saskatchewan's post-secondary sector while ensuring that institutions have opportunities to meet public demands for programs.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide a statement to the committee.

[09:15]

The Chair: — Thank you very much to the officials from Advanced Education. Any questions? Seeing none, I would recognize Mr. Olauson.

Mr. Olauson: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move:

That the committee report Bill No. 903, *The Canadian Revival Training Centre Act, 2018* not further proceed.

The Chair: — Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I recognize Mr. D'Autremont.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I move:

That the fees respecting Bill No. 903, *The Canadian Revival Training Centre Act, 2018* be remitted to the petitioner.

The Chair: — Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Thank you very much. Carried. A draft copy of the third report has been distributed. Would a member move the

following motion. Mr. Weekes.

Mr. Weekes: — I move:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

The Chair: — Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. That concludes today's agenda. Thank you very much to the ministry officials for coming out and giving that presentation. I'd ask for a member to move adjournment motion. Mr. Brkich. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. This committee stands adjourned to the call of the Chair. Thank you, everyone, for coming out this morning.

[The committee adjourned at 09:18.]