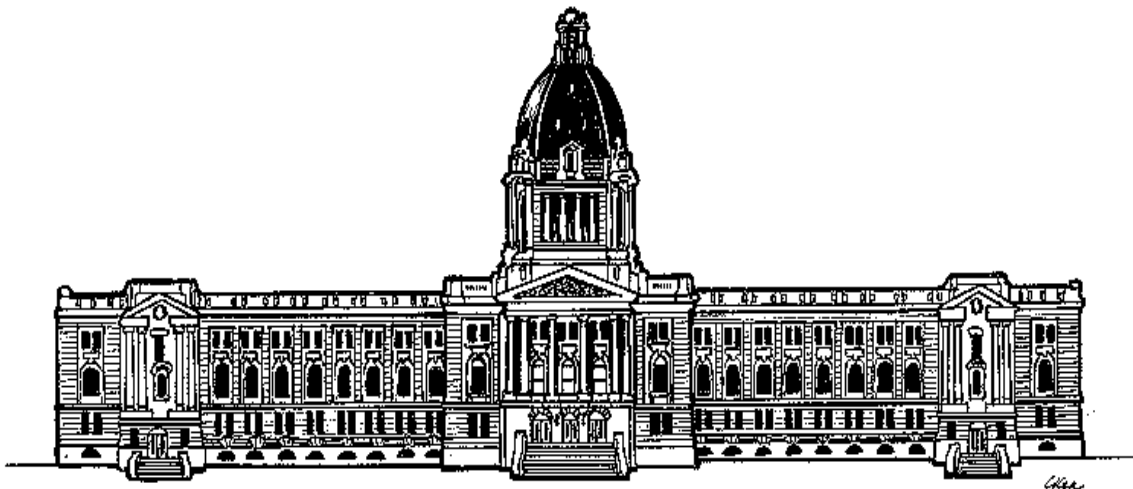




STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
2007**

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Saskatoon Eastview

Mr. Wayne Elhard, Deputy Chair
Cypress Hills

Mr. Lon Borgerson
Saskatchewan Rivers

Ms. Joanne Crofford
Regina Rosemont

Mr. Peter Prebble
Saskatoon Greystone

Mr. Don Toth
Moosomin

Mr. Milton Wakefield
Lloydminster

[The committee met at 15:46.]

The Chair: — Good afternoon. Welcome to the Standing Committee on Human Services. The items up for consideration today are Bill No. 63, The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act and Bill No. 68, The Status of the Artist Act. We'll start off with The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act and ask the minister to introduce himself and his officials and any comments he wants to make on the Act.

Bill No. 63 — The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act

Clause 1

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — I'm Frank Quennell, Madam Chair. Thank you very much. Seated to my right is Barbara MacLean, deputy minister, Culture, Youth and Recreation. To my left is Dawn Martin, executive director, culture and heritage division, and behind me to my right, Ray Petrich, Justice, Crown counsel. And I do have a short opening statement about the Act.

The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act was proposed in recognition of the museum's 100th anniversary in 2006. The Act lays out the mandate and purpose of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. Included in the mandate are research and education as well as the traditional and well-known exhibition mandate. The Act also lays out the authorities for the direction of the museum and clarifies, in particular, the museum can share objects in the provincial collection and can, where appropriate, dispose of items in the collection.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, the Act lays out the principles of a policy that must be established by the museum regarding access to care, use, and repatriation of sacred and culturally sensitive Aboriginal artifacts in the museum's collection. The policy is now being finalized after extensive consultation with the First Nation elders and will provide Aboriginal people with options regarding how such objects will be handled. These options range from access to use and borrow objects for ceremonies, transfer ownership of objects to the originating community and continue to hold the object in the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, and transfer of ownership and possession of the object to the originating community.

The Chair: — Thank you. Questions. Ms. Draude.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you very much. Mr. Minister, and to your officials, I look forward to discussion on this Bill and later The Status of the Artist Act. I appreciate the fact that the Royal Saskatchewan Museum now has its own Act after 100 years. And I'm sure there are a lot of museums around the province who are also happy that there is now an Act for our museum. Can you tell me, with some of the increased responsibilities for the museum, if there was extra money put into this budget this year?

Ms. MacLean: — Madam Chair, in answer to the member's question, this doesn't require additional resources. The Act lays out actual existing responsibilities that have been undertaken by the museum over the last number of years, and the museum maintained a status quo budget in the 2007-08 budget year.

Ms. Draude: — I appreciate from the Act that we now recognize the importance of the First Nations artifacts. Can you tell me how many artifacts we now store at the museum, when we started working with First Nations artifacts, and if there's any work that has to be done to ensure that they are maintained?

Ms. MacLean: — We have currently in excess of 100 objects in the RSM's [Royal Saskatchewan Museum] collection that would be considered or culturally sensitive. They are housed, there's special provisions made within the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and certain protocols that are followed and that were developed in consultation with First Nation elders around the treatment of those.

I cannot answer the question in terms of how long they've been collecting them. I think it's been over the course of a number of years. And during that time there's been significant development on the care, preservation, and actually the return and the lending of those artifacts back to the particular owners, First Nation bands.

Ms. Draude: — Is there an elder, either from the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] or one of the tribal councils or reserves in the province, that is sitting as a representative on the museum board? Or who do they contact when it comes to looking at the artifacts or any new artifacts that may be considered to be brought in to the museum?

Ms. MacLean: — We have a group of elders that our staff on a regular basis consult with in determining how and what is determined, the nature and the history of it as well as the use of it. We also have, I guess, an archaeologist who is a First Nations expert as a member of the staff. But certainly on a periodic basis we do a fair amount of consultation with a group of elders.

Ms. Draude: — Are the artifacts from the First Nations history, are they available for viewing right now?

Ms. MacLean: — It would depend on the particular artifact. In many cases, because of the environmental effects on them, they're housed in what we call a cocoon over at the annex. But periodically they'll be taken out, put on display. And through the First Nations gallery at the RSM there'll be a rotating collection of some of them, depending on the . . . The sacred artifacts are never put on display. It would be the others that are put on display.

Ms. Draude: — I believe it's Treaty 6 or Treaty 8 talks about a keeping house for artifacts. Is the museum considered a keeping house?

Ms. MacLean: — I'll ask Dawn to respond to that.

Ms. Martin: — A keeping house would generally be considered among First Nations people as a ceremonial, traditional place. And I don't think that anybody would consider the Royal Saskatchewan Museum a keeping house in that traditional way, although the articles are clearly kept there on behalf of First Nations people.

Ms. Draude: — I'm wondering, with the involvement of First

Nations now in the Act, if there's been any discussion on, and having what would be considered a place for First Nations artifacts in the future and involving part of the traditional . . . or the rights under the treaties to have a place to keep their artifacts, where it can be kept as the important part of our history.

Ms. MacLean: — As I understand it, I think that may evolve to that. At this point in time during the consultation and with the involvement of the First Nation elders, there has not been a discussion. But that does not preclude at any time First Nation leaders developing a keeping house and then working through a protocol.

Ms. Draude: — I also believe and understand that it would be a responsibility of the federal government to help in the costs of this. And I'm wondering if there's any ongoing discussions with them to ensure that the historical artifacts that belong to the First Nations are preserved in a way that they have a right to be.

Ms. MacLean: — The federal government has been involved on a regular basis and an ongoing basis in terms of the assistance in both repatriating artifacts and the care and preservation. It's a federal-provincial agreement that we have with them.

Ms. Draude: — Does the money go directly from the federal government to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, or does it go to the government and flow through to the museum?

Ms. MacLean: — It flows through to the museum. It's an agreement that money goes into the GRF [General Revenue Fund] and then through our budget, the GRF through to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

Ms. Draude: — Okay. This isn't the right place to ask, so I am going to be wondering how much money that does come from the federal government but there is a couple of other issues that I wanted to talk about with the museum.

I know that our museum has a great collection of rare books and that there is some concerns about how they're being kept and how we can ensure that they'll be there for generations to come. What work is being done on the books at this time?

Ms. MacLean: — I'm sorry, just to clarify . . .

Ms. Draude: — Is there any work being done or any spot available to ensure that the books that we have that are part of our history are going to be able to be maintained? I know that having them exposed to light and to air and to . . . will have an effect on them, and there are thoughts from some of the people that I've been dealing with that there is a concern that they are being able to be kept in a way that will preserve them. Is that being looked at as an important issue now in the museum?

Ms. MacLean: — That would be one of the aspects in terms of the care and preservation of our collections, certainly, as well as the role of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, working with them on the care and preservation of documents, books, historical documents.

Ms. Draude: — So are they kept at the museum or are they at the archives?

Ms. MacLean: — The books collection for the most part would be at the archives. The paper would be at the archives.

Ms. Draude: — I'm also aware that there are boxes and boxes of artifacts, not necessarily First Nations, but of Saskatchewan history that we have no place for. And can you tell me how many different localities within probably Regina, these boxes of artifacts are kept?

Ms. MacLean: — Three locations in Regina.

Ms. Draude: — So how are they kept track of? Who knows what is in what box?

Ms. MacLean: — The staff at the RSM has a collections policy for recording the collections and access to that collection.

Ms. Draude: — Is it a computer-generated record of artifacts that we have?

Ms. MacLean: — Yes it is.

Ms. Draude: — So is there a computer set-up from the museum to the different warehouses?

Ms. MacLean: — It is linked, yes.

Ms. Draude: — Okay. Thank you. I don't think I have any other questions on the Bill. I would like to state for the record that I am pleased that the museum has this Act, and that I'm especially pleased to see that we are dealing with the First Nations artifacts and that there is an involvement.

It's important that our history is preserved. Our province is only 100 years old. And too many times we look at something that's 100 years old and think it's old, and it's really just a beginning. So I appreciate the work that's being done in this area.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to follow some of the questions that my colleague initiated on this particular piece of legislation. Since the Royal Saskatchewan Museum has been around 101 years, I guess, why is it now, just now, that we're getting to an Act that represents the interests of the museum specifically? What engendered or drove this particular piece of legislation?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Well first of all, Madam Chair, I'd say what delayed it, or made it seem perhaps unnecessary and not in the top of mind of legislators for the last 100 years, is that the museum was operating without the Act and operating ably without the legislation.

Two issues — and the officials may want to add more — but I believe two issues have brought this to the fore. One is the centennial and the desire to have what is a provincial institution actually be a provincial institution that is recognized in legislation as a branch of the Government of Saskatchewan. Secondly, are the growing sensitivities around the treatment of

sacred and culturally sensitive material and the need to have an appropriate policy and a legislative framework for that policy around the use of that material and those objects. So I believe that that's what has engendered in the modern era the need for a more formal recognition of the museum and its role in the culture of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Elhard: — When I was a boy I used to attend the museum. It was a brand new facility at the time. And I happened to be back there last night for an event and noticed that it's showing the signs of wear and tear. And I don't know if the minister or the officials today want to address that, but it's time for a facelift there. Can you give us an indication as to whether or not there are plans to achieve that, not as a result of the Bill but . . .

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Madam Chair, I will allow Ms. MacLean to answer the question, but I can't help but note that some of the questions that have come from the opposition members on the Bill have little to do with the Bill and more to do with estimates.

And I can't help but wonder if the questioning on this rather straightforward piece of legislation doesn't have more to do with not holding a vote on the next piece of legislation, the status of the artist legislation, than actually obtaining information on this Bill. That said, I'll allow Ms. MacLean to answer Mr. Elhard's question.

Ms. MacLean: — The department has been working with Saskatchewan Property Management over the last couple of years on a business plan as well as a programmatic overview for a capital and renovation project, and we're hoping to complete some work on that planning in the 2007-08 fiscal year.

The Chair: — Ms. Draude.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Madam Chair. To the minister: that said, the official opposition is concerned about every Bill that's brought forward. There hasn't been one piece of legislation that's come into the House this session we haven't asked questions on. If the minister would like to believe that we're not going to ask questions on this Bill or any other one so we can hold up another piece of legislation, that's not right. We're doing due diligence on every piece of legislation. And I'm sure that you'll learn that when you talk about the next Bill that we are bringing forward.

It is important that we know about the legislation. The people in the province have a right to know. And if the minister wants to make those kind of statements, that's fine. That's the kind of discussion we'll have in the House right now. But what we want to do is understand what's going on in this Bill and every piece of legislation that comes into the House.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — And, Madam Chair, I look forward to the questions on the Bill therefore.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Minister, I will direct my next question specifically to the Bill. Section 3, "**Continuation of branch, director.**" I notice that section 3(1) it says, "The branch of the department called the Royal Saskatchewan Museum is

continued." I think it's important to know why it is that it's necessary to have the Royal Saskatchewan Museum identified as a branch of the department. Why was that designation important?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Madam Chair, I think the short answer is that it's a public institution. And the alternative might have been a Treasury Board Crown, but this was considered to be more appropriate.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Minister, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology was once considered a branch of the Department of Post-Secondary Education or advanced learning. It has since moved to a different relationship with the department. If the Royal Saskatchewan Museum is to reach its full potential, it might be better served as a more independent agency as opposed to being a branch. Has this been contemplated?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — No, this is a reflection of the historical relationship of the museum to the province.

Mr. Elhard: — Would the future of the RSM be enhanced by greater independence?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Madam Chair, there's no reason to believe the future of the museum would be impeded in any way by being a branch of government.

Mr. Elhard: — The issue of independence, I think, goes to the heart of how much value and/or trust we have in the institution and in the people who lead the institution. And it would suggest to me that the designation of this RSM as a branch of the department is an attempt to kind of keep the facility and the people who work there on a short leash. And the reason I'm going to suggest that, Mr. Minister, is that if you go to subclause (2), it says that, "The minister shall designate an employee of the department as the Director of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum."

That clause, in itself, suggests to me that independence or any attempt at expanding the independence of the museum is tempered by the reality that the director has to be an employee of the department.

I would think that if you look at museums located around the world and across this country that the best, the best museums in the country would probably not be fettered by that kind of a relationship with a department.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — We note Mr. Elhard's comments. I await his question.

Mr. Elhard: — Why is it necessary that the director of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum be an employee of the department?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — The Bill is in almost all respects, except for the important matters in respect to treatment of culturally sensitive objects, codifying the current relationship that the institution has with the province, a relationship that works fairly well. There are lots of models for museums in the country. But museums that may seem more independent in their

structure, in the relationship, in their legislative framework require a great deal of public support. And this is a public institution, and to date I don't think there's been any concern about its — overall — its service to the people of Saskatchewan.

The particular issues of treating Saskatchewan cultures with an equal amount and a high amount of respect is being addressed. And that's certainly not being impeded by the structure of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Minister, in effect this clause limits the capability and the capacity of finding a director that might serve the institution very well, assuming that someone new may not want to be an employee of the department.

I guess the problem I see here is that if there's a changing of the guard there, and there is from time to time that necessity, the next best person to take on the role of director might in fact not see himself as wanting to be an employee of the department. And I don't know that we would want to limit the quality of candidates by that particular specific requirement.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Well, Madam Chair, it's a speculative question. And I suppose one answer to it is if somebody doesn't want a job, they're not going to take the job. But I guess the subtext of the question is that it's not desirable to work for the province of Saskatchewan, and I think there's literally thousands of people who don't share that view.

Mr. Elhard: — Would you want to rule out the best possible candidate for the job on the basis of this requirement?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — And again the subtext of the question is, if the best possible person for the job wouldn't want to work for the province of Saskatchewan. And again I think there's thousands of people who don't share that view.

Mr. Elhard: — Well what if you had the best possible candidate for the job who wouldn't be restricted by the salary limitations of the civil service?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Well and again I say whatever model the Royal Saskatchewan Museum used for its governance and structure, it would require a great deal of public support. And you know, to suggest that somehow the museum could, under a different model, be in a position to pay a director a significantly greater amount of money, I think is pretty speculative.

Mr. Elhard: — Well I don't think its speculative at all, Mr. Minister. I think that that's probably the reality. And I think that if we really want to see the museum grow and prosper and provide the quality of exhibits and the kind of programming that we want to see in the province, we don't want to unnecessarily limit its capacity. And I think this is one of the clauses that might, might do that.

I'm not so sure that being designated as a branch of the department is necessarily helpful either. The minister doesn't seem willing or interested in entertaining any other type of arrangement. But to require the director of the RSM to be an employee of the department, I think is limiting to some extent, and it's an unnecessary limitation.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Madam Chair, for 100 years the province has not had difficulty recruiting highly qualified individuals, including people who work for the Royal Ontario Museum. And that's why I consider Mr. Elhard's question to be speculative. It doesn't reflect the history of the institution.

Mr. Elhard: — You know, if we just keep doing things because we've always done them . . . You know, if we keep doing the same thing over and over we're going to keep getting the same kinds of experiences going forward. And I don't think that we have necessarily been handicapped in the past by this arrangement, but it certainly doesn't provide the greatest latitude for going forward.

And I would think that it would be in the interests of the RSM and even the ministry to explore ways in which we can expand and enlarge our vision and look at a wider scope of means to undertake these kinds of changes. I'm just concerned that this particular limitation might be too restrictive and too onerous for the future and would be unnecessarily so. With some small amendment or some different language we could have achieved a broader context for the appointment of a director for the RSM, and whether or not he wanted to be — he or she — wanted to be an employee of the department, as such, would have been negotiable. But nevertheless, we're going to move on.

I think I have some questions under section 5. When I look at subsection (d) of clause 2, it talks about the role of the director is to "assume . . . responsibility for the protection and preservation of the paleontological and archaeological objects under the ownership of the Crown in right of Saskatchewan."

I would like the minister and/or the officials to assure me that this will not negatively affect the T.rex Centre in the community of Eastend. As they are well aware, I am concerned about the ongoing role the T.rex Centre plays in this particular area of endeavour, and I need to know that that community facility and similar facilities . . . Although they may be less well endowed with capacity in terms of the work that the T.rex Centre does, many other facilities around the province do have on display paleontological artifacts and would want to be assured that they're not going to be put at risk of losing those artifacts.

Ms. MacLean: — Madam Chair, I'll respond to that. That's certainly not the effect that . . . We're not anticipating there'll be any change in the relationship with the T.rex Centre, and the productive working relationship we have at this point in time will continue.

Mr. Elhard: — The responsibility for stewardship does not extend to bringing the artifacts into Regina and controlling them here? Is that what you're saying? Or displaying them here? It would not?

Ms. MacLean: — Well subject to The Heritage Property Act, responsibility and ownership is that of the Crown. The working relationship we have with T.rex is respecting within that construct the care and maintenance of that and the working relationship we have, understanding that T.rex Centre has a very important role to play in the display and education of the paleontological finds of that area of the province.

Mr. Elhard: — I will assume that your assurance is adequate for the time being, and I have no further questions.

The Chair: — Ms. Crofford.

Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Looking at the time and considering the fact that the next Bill, which is more complex, may require more discussion, I would like to move that the committee sit until we're done.

The Chair: — Discussion?

Ms. Morin: — I'll second that motion.

The Chair: — Do you have a comment?

Mr. Elhard: — I'll speak to the motion.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — In the absence of any agreement to the contrary, we have a 5 o'clock deadline tonight, and it is our position that the 5 o'clock deadline ought to be met.

The Chair: — Ms. Crofford.

Ms. Crofford: — Without breaching the confidentiality of in camera discussions, it was my understanding that we had agreed that this Bill would go forward, and it is my desire that it do so.

The Chair: — Ms. Morin.

Ms. Morin: — There are others of us that have engagements this evening, including a fundraiser that I've organized for myself that I'm willing to forfeit in terms of seeing that the work is done in this committee instead.

The Chair: — Ms. Draude.

Ms. Draude: — Our discussions around this Bill from the very beginning is to ensure that everybody has a voice. Two weeks ago this Bill was introduced in the legislature. At that time and only at that time did everyone in the province get a chance to see it. In the last two days we've started to get phone calls and emails and letters and visits from many people who were not aware of this Bill. There is no way that as an opposition we can do our job if due diligence has not been done with consultation.

We have worked with a government for a number of years who feel quite strongly that it's okay to push through any piece of legislation they want to, without consultation. Ask the First Nations about that. And we are going to make sure that the voice of the people are heard. This Bill is going to be heard by everybody. There's going to be a chance for people to have a voice. The job, this government, this minister, and the minister of four hours ago also wanted to send the message that we don't care about artists. We care very much about them. We care about their livelihood and we want to make sure that they can stay in this province. And we can't do it by just looking at one side of the equation.

If there's a Bill that comes forward that's beneficial to the artist

and the engagers have not seen it, it is not going to make for a fair, balanced, level playing field. In order for this to work there has to be an understanding and a mutual respect. There's no respect if only one side of the parties involved have seen it. And our goal is to make sure that we can go forward in a province where people are working together hand in hand. That does not mean putting a divide between the people who supply the art and the people who purchase the art.

There is a 5 o'clock deadline and if . . . The government has had 16 years, I believe, to bring forward this Bill. They've had since last November when The Status of the Artist Act, Bill 40, was brought forward. They've had an opportunity to discuss it whatever time they wanted to. It was entered into discussions two weeks ago and now we're starting to get a response. It's our obligation and our duty and our responsibility and our desire to make sure everybody has a voice.

The Chair: — Ms. Crofford.

Ms. Crofford: — I will just conclude by saying that we had a open public process that was advertised, that any of these people who have all of a sudden found out that they have concerns could have come to. I think due process has been served. And I don't think you're required, even in the public interest, to talk about something forever when there was an advertised process that people could have attended. So I'll leave it at that, and leave you with the thought that we are prepared to stay to finish the work on the Bill.

The Chair: — Ms. Morin.

Ms. Morin: — I just also wanted to add that we have been hearing from all sides of the debate. We've had 200 . . . Over 200 invitations were sent out to both the engagers and the artists' associations. That means both sides of the debate had the ability to make presentations to the committee in terms of public hearings. We had people that made presentations. We had some people that did . . . decided not to make presentations. But everyone had the same opportunity. We also invited other groups to come to present to us in camera and we were able to get those presentations from the other side of the equation that the opposition had concerns with. So the voices have been heard.

And I'm with the members that feel that we shouldn't be delaying this Bill any further. And quite frankly I have to say that given that the hour is 20 minutes after 4 and that there was two hours scheduled for today, and we knew that the museum Act was a Bill, unfortunately, that there was a whole bunch of questions asked about that didn't even have any reference to the Bill, that this seems like nothing more than a stall tactic by the opposition in terms of not wanting to have this Bill go forward.

The Chair: — Ms. Draude.

Ms. Draude: — What the government members would like to have people believe doesn't necessarily relate to what the facts of the matter are. I don't think, unless you have in front of you five or six pieces of paper from individuals who will in their livelihood are making their living by employing artists or the products from artists, then you aren't hearing everything.

The consultation process that has to be done in this province to ensure that everybody has a voice has to be done. It can't be done within two weeks. There was letters sent out, and I know for sure . . . And one of the people that are sitting in this room at this moment has a business in this province. She . . . This business had never heard about it. And if that's good enough to just slip it through so a few people can hear about it, if that's the way this government wants to operate, that's fine. But in opposition, we're not doing that. We had . . . There is rules of this legislature made to ensure that we, everybody has a voice, and that's what I'm here for.

The Chair: — Mr. Iwanchuk.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Yes, we had heard from a number of groups, and I believe that the workings of the committee are such that what you're having us believe is that any time the committee does its work . . . We sent out . . . advertised. No one raised any objections to the advertisements that were posted so that all could see. We're hearing now that somehow people didn't hear about it. I wish that people would have raised those kind of objections earlier so that we could have dealt with that.

We spent considerable time raising people's expectations that if they came before us in a process that we set out, that we agreed to, that they would be heard. It's very unfortunate that at this late hour that we hear somehow that we're not listening to the people of this province. I thought we had. I thought we had been moving along and doing that work, and we have now raised expectations of people who might consider now, when is a process really over. I wanted to get that for the record, and thank you very much.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — This is an imperfect process. And I think that members of the committee will understand that we're all feeling our way around this. That rules are in place, and rules have been adjusted or challenged, and we have done things that weren't contemplated when the committee structure was set up.

And it's true that we did hold public hearings and that 200 invitations were sent out to a variety of groups and organizations. And we held public hearings. There's no doubt about that. Those public hearings were beneficial. And we heard pretty clearly from some very determined individuals and organizations who felt strongly about the issue.

But this is important legislation. And what I find interesting is that the people who we're hearing from in the last 24 hours are all very important players in the field of artist endeavour, who hadn't heard about this until either the newspaper story showed up just recently or they heard it by word of mouth. And if some important and key players of the artistic community are keenly desirous of providing their input to this process now at this later date, I don't know that, I don't know that it would be ill advised of the committee to say, we'll provide a further opportunity for this discussion.

I don't know that any good public policy purpose is served by stifling debate or ending it prematurely. And in this particular instance, as my colleague indicated, the government of the day has had the last 16 years to move this particular legislation

forward. It chose a process that this committee tried to accommodate. When we were charged with the task and couldn't come to grips with what the actual request was and so forth, we asked the minister to bring forward legislation.

The new legislation, Bill 68, came to us not even two weeks ago. Bill 40 is withdrawn. Bill 68 is new. It's fairly extensive. It's 54, 55 pages — I'm sorry — clauses long, and it is going to have an impact on the arts community for good and/or not so good.

And I really don't think that there's any real purpose served in stifling debate, especially when it's the artistic community or part of the artistic community itself that wants to come to this committee and give us their views on how this legislation, as it's written now, will impact them. We don't have to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but I think we have to give the baby full opportunity to take advantage of the bathwater. That's a terrible analogy.

But the point is that if we listen to another set of representations by some of these artistic groups and individual artists, there's no shame in doing that. There's no problem with doing that. And it would probably be in the best interests of the Bill.

And you know, this committee is free to sit intersessionally . We can sit down some afternoon after the House rises tomorrow. We can meet at some point and hear them out and see how they feel, how they feel this particular legislation is going to impact them. What would be wrong with doing that? I don't think that there is a necessity to push this through today since we've waited 16 years to see it. And I think that it would be just good common sense and a welcome reprieve from the partisan dynamics around this piece of legislation to allow that to happen.

The Chair: — Any further comments? Ms. Draude.

Ms. Draude: — I think there are two other points that should be put on to record. First of all I would think that as a government to know that there are people who have concerns, I would think you'd want to know what they were. I would think that you would have concerns. You'd really be curious to know what concerns people have. And I would think that there should be time you'd want to make sure you could address them. Maybe they are concerns that can be addressed easily. But maybe they aren't, and it could impact the economy as well the lives of artists.

And the second thing I think it's important to put on the record, to note, is that this Act is going to come into effect on proclamation. It's not on assent. That means that we're going to be waiting for regulations to be made, and some of the people I've spoken to said, what's in the regulations? We don't know that. We've discussed before that a lot of times the real details, the importance that's happening in a Bill happens in the regulations.

I would think that to ensure that a Bill that's first in Canada outside of the province of Quebec, if it's to be seen as a model, we would want to make sure it was done right. I would hope that there would be a desire by government to look at all sides of it to ensure that the regulations are something that will

enhance the Bill and not frustrate people.

It wasn't that many years ago we lived through the problem with regulations meaning that a babysitter had to be paid minimum wage. That happened in regulations, and it took time to do some changes. There are important things that have to be done here. It's not just . . . For me it's not a political Act. It's not something that's done in the dying hours of a government to appease somebody.

This is something that's going to be making a difference in our province, and I would sincerely hope it does. So I would respectfully request that people here in the province have a chance to voice their opinion.

The Chair: — Ms. Morin.

Ms. Morin: — Well first of all, I don't see this is something that's done in the dying hours of government, so we might as well just clear that air up. And second of all, there have been plenty of Bills that have been passed without the regulations having been dealt with already. Matter of fact we just passed one today, and I don't know if you noticed that happen in the House or not.

But anyways having said that, the government members of this committee no longer wish to take up any more time off the clock, and so therefore we're finished with our comments, Madam Chair.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Madam Chair. I won't be lengthy on this comment. First of all, I think that the artists themselves and their representatives have suggested a concern about what the Bill will contain as a result of regulations. So I think that we would agree that it's important to see regulations. I don't know that that's going to be accomplished in the next little while. But if it isn't, this Bill is not necessarily dead as a result of this exercise or this delay.

The House leaders had an agreement this year that saw a certain number of Bills deemed as specified Bills that had to be passed by the end of the session. That agreement has been kept.

This piece of legislation was not part of the specified group of Bills, and if we do not see it through to completion this afternoon, that doesn't mean the Bill's dead. It means that the Bill is specified for the fall sitting. It becomes part of the specified package for the fall sitting. And I don't think that it would be honest or fair to suggest to anybody that because we want to hear the opinions of an additional group of people who have a lot at stake in this particular legislation that by doing so we would somehow be killing this particular piece of legislation.

The agreement is pretty clear that any Bills that are held over can be specified by the House leaders for inclusion in the fall sitting. And the Bill picks up right where it left off. So I don't know that . . . You know, if there's a delay here, there's no question about that. But I don't think that people should necessarily despair over this.

The Chair: — Well I don't see too many happy faces in the room. But we do have a motion on the floor to extend the clock, which takes precedence over our going back to the Royal Museum Act. So unless there's anymore comments on the motion, we have a motion to extend the clock past 5 o'clock although . . .

Mr. Elhard: — Madam Chair, we have an agreement that supersedes the committee in that respect, and the agreement says the committee is ended at five.

The Chair: — I know. There's a process though that you can ask to extend the clock by vote which has always been. So that's what's on the floor right now, a motion that's in order. So it's been seconded and moved, and we now have to vote on it. All in favour of that motion? Opposed? Milt, you and Ms. Draude can't both vote. Sorry . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Pardon? Yes, Ms. Draude is chitting in for you, so we record her vote then, and the Chair votes in favour with the government side. So that motion is carried that we can extend the clock.

Now what we have before us is still the Royal Museum Act which there were no further questions. So if I still see none, we'll move to the clause-by-clause of that Bill which is the short title, the Royal Museum Act. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 8 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act. Could I have a member move that we report this Act without amendment? Ms. Morin?

Ms. Morin: — I so move.

The Chair: — Agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — And that's carried.

Bill No. 68 — The Status of the Artist Act, 2007

Clause 1

The Chair: — Now we have the minister up for consideration of Bill 68, the status of the artist and professional relations between artists and engagers Act. The short title is, The Status of the Artist Act, 2007. The minister has any new officials or comments to make at the opening of this.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — An opening statement, Madam Chair. I noted that Mr. Elhard referred to artistic groups or artistic organizations who wanted to see this Bill delayed, but he didn't name any, and I wonder if in the next little while he might take the opportunity to do that.

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to ensuring artists can build and maintain viable careers in Saskatchewan. A thriving arts community is essential to the quality of life in Saskatchewan. This legislation is only one element of the government's response to identified needs in the arts community.

The legislative proposals were developed as a result of thorough consultation with members of the arts community and the public at large. Artists are twice as likely to have a post-secondary credential as the general population but likely to earn about 60 per cent as much. The legislation features four main areas: recognition of artists, mandatory contracts, professional relations, and the repeal of The Status of the Artist Act.

The mandatory contract area will require engagers to enter into written contracts including specified elements with professional artists. Improved contracting will provide a measure of protection to artists particularly those who are just beginning.

The model professional relations was designed to give artists choice as to when and under what circumstances collective bargaining is to be engaged in. It is also designed so as not to disrupt existing practices of collective bargaining. By supporting artists, Saskatchewan will become a more attractive place for business, and we will be better able to attract and retain a skilled workforce.

The proposed supports will strengthen the arts sector, bringing increased diversity and vibrancy to our province's quality of life. Research evidence has shown that there's a link between the quality and the strength of the arts and the attractiveness of a community to skilled workers, particularly in knowledge sectors.

Bill 68 features four main areas: recognition of artists, mandatory contracts, professional relations, and the repeal of The Status of the Artist Act. The Bill features broad policy statements around the value of the arts and the social and economic and educational contributions made by artists. Engagers will be required to enter into written contracts with professional artists. Regulations will require certain elements such as the transfer of intellectual property rights to be included in each contract. A similar requirement is included in a Quebec statute.

The Bill establishes a system of professional relations for the negotiation of scale agreements between artists and engagers in Saskatchewan. The proposed system of professional relations is similar to the federal model in The Status of the Artist Act with the following important distinctions. The proposal establishes the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board as the body responsible for administering the Act.

An artists' association applying to the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board to represent a sector for the purpose of negotiating scale agreements must provide written proof of support from the majority of its members who are professional artists living in Saskatchewan. Artists are given the opportunity to choose when and under what circumstances their associations will be authorized to act as their bargaining agents.

Registered artists' associations negotiate scale agreements for a sector with representative engagers' associations, and where a national, voluntary scale agreement exists between two parties who subsequently register or certify under this Act, the scale agreement will be continued and the proposal provides for first-agreement arbitration.

The Chair: — Ms. Draude.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am absolutely amazed that a government is quite willing to put forward a Bill and not hear everybody in the province. That absolutely amazes me. So for the next few minutes I'm going to put on record some of the words that we've heard in the last little while — not my words; not my words or the official opposition words — the words of the people who are affected by this Bill in this province. They have questions to ask and they have a right to have answers. That's what government is supposed to be about. This may come as a shock, but they are supposed to be able to get answers from their government.

I'm going to start with a letter, an email that we received from Cindy Tash, and I'm sure that the people in this room will have heard of Cindy. She's a watercolour artist. She was a teacher. She writes:

. . . I went over what we considered the relevant portions of the Bill and have the following collective comments or questions:

There are many "artists" in a variety of media in our society. The question remains what constitutes being an artist and in the case of this legislation a 'professional artist'. Does anyone deserve being considered a professional artist by simply . . . [trying to fit] into the very broad categories listed in the legislation.

The determination of an artist's worth and talent should be judged by the acceptance of the artist's work by the society in which he/she exhibits his/her work. Far too many people masquerade as artists and have no appeal to the members of their society. Do these individuals have a right to be considered professional artists?

If an artist's work is 'valued', it will be 'purchased' by a member of one's society. If an artist's work is not valued, perhaps that individual should . . . [be doing something else.]

It has not been an easy road and it has taken a great deal of work like any small business demands. We produce and [we] sell artwork to people around the world. We've never asked for a penny from anyone to parlay artistic talent into a viable and profitable enterprise. We have not sought a safety net larger than any [of the] other small business enjoys and we have not heard of this legislation until yesterday.

ps. I am a member of the two professional artist associations in the province. Their interests in securing grant money or their . . . [personality] battles for recognition have never interested me. Quite probably this proposed legislation was part of . . . [a] newsletters [and] I

must have missed it.

And I'm quoting from a letter. And I know that this artist's name is known because this artist is a successful artist. I have a letter from Henry Ripplinger, Ripplinger Gallery and Picture Framing.

I own and operate an art gallery here in Regina (Ripplinger Gallery and Picture Framing) and purchase art to sell through my business.

It was only in the past couple of days that I learned that the government is in the processing of passing a bill entitled "The Status of the Artist Act." The intent of the legislation is complex to say the least. The act includes wording such as, "collective bargaining", "employer association" and "Labour Relations Board" that I believe need further explanation before a complete understanding of the impact of this bill upon my business can occur.

I am writing to ask that your committee takes the time to speak with the so-called "engagers", as well as artists before this bill is passed. This is crucial if the provincial government surely wants the process to work in a respectful manner.

I have a word from Maurice (Moe) Neault from the Saskatoon livestock and exhibition association. His opening statement to me was stakeholders should all be informed. He stated that the exhibition association is under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture and that the association was not informed in any other way. The Minister of Agriculture had the responsibility to inform the association.

The association hires entertainers. They hire clowns and hypnotists and singers and dancers, and he has questions about how this will be impacted. Everyone who hires an artist needs clarification of the Bill. The board member is also concerned about regulations. They are supposed to pass the Bill and wait for regulations, and we're supposed to trust them to know of how to best serve artists and engagers.

I also spoke to the owners and operators of the Applause! theatre. They are unique in our province. They have been in business for 17 years; 95 per cent of their employees are Saskatchewan residents. There're usually young Saskatchewan residents, high school students and university students, and they love acting. They build part of their portfolio at the theatre. In fact Darren Lee, who now stars in Vegas, has had his beginning in the Applause! theatre.

The Bill brought forward by government causes concerns for this family-owned business because they have never been consulted and don't understand part of it. They don't understand how it may impact their business. They had no knowledge of this Bill until two days ago. They are concerned about how this Bill may affect them.

They know that the wages paid to their employees is not a lot less than those in ACTRA [Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists] and Equity. But their question is now will that mean they will have to pay increased rates for stage managers, costume designers, light and sound people? In

fact the question is, will they have to pay for separate directors and writers? No one has answered those questions for them.

They have questions because they have not been consulted. Two weeks and the government wants to pursue a Bill that will affect the whole arts community without input from everybody involved. The owners are afraid that the Bill will in fact have a negative effect on the lives of artists in our province.

I have a letter from the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, and it was written to the Premier of the province:

The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce is writing with respect to Bill 68 — The Status of the Artist Act, 2007, recently introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

This Bill will have a significant impact on Chamber members who operate bars, nightclubs, galleries, gift shops or sponsor community events. It is also apparent that the Bill will also impact the labour relations community. There is a potential for serious ramifications for Saskatchewan businesses and artists alike. Our members would appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation and [to] seek answers to questions regarding the purpose the bill seeks to address and [to] gain a fuller understanding for the intentions of your Government in proposing the legislation.

The Provincial Chamber was not consulted in this matter, and as a stakeholder representing the business community we ask that Bill 68 be held in abeyance until such time as full public consultations are undertaken.

Madam Chairperson, these are the kind of comments we're getting from people. And I think a lot of these questions can be answered simply. In fact I think that if there was an opportunity to sit down and talk with them, there would be an education process that would maybe mitigate so many of the fears that they would just plain go away. But when we have, in the two hours of time, say that this Bill has to go through, it causes fear through the whole community. It's not right, and it's not the type of thing that government should be doing.

The minister and the members on the government side have voted to extend the clock, and that's fine, because maybe in that time we can answer some questions. I believe I have 72 questions here right now, and I'm going to start asking them in a minute. I know my colleague, Mr. Elhard, wants to make a few statements as well.

But if this is the way the government wants to do it, I'll do my best to make sure that we can get the questions asked and answered. I don't know how long it's going to take, but I'll do my best to make sure that I do my job so that people of the province have a chance to have their questions answered.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — I just, before we actually get to the questions that my colleague has indicated she would like to put to the minister and the officials, some of the fears I guess that have come to our attention as a result of this legislation may or may not be well founded. But the question I guess becomes, why

would the government be interested in moving forward on a piece of legislation that without explanation, without input from people who may be affected very negatively or are worried they'd be affected negatively, why would the government want to push forward with the legislation?

There doesn't seem to be any need or necessity to do that. There isn't a time constraint that would require it. And in the interests of good public policy and meeting the needs of all of the artists and all of the engagers and the people who are going to be, you know, either paying the bill or being remunerated because of the legislation, it would seem that we would want to give full voice to those concerns. And as regrettable as it is, we didn't achieve that, apparently, as a result of the public hearings that were held previously.

And as I outlined in my earlier comments, if this Bill doesn't go forward today, it's not necessarily lost. And wouldn't it be preferable from the government's point of view that we end up with a better product or the best possible product than to push through a Bill that has flaws in it or that could do serious harm to some of the engagers that exist in the province?

You know, there are some engagers who have indicated to us that on reading this Bill their response is that this puts their business in jeopardy. Now I can't see how it would be in the interests of the artistic community in this province, or the government, to move forward on a piece of legislation that might have that impact.

I mean, well I hear the member from across the way saying that's simply not true. How do we know that's not true? We haven't talked to these people and I think that until we do — we've talked to some; we haven't talked to everybody — would it be in the interests of this piece of legislation or the artistic community or this government to see any engager put in financial difficulty? Is that the interests of good public policy? I don't know that we want to go there. And for the sake of, you know, a couple more afternoons of hearing from these people, we might come up with a lot better piece of legislation.

So having said that, I guess one of the questions that I would like to ask on this particular Bill is, we know that there was economic hardship studies produced by the artistic community. We know that there's a lot of financial data as it relates to the artistic community. But was any attention or any effort made to quantify the cost of this, the impact of this legislation on the engagers? Was any interest shown in finding out what the impact financially would be of this legislation?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — I again note that Mr. Elhard referred to artistic groups in the plural who wanted this legislation delayed. And I express the hope that he would advise the committee what artistic groups that he's referring to that want to see this legislation delayed.

There were consultations on this legislation and on the principles of bargaining in this legislation to which the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce — one of the correspondents with the government and evidently with the opposition — were invited to and declined to attend. So my question, I guess — an official might have a fuller question about the studies that were done — my question is we have a

group of people whose education exceeds the education in the average population, but whose income is almost half of the average population. No one's pretending that this legislation is going to, by itself, correct that discrepancy. But when we talk about hardships and costs, I think committee members and members of the public should keep those facts in mind.

And when we're talking about delaying the legislation, given that relatively new in this legislative process there were public discussions . . . that wouldn't have been the case a few years ago. There were public discussions about this legislation and the principles in this legislation. And this legislation was modified as a result of those consultations. If you have more consultations, do you have more modifications? When does the end come to this receding mirror before we can bring forward — what I think everybody's conceded by talking about how long that this has taken — long overdue legislation?

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — Do the officials have any response to the question I asked?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — No, there's no particular study done on the costs. I mean these are, all these scale agreements are subject to negotiation. So it would be a speculative question. Negotiations would have to take place before the scales are set, and the scales of course would be a minimum.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Madam Chair. The minister refers to the educational standing of artists as an average and the income of artists as an average being significantly lower than the rest of the workforce. Nobody disputes that. You know, one of the things that's been really beneficial about this exercise is how informative it's been. And I think that we have all learned a lot about the issues and the difficulties facing the community of artists in this province. So there's no dispute on that front.

And the minister by his own words. . . And we've heard this previously from the former minister and other officials from the department and even individuals in the community of artists in this province, that they don't see this as a panacea. They don't see it as being the one silver bullet to solving the financial issues facing provincial artists. There are lots of things that could probably do a lot more for the artistic community.

There are two items in this particular piece of legislation that ought to be moved on, and I don't know why that, you know, more effort and more attention hasn't been made to undertake these two areas prior to this particular Bill. One of them of course is the Crown being bound by the legislation, which is really ironic, Mr. Minister. You know, we've had this kind of language before, and Executive Council chose to ignore it.

You know, we had representation here from the professional photographers, and they are embittered by the treatment they have received at the hands of your government. I just can't quite believe the gall of a government that would now bring a Bill forward that says the Crown will be bound by this legislation when it hasn't found fit to be bound, either morally or legally, by just proper behaviour previously.

Now if the minister and his government is really serious about

benefiting artists, why didn't they do something about that Crown or executive government decision to steal the intellectual property of the photographers in this province? Why didn't they act on that? Where was the government's moral outrage when they were stealing the intellectual property of photographers in this province by fiat? Why is it that the government would insist on moving forward with a piece of legislation that is in some respects flawed at this point, when it had within its grasp perfectly acceptable means of affecting the financial wherewithal of the artistic community and chose not to do it?

Why is it that this legislation suddenly introduces the concept of a written contract? Why wasn't that done ten years ago? You can't sell a car in this province without a written contract. How can you take intellectual property of this valued area or this valued group of people in our province and allow them to flounder without the obligations of a written contract? Why wasn't that seen as important or a priority by this government in the past 16 years?

Mr. Minister, there is so much that could have been done and ought to have been done by your government to the benefit of the artistic community in the recent past. And this, by everybody's admission, is not the panacea. It is not the silver bullet. It will not make substantial difference. Let's get it right so that it does make substantial difference in the lives and the income of the artistic members of this province.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Madam Chair, the Crown is bound by the Act . . . [inaudible] . . . Bill 68. Matter of fact Bill 40, the predecessor, had the same provision. The Crown is bound by the Act. It's a curious argument to make that we will delay this legislation, perhaps to the fall, perhaps longer, but certainly delay it so that it's not passed this spring because the legislation contains provisions which the opposition member argues stridently should exist in the province and won't exist if the legislation's not passed. It's a very curious argument, Madam Chair.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — Madam Chair, I want to direct my question to the minister again. The previous legislation did in fact require the Crown to attend to the intellectual property provisions of artists, and Executive Council chose to ignore that. And we've had witness to that very fact and the impact it has had on the professional photography groups in this province.

And in fact I was sickened by the testimony we heard from one individual who in fact had to virtually give up the very form of artistic expression he loved or had to consider taking up residence in another province because he could not get work with the Government of Saskatchewan. He was compelled before he was even eligible to provide artistic work for the province and for all government agencies to give up his rights to intellectual property.

How does the minister square the actual activities and views and exercises of his government with the goals that he's talking about here today, this particular piece of legislation improving the financial wherewithal of artists?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Well, Madam Chair, when procuring intellectual property in creative material or ads or photocopy, photography, government notifies all suppliers, not just photographers, that the terms of procurement are full buyout. And there's an exception that suppliers . . . Or there's an expectation that the suppliers will price accordingly, maybe price differently if it was not a full buyout.

Nobody's asked to waive their intellectual property rights by the government. And prior to placement on the government procurement list, they are asked to sign a document acknowledging the nature of the government procurement.

Now the written contract that Mr. Elhard was referring to earlier as being desirable, photographers are treated no differently than other suppliers of creative goods and services to government. And the department will continue to work with the government procurement officials to ensure that both the letter and the intent of the status of the artist initiative are preserved.

The Chair: — Mr. Toth.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Minister, and to your officials, regarding Bill 68 that's set before us . . . and my colleagues have laid out a number of some arguments in regards to the legislation where it currently exists. I know I've listened with interest at some of the arguments that were presented by government members and their move, if you will, to stifle debate and the fact that normal process would see a piece of legislation immediately move forward when we know it does take time, when there's a normal process to follow and in fact to ensure that everyone is heard.

And, Mr. Minister, you're right, and the members are right; the members of this committee did meet with a lot of artists. I know that the Clerk sent out a lot of requests that had gone out to a number of people inviting them to come and make presentations. But I'm not exactly sure that most people understood exactly what was being required, or shouldn't say be required, but being asked of them in making presentations.

I might add as well that I believe Minister Hagel, in all the work he'd done over the past number of years in addressing the rules, addressing changes, the establishment of committees and how committees would be able to function or not function, had gone a long ways. And Minister Hagel tried to accommodate and in some ways actually open up the door for what we hope will be a process of consultation down the road.

And Minister Hagel was the first one to actually invite a House committee to hold public hearings. Minister Hagel also indicated to the committee that he understood after the process period of time that that process takes a while and that it's not all . . . may not be totally perfect, but he was hoping that we could certainly build on where we've been and where the committee has been. And for that I want to compliment Mr. Hagel for having taken that initiative.

And when Mr. Hagel last appeared at the committee, he indicated that he was going to withdraw Bill No. 40 which was a fairly simple Bill and yet there was a lot of trying to read between the lines exactly what it contained. And he said he would be bringing forward a new Bill, which is now Bill 68,

recognizing that the Bill would be a lot more far-reaching, would be a lot more extensive.

And at the time my colleagues and I had indicated we had some concerns with some of the issues, but we certainly supported artists and the right of artists to be able to not only portray their artistic ability in whatever form, but also to receive appropriate remuneration for their art in view of the time and effort they put into it.

We also recognize the fact that for many artists they do face very low incomes, and we've also, as we heard from a number of the organizations and groups, that there have been periods where artists have done engagements and engagers haven't been faithful and living up to the agreement, word-of-mouth agreements that had been arrived at, and that should be a concern to everyone.

This province has been built by people who lived by agreements, word-of-mouth agreements and a hand shake. And unfortunately as we've moved forward, we don't necessarily have that to live by these days.

And recognizing the complexity of the Bill and the fact that I believe since the Bill was introduced . . . And the normal process is until the Bill is introduced . . . We can go around and we can say, well the government's proposing to come forward with legislation, and we think that this is what it might be. That would not be appropriate for us to try and put words in someone's mouth about what that Bill might contain until we see it.

And so the normal procedure is for a Bill to come forward, and then as members, once it's had first reading, members of the Assembly can invite others who have an interest to get back to them in regards to their thoughts and views to ensure that when a Bill finally receives final assent, that it has, while it may not have total agreement, that is has general agreement and the members can feel assured that the Bill has addressed all the issues that arise from that piece of legislation.

And I think in this piece of legislation, while there are areas we certainly can agree with, there are some areas we still have some concerns with. And as my colleagues have already indicated, as people have now been getting a bit of, having the opportunity to look at the legislation, there are concerns being brought to our attention that I feel it's certainly necessary for . . . and it should be the responsibility of this committee to ensure that everyone's, that we get all the, that all the questions that would be raised are answered.

And I'll acknowledge this fact as well, Mr. Minister, that on short notice you have been asked to try and stickhandle the legislation today and the debate in the Assembly. So we're trying . . . In trying to get some of the questions answered, the questions that will be coming forward, we understand you may not be totally up to date on all the questions and the purpose of the Bill.

And so it would seem to me that we need to move forward and get some answers to many of the questions that have been raised and brought to our attention. And I think that it's only appropriate that we have the time to do that.

The Chair: — Ms. Crofford.

Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Madam Chair. The intent of the motion was to enable us to complete the work. And if in fact we are not able to complete the work — which I hear the wish is to proceed with more discussion — I would move that this committee now adjourn.

The Chair: — All in favour? Opposed? Seeing none, the committee is adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 17:07.]