



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS
2004**

Mr. Kevin Yates, Chair
Regina Dewdney

Mr. Allan Kerpan, Deputy Chair
Carrot River Valley

Mr. Graham Addley
Saskatoon Sutherland

Mr. Greg Brkich
Arm River-Watrous

Ms. Doreen Eagles
Estevan

Mr. Warren McCall
Regina Elphinstone-Centre

Ms. Sandra Morin
Regina Walsh Acres

The committee met at 10:00.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, members. I'd like to call the meeting to order. You have each been given a package which has each of the Bills and the explanatory notes of each of the Bills before us today. We are going to deal with three Bills this morning. And I'd just like to note that Mr. Iwanchuk will be substituting for Mr. Addley. And are we going to have substitution for Mr. Brkich? Okay, thank you.

**Bill No. 301 — The Bethany College
Amendment Act, 2004**

Clause 1

The Chair: — Well we'll proceed then with Bill No. 301, The Bethany College Amendment Act, 2004. Mr. Heppner, could you introduce . . . could you start preparing your officials and before we get there would the Law Clerk like to give us a report on the Bill, please.

Mr. Ring: — With respect to Bill 301, I've examined this private Bill. The committee members have a copy of the report in your materials. I've examined this private Bill and am pleased to report that it is drawn in accordance with the rules of the Legislative Assembly respecting private Bills. I am further pleased to report that in my opinion it contains no provisions that are at variance with the usual provisions of private Acts on similar subjects or that are deserving special attention. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. Ring. Mr. Heppner, would you like to introduce the witnesses or officials representing this Bill?

Mr. Heppner: — Good morning. We have with us this morning, Mr. Rick Schellenberg, who is the president I believe of what used to be Bethany Bible Institute . . . no, is now going to be Bethany Bible Institute. Sorry, I'm going to backtrack on that from institute to college.

And I've been fairly in touch with the school over the years. It's close to my home area, so I know the school fairly well and Rick as well. So it's good to have him with us this morning. Rick.

Mr. Schellenberg: — Thank you. Good morning.

The Chair: — All right. Would you like to make a presentation or do you have any presentation to give to us on the Bill itself?

Mr. Schellenberg: — If I could give you a brief history of the school and have a sense of who we are and why we're changing the name.

The Chair: — We appreciate that.

Mr. Schellenberg: — Great. Bethany Bible Institute began in 1927 as an outgrowth of the Mennonite Brethren churches in the Saskatchewan Valley area. Over the years there have been several schools from outside the area: the Herbert Bible School which was also a Mennonite Brethren school and the Alberta

Mennonite Brethren Bible Institute, who amalgamated with Bethany over the years in '58 and then again in the late '60s.

In '77 the college began an accreditation process with the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges based in the States. And our . . . it was a long time developing, partly because our constituency within the Mennonite faith does not always view higher education positively. And it took a while for us to be at the place where that was a good thing for all of our constituents.

In 1996 we were awarded candidate status with the accrediting association. And in 2000 we gained accrediting status, accredited status with that association. It was at that point that we introduced a four-year Bachelor of Arts program and began the process of thinking about a name change, and moving from institute — which might reflect more of a high school or technical approach to education — to college, where we feel we are producing graduates who will be able to minister within the church and within society in effective ways. And that's our mission.

The Chair: — Thank you very much. Do we have any questions from any of the members? All right. Seeing none, we will proceed to the Bill itself. Could I have a motion to adopt the preamble, please? Moved by Mr. McCall. Thanks very much. Any speakers on it? All those in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Okay, it's carried.

Preamble agreed to.

The Chair: — All right, we'll move on to consideration of the Bill clause by clause. Clause 1, short title. Is everybody agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 10 inclusive agreed to.

The Chair: — Therefore Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: An Act to amend The Bethany Bible Institute Incorporation Act, 1993.

Could I ask the member to move a motion to report the Bill without amendment. Mr. Heppner?

Mr. Heppner: — I'm not . . .

The Chair: — Oh, pardon me . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Okay. It's been moved that we report the Bill without amendment. Everyone in agreement. That's carried.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

The Chair: — All right. I'd like to thank you very much for your attendance this morning and, Mr. Heppner, thank you for your sponsorship of this Bill. This Bill will proceed tomorrow on private members' day to third reading in the legislature, and

will be moved forward tomorrow in the Assembly. Thank you very much.

Can I ask one of the members to move a motion please regarding the fees, the motion being that the fees respecting Bill 301 be remitted less the cost of printing? Can I have a mover for that? Moved by Mr. McCall. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, all those in favour? Opposed? That's carried.

Motion agreed to.

**Bill No. 302 — The Fountain of Life
School of Ministry Inc. Act**

Clause 1

The Chair: — All right. We will move to Bill No. 302, The Fountain of Life School of Ministry Inc. Act. Mr. Toth is the sponsor. Does the Law Clerk have any comments on this Bill?

Mr. Ring: — I have a report with respect to this Bill 302 as well. I have examined this private Bill and am pleased to report that it is drawn in accordance with the rules of the Legislative Assembly respecting private Bills. I am further pleased to report that in my opinion it contains no provisions that are at variance with the usual provisions of private Acts on similar subjects.

However I would note that Fountain of Life School of Ministry Inc. is not incorporated pursuant to a private Act.

The Chair: — Okay, thank you. Mr. Toth, would you like to introduce the officials or witnesses that came on behalf of the Fountain of Life School of Ministry?

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With us today we have Reverend James Regehr — I hope I've got that pronounced right — who is the president of the Fountain of Life School of Ministry, and Fraser Watson who is the registrar, who have come to join us today to make their presentation for this private Bill. So I'll turn it over to them. Thank you.

The Chair: — Would you like to make a presentation to the committee?

Mr. Regehr: — Yes, thank you very much. I have a PowerPoint here.

In the Hebrew:

(Mr. Regehr spoke for a time in Hebrew.) "For with you is the fountain of life." Psalm 36, verse 9.

On May 13, '97, Fountain of Life School of Ministry became incorporated as a private post-secondary institution for the vocational training of ministers of religion. From the very beginning, our college was non-traditional. We chose to adopt a vocational orientation and registered with Saskatchewan Learning as a private vocational school. Located in Prince Albert, our program is focused on training general religious ministry and counselling skills with a particular emphasis placed on the needs of the First Nations communities and people in our area.

For seven years of our operation, the vast majority of our graduating students have been First Nations people. Our students are typically non-traditional students. Some are married, some are single parents, some have previous criminal records, some have physical challenges, some have emotional wounds, and some lack significant formal education, but they all have a sense of calling and leading on their lives that cannot be ignored. Each one is eager to learn and demonstrates keen intellect and a powerful spirit that will impact positively many people.

Having quickly recognized the need to provide continued education, an academic fellowship was successfully negotiated with Biblical Life College & Seminary of Marshfield, Missouri, where our graduates are able to enter directly into BLCS's (Biblical Life College & Seminary) undergraduate degree program. Operating as a satellite campus of BLCS, we've been able to provide their undergraduate program locally for a fee. While meeting an immediate need, this arrangement is not a long-term solution.

On January 1, 2004, I was appointed the president of our college. I moved to Prince Albert with my family, from Manitoba, in order to assume my responsibilities there. I've got an undergraduate degree from Briercrest Bible College in Caronport, Saskatchewan; a graduate degree from North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and post-graduate degree from Cambridge Graduate School in Arkansas. It's a Ph.D. in Biblical studies.

In addition to my education, I hold Baptist ordination credentials and roughly 18 years of Christian ministry experience in a variety of contexts. Under my leadership and due to my credentials and supervision, our college has decided to petition our government for the power to confer academic degrees in theology.

Being able to confer degrees ourselves will enable us to keep Saskatchewan students in Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan dollars in Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan jobs in Saskatchewan. We believe that as we offer academic theological degrees, students from other provinces will be attracted to our college and thereby helping to strengthen the economy of our area.

Saskatchewan will also reap benefits from a higher level of educators that will be required to deliver our anticipated programs. But most significantly, we envision a bright future filled with hope and purpose for many peoples, but especially for Saskatchewan First Nations. Already several students enrolled in our college are being fully sponsored by their own First Nation bands. First Nation bands are already benefiting from the impact our graduates are making on a personal level in their communities.

We are a Fountain of Life School of Ministry and our goal is to help our students transform people positively from the inside out in a way that will improve our society on a local, provincial, national, and international scale.

We accept non-traditional students. We provide non-traditional educational styles such as community internships, module-style courses, daily chapels, experiential learning, low instructor/student ratios, and highly qualified instructors. This

helps us produce non-traditional minister of religion graduates who can approach our world with exciting and innovative approaches to long-established concerns.

Since Fountain of Life School of Ministry began, our student body has experienced growth.

Our minister of religion program, in the year one, is a certificate program — this is an existing program — and the goal is to provide the student with a solid foundation in the Bible and religious ministry, while also begin to equip them for spiritual counselling as a minister of religion. Our year two program focuses more on acquiring the practical skills to serve as a minister of religion.

Our anticipated year three program to our bachelor of religious ministry degree is building on years one and two to help a student understand how to effectively serve as a minister of religion within the context of a global faith community. And in the year four, building on the years one to three to help the student grow spiritually in order to equip them for service as a minister of religion.

Thank you very much for this presentation. I've also distributed a brief brochure which provides some of this information for you to keep in your hands as well. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you very much for the presentation. Are there any questions of the presenters?

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much for your presentation. Toda Raba. But I just wanted to ask a question of Mr. Ring in terms of noting that the Fountain of Life School of Ministry is not incorporated pursuant to a private Act. If you could just expand on what that means.

Mr. Ring: — Usually colleges that come forward for religious degrees have been incorporated through a private Act of the Legislative Assembly.

Fountain of Life School of Ministry is incorporated as a non-profit corporation. I don't see that as a problem or a barrier to the degree-granting status, it's just that that's not the normal course. Usually they are incorporated by private Act and that happened in the teens, the '20s, the '30s. And this one is different and that's why I noted that for the committee's attention.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you.

The Chair: — Are there any further questions? Seeing none, we'll proceed with the preamble. Can I have a motion to adopt the preamble before you? Moved by Ms. Morin. All those in favour? Opposed? That is carried.

Preamble agreed to.

The Chair: — We'll now go through the Bill clause by clause, starting with clause 1. Is clause 1 agreed? Okay, carried.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

The Chair: — Okay. Thank you very much.

Therefore Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: An Act to provide for certain degree granting status for Fountain of Life School of Ministry Inc.

Is that agreed? Thank you, it's carried.

I'd like to thank you for coming this morning. And could I get someone to move to report the Bill without amendment?

Moved by Mr. Iwanchuk that we report the Bill without amendment. Is that agreed? That's carried. Thank you.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

The Chair: — All right. We have the standard motion we have for fees. Could I get one of the members to move that the fees respecting Bill 302 be remitted less the cost of printing? That's moved by Ms. Eagles. All those in favour? Opposed? That is carried.

All right. Thank you very much once again.

Bill No. 303 — The Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association Amendment Act, 2004

Clause 1

The Chair: — We will proceed now with Bill No. 303, The Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association Amendment Act, 2004.

Is there a report for them from the Law Clerk?

Mr. Ring: — Yes, Mr. Chair. I have 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 am further pleased to report that, in my opinion, it contains no provisions that are at variance with the usual provisions of private Acts on similar subjects, or that are deserving of special attention. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. Ring. Mr. McCall, as sponsor of this Bill, could you please introduce the officials or representatives that came on behalf of this Bill?

Mr. McCall: — With pleasure, Mr. Chair. I'd like to introduce to the committee Ms. Bonnie Ozirny. Ms. Ozirny is the general counsel for the Saskatchewan School Boards Association and no stranger to the legislature, and had . . . fact at one point worked as a drafter of legislation. So the fine work that you see before here I'm sure has been impacted by that good experience.

And anyway, I won't belabour the matter, but with that I'll turn it over to Bonnie to introduce the Bill and talk a bit about it.

Ms. Ozirny: — Thank you very much. Lance Bean, our president, sends his regrets but 11 o'clock is a key moment in the life of education in Saskatchewan and so he was called away to that announcement by the Minister of Learning.

I just want to take a couple of minutes to tell you who the association is and what we do, and why this Bill is before you today. The association is a voluntary and democratic organization that has been around in one form or another for probably 90 years or so, and it was a very loosely formed association up until the late '40s. With the introduction of teacher collective bargaining, boards of education — or school districts as they were in those days — found a need to have a more formal organization to serve them. And in 1952 the association was established as a body corporate under a private Act of the legislature, which we're seeking to amend today.

The association's membership is comprised of boards of education. It's voluntary, but we've enjoyed almost 100 per cent participation throughout the life of the association. With the establishment of the francophone school divisions, the Division scolaire francophone became a member of our association. We also have First Nations education authorities who are members. And the boards that run historic high schools, I think they're all members — like Luther College, Notre Dame; we have Rosthern Junior College and a number of other entities.

So what do we do for our members? We provide advocacy and leadership on issues affecting public education. We provide support to our member boards in a wide range of services, education and research, legal services, employee relations — which was the reason for our being to start with, the collective bargaining. We administer a benefit plan for employees of school boards and an insurance plan for boards of education so they can access reasonably priced insurance to cover all the risks that grow day by day.

We like to say that we are the voice for public education in Saskatchewan. And in saying that, we revisited our governance structure a couple of years ago and this year we have a dramatically changed executive. The executive is our board of directors; it serves that function.

Up until this year our executive was elected on a regional basis, so it was geographical areas. We now have a very different structure. We have some regional representation but most importantly we have an Aboriginal representative, we have a francophone representative, we have a rural representative, an urban representative, and a Catholic representative. So there will always be guaranteed one seat at least for each of those unique voices. So when we say we speak for public education in Saskatchewan, we truly are. We are carrying forward all of the perspectives and the unique voices of those people who have an interest and are affected by public education in Saskatchewan.

This change in name is the last step in our restructuring process. We had done some polling a couple of years ago and we found that people didn't identify with the word trustees. It was an outdated term. The boards of education are actually our members as contrasted to the individual trustees, although we provide support for trustees. But we found if the trustees association spoke or trustees spoke, people didn't really know who was speaking. Yet in that same polling, we found that they readily understood who school boards were, hence the change in name that we're seeking today. It's sort of part of the rolling out of this new structure and new imaging for our association.

So I would certainly be happy to answer any questions you might have.

The Chair: — We'll open the floor for questions. Are there any questions?

Seeing no questions, we will move on to the Bill itself. Could I get a motion to adopt the preamble?

Mr. McCall, as the sponsor, you're not able to make motions. Ms. Morin has moved the adoption of the preamble. Is that agreed? That is carried.

Preamble agreed to.

The Chair: — We will now move through the Bill clause by clause. Clause 1, short title — is that agreed? That's carried.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 6 inclusive agreed to.

The Chair: — Thank you very much. That is carried.

Therefore Her Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enacts as follows: An Act to amend An Act to incorporate The Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried.

Can I get a motion to report the Bill without amendment? Moved by Mr. Iwanchuk that we report the Bill without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

The Chair: — All right. Okay, could I get a member to move that the fees respecting Bill 303 be remitted, less the cost of printing? Mr. Kerpan. Thank you very much. Is that agreed? That is carried.

All right. I would just like to take a minute to thank all the presenters and sponsors this morning. It's very important in the Legislative Assembly and in our life as legislators to have the organizations in the public to come forward with those things that are important to them. And we very much thank you for coming forward. We're very pleased, as all members of this committee, to help and assist you and your organizations moving forward with your needs. So just on behalf of all of us, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you. Thank you.

Now if I could just get the members to stay for a couple of minutes, we have a couple of other motions and business we need to deal with. Thank you.

The committee recessed for a period of time.

The Chair: — Can we call the meeting back to order, please. I'd like to lay out the procedure for committee members. This afternoon we will report the Bills and tomorrow morning on private members' day we will proceed with moving these Bills forward in the House.

Are there any questions about the procedure tomorrow, or do any of the sponsors have any questions that they'd like to ask at this time?

All right. Seeing no additional questions, I will accept a motion for adjournment. Moved by Ms. Morin.

All those in favour of adjourning?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. Thank you very much, members, for a very good meeting this morning.

The committee adjourned at 10:32.

