



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
First Session

Standing Committee
on
Private Bills

Bill Pr. 1, St. Joseph's College Amendment Act, 2023

Wednesday, November 29, 2023
10 a.m.

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Standing Committee on Private Bills

Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie-East (UC), Chair
Stephan, Jason, Red Deer-South (UC), Deputy Chair

Bouchard, Eric, Calgary-Lougheed (UC)
Ceci, Joe, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)
Deol, Jasvir, Edmonton-Meadows (NDP)
Dyck, Nolan B., Grande Prairie (UC)
Hayter, Julia K.U., Calgary-Edgemont (NDP)
Petrovic, Chelsae, Livingstone-Macleod (UC)
Sigurdson, Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)
Wright, Justin, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UC)

Also in Attendance

Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (Ind)

Bill Pr. 1 Sponsor

Sigurdson, Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)

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Standing Committee on Private Bills

Participants

St. Joseph's College

Shawn W. Flynn, President

Matthew Kostelecky, Vice-president Academic and Dean

Dave France, Legal Counsel

10 a.m. Wednesday, November 29, 2023

[Ms Pitt in the chair]

The Chair: Good morning, hon. members. I'd like to call this Standing Committee on Private Bills to order.

My name is Angela Pitt. I am the chair of the committee. We'll start with asking members to introduce themselves, starting with the member to my right.

Mr. Wright: Justin Wright, the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Mr. Bouchard: Eric Bouchard, for Calgary-Lougheed.

Mrs. Petrovic: Chelsae Petrovic, Livingstone-Macleod.

Mr. Stephan: Jason Stephan, MLA, Red Deer-South.

Mrs. Johnson: Jennifer Johnson, Lacombe-Ponoka.

Ms Hayter: Julia Hayter, Calgary-Edgemont.

Member Ceci: Joe Ceci, Calgary-Buffalo.

Ms Sigurdson: Lori Sigurdson, Edmonton-Riverview.

Mr. Deol: Jasvir Deol, MLA, Edmonton-Meadows.

Ms Govindarajan: Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel.

Ms Robert: Good morning, everyone. Nancy Robert, clerk of *Journals* and committees.

Ms Rempel: Good morning. Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

The Chair: Wonderful. There's no one online joining us virtually.

A few housekeeping items. Don't touch the microphones; they're operated by *Hansard*. Committee proceedings are being live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. Please silence your cellphones and other devices for the duration of this meeting.

I'd like to draw everyone's attention to the draft meeting agenda. Would anyone like to propose any amendments? Would an hon. member like to move to approve the agenda?

Member Ceci: Yep.

The Chair: The hon. Member Ceci. All in favour? Any opposed? So moved.

We also have a set of minutes from our last meeting. Would anyone like to propose any amendments? Would anyone like to move to approve?

Mr. Wright: Sure.

The Chair: The hon. Mr. Wright. All those in favour? Any opposed? So carried.

Okay. With this being our first time considering a private bill in this Legislature, I will quickly outline the process for today. As we discussed at our last meeting, the petitioner has been invited to appear before this committee to make a 10-minute presentation. Following the presentation committee members will have an opportunity to ask questions. Once the hearing is complete, the committee will deliberate on the bill and make one of the three following recommendations: one, that the bill proceed as is; two,

that it proceed with amendments; or, three, that it not proceed at all. Once we've made those determinations, I will report on behalf of the committee to the Assembly. Are there any questions before we ask the petitioners to join us?

All right. Here we go. Just before our petitioners come in, at our meeting on November 20 the committee received an overview of the petition for Bill Pr. 1, St. Joseph's College Amendment Act, 2023, from Parliamentary Counsel, and the petition was found to be in compliance with standing orders 90 to 94. On November 21 the chair reported to the Assembly on the petition pursuant to Standing Order 99. The bill was subsequently introduced in the Assembly on November 22 by the bill's supporter, the hon. Lori Sigurdson. Then, in accordance with Standing Order 100, the bill was automatically referred to the committee after its introduction.

I'll now ask the presenters for Bill Pr. 1, St. Joseph's College Amendment Act, 2023, to be invited in and ask Ms Govindarajan to swear them in so we can proceed with the hearing.

Good morning. Thank you for joining us today. We're happy to have you here. My name is Angela Pitt. I am the chair of this committee. I will ask the members to introduce themselves and our guests to introduce themselves in just a moment.

For the sake of our guests, our microphones are operated by *Hansard*, so there's no need to hit the button to speak. We'll start with introductions to my right.

Mr. Wright: My name is Justin Wright. I am the MLA for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Mr. Bouchard: Good morning, guys. I'm Eric Bouchard, the MLA for Calgary-Lougheed.

Mrs. Petrovic: Good morning. I'm Chelsae Petrovic, MLA for Livingstone-Macleod.

Mr. Stephan: Good morning. Jason Stephan, MLA, Red Deer-South.

Mrs. Johnson: Morning. Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka.

Ms Hayter: Good morning. Julia Hayter, the MLA for Calgary-Edgemont.

Member Ceci: Good morning. I'm Joe Ceci from the beautiful city of Calgary, and my riding is Calgary-Buffalo.

Ms Sigurdson: Good morning. I'm Lori Sigurdson, and I'm the MLA for Edmonton-Riverview, which is where St. Joseph's College exists. Welcome.

Mr. Deol: Good morning. I'm Jasvir Deol, MLA, Edmonton-Meadows.

Ms Govindarajan: Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel.

Ms Robert: Good morning. I'm Nancy Robert, clerk of *Journals* and committees.

Ms Rempel: Good morning. Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

The Chair: We'll ask our presenters to introduce themselves and then proceed with your presentation.

Dr. Kostelecky: My name is Matthew Kostelecky. I'm the vice-president academic and dean at St. Joseph's College at the University of Alberta.

Dr. Flynn: My name is Shawn Flynn. I'm the president of St. Joseph's College.

Mr. France: My name is Dave France. I'm a retired Alberta Justice lawyer, and I volunteered to help St. Joseph's College draft this bill.

The Chair: Good morning. Welcome. The floor is all yours.

Mr. Flynn: Thank you very much. With thanks, Madam Chair, to you and the committee for your finesse and flexibility in getting this started and helping us along in our process here. So what are we doing today? We're simply proposing to update our historic bill to allow us to offer our own academic programming like any other college or university all while maintaining our affiliate relationship with the U of A.

A bit of our story and history. It's often hard to explain what an affiliate college is. Canada had the good sense that all people should be part of public education. Thus, in Alberta's case, to get these universities started, different religious entities like St. Joe's were offered an act to incorporate. This ensured the early success of the public universities and at the same time respected religious rights and freedoms. By 1927 St. Joseph's College had its own act, the bill we're discussing today, an affiliation agreement with the U of A, a board of governors, a building project, all in the middle of the University of Alberta so Catholics could have a home at the public University.

For a hundred years St. Joe's professors have taught and been cross-listed at university departments. In 1927 our first class had 37 students, who were from everywhere: students from Calgary studying pharmacy and science; students from Edmonton; Pincher Creek; High River; Muenster and Bruno, Saskatchewan; and even one from Sandon, B.C.

The current reality is: today, as we have always done, we provide a space where the liberal arts and humanities broadly intersect with a variety of U of A degree programs and subjects for the benefit of students, but we do not offer our own programs. At St. Joseph's College conversations of faith and religion are brought into honest dialogue and discourse with any subject, where all of our courses count for credit towards any U of A degree. Students learn to live faith in the real world, not to create walls or fortresses but to learn what is best of their faith tradition and to use it to build the common good through their careers. In this journey we provide a home on campus, where students struggling with mental health, anxiety, loneliness, those from rural Alberta – perhaps Grande Cache, Barrhead, or Nanton – or international students, and those of many faiths or none at all are given a home in which to study, live, and thrive.

We have grown. Today we educate now over 2,700 undergraduate students per year across our 70 classes. Options for U of A students only: 348 students live in our buildings, and 284 of them are women's-only residents, perhaps the largest in the province and a best kept secret, while nearly 300 attend our worshipping community weekly.

The bill update. Updating our historic bill will allow us to offer our own academic programming like any other college or university. The meat of the matter is simply 1.2, programs, degrees, diplomas, and certificates, or page 2 in your package of Bill Pr. 1. This is new for us, but it is normal: 1.2(a) simply states the areas we would focus on; 1.2(b) situates us clearly under the Post-secondary Learning Act; section 3, on the board, has all the same powers that we currently have; it just updates them for our time; and the senate on page 4 is now needed to guide a future curriculum. That is all. It is simple, and it is clean.

10:10

Private bills should not create an inequity. Rather, I believe this corrects one and solves other problems. We can simply be another postsecondary partner clearly operating under the Post-secondary Learning Act and are only asking for a seat at the table, like all of our other colleagues, and to be a choice and a pathway for students in the province.

But we are certainly unique in our positioning, in our 100 years of history, and the context from which we can provide this pathway for students. We believe our gifts can be offered more broadly. The student who is not quite ready for their university journey can come to St. Joe's and transfer later on: the student from a small town who wants to move or even my nephews from Sexsmith would be first-generation students but need the first few years to adjust and explore; the international student who needs a landing pad; or the students whose grades were not quite there; the student I was, who needed time to discern if university is right.

Well beyond our required statutory advertising we have worked hard on consultation. Of the supportive letters we have received for this update, in your package are seven presidential letters from colleagues across Alberta. President Trimbee of MacEwan University understands the practical side and says, "St. Joseph's College [provides] an important role . . . more options for students as they pursue post-secondary education." This perspective was also reflected in the recent Speech from the Throne citing population growth in the years to come. President Humphreys, the president of The King's University, states, "King's is happy to provide whatever assistance . . . [St. Joe's] might require as they further develop . . . and [to] work on transferability." Importantly, a key partner, the University of Alberta president, Bill Flanagan, knows that

the Act update respects and promotes the affiliation agreement we have long enjoyed, but it also leverages the College's strengths in providing a supportive community . . . in which students can thrive across all dimensions of their University lives.

This unique environment has particular benefits for students from rural Alberta and international students.

But, most importantly, our mission, its success, and the reason why I am privileged to serve St. Joseph's College is because of our students. Ann Isaac, an international student from Egypt who lives in our women's residence, works in our dining hall, and sits on our board of governors, when asked last week, said: I found St. Joe's by accident, but it very quickly became more than a place where I live, take classes, work, or worship; it became my home and the place that helped me become the person I could be proud of.

St. Joseph's College is a beacon of light on a busy campus. Alberta's current Justice Kevin Feehan formed all his philosophy, ethics, and options courses at St. Joseph's College. Your retired colleague Richard Feehan, MLA, also formed all his understanding of the poor and marginalized at St. Joseph's College courses. We work across boundaries and divides while speaking from our Catholic faith without shame to support students on their path to make the world a better place. Thus, in 1957 a young 18-year-old from High River, Joe Clark, started at St. Joseph's College. More recently small-business owners like Charlie Bredo, the CEO of the Troubled Monk Brewery in Red Deer, was our resident and student and is a great college supporter. Perhaps the context might have inspired the company name a bit. Paul Gantar, the CEO of Stanley Construction: also a former student. His construction company is currently working on Olds College's new meat training centre, and his company built Edmonton community centres' 100th Anniversary Plaza at Hawrelak park. Much more recently Rielle Gagnon was welcomed to the bar last spring, and Matt Gorman

received his oncology placement at the Cross Cancer Institute, all formed by St. Joe's.

We want to do this more. We want to do it in partnership with all of our postsecondary colleagues on an even playing field through our own programs with government while providing more pathways to education within this beautiful province.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Wonderful. Thank you so much. I like St. Joe's.

I'd just ask our member who just joined us to introduce himself.

Mr. Dyck: My name is Nolan Dyck. I'm the MLA in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

The Chair: Perfect.

Members, this is our opportunity to ask questions of our presenters. Parliamentary Counsel may have some questions once we're done with ours. Are there any members wishing to speak? The hon. Ms Sigurdson.

Ms Sigurdson: Yeah. Thank you so much for the presentation. I just want to confirm. You know, you shared quite a list of Albertans who have attended and gone on to great things, and a good friend of mine, Mark Corrigan, 40 years ago lived at St. Joe's, and he talks very fondly of it. So I've known about St. Joe's way before I was ever an MLA. I think, when I came to visit, we searched for the plaque that showed that he'd won the chess tournament along with one of the fathers at St. Joe's. I think that so many people have benefited greatly from learning and being part of that community at St. Joe's.

One of the things I'd like, Dr. Flynn, for you to expand on a little bit is, you know, that you're talking about being degree granting and liberal arts and humanities, and sometimes when people think about a religious institution, they think: okay; well, they're going to be doing divinity degrees and things like that. I just wondered if you could really expand on that and clarify that it is a more liberal arts, humanities focus.

Dr. Flynn: Yeah. Madam Chair, thank you for Member Sigurdson's question. Simply, St. Joe's grew up at a time within the University of Alberta in which it was always in a participatory role with the University of Alberta. So we don't train priests at St. Joseph's College. There's a seminary for that in Edmonton. We don't train pastors for future ministry. There are other places for that.

We take individual people, whether they're religious or not, and we help invite them into a conversation within how faith interacts with all subject matters. For an example, we have science and evolution as a course that's well populated, where someone who has a PhD in theology and a PhD in evolutionary biology is walking students through that discussion at the University of Alberta. We always do things at the level of expertise and with the language where we can articulate things within the proper subject matters, within the liberal arts and the sciences or ethics or wherever those fields intersect with each other. So it's really important to understand that we're not training ministers at St. Joe's.

We're primarily an undergraduate institution, and what we'd want to focus on, in the first couple of years anyways, is helping students make that soft transition to their university careers if they choose to do it. We have all the experience across our courses to do that. Our courses aren't theology courses. Our courses are broad liberal arts courses from – we have a Jewish colleague teaching drama and religion right now, science and religion, sports and religion. We have a broad section of courses: English literature, philosophy, everything. So 70 courses are being offered every year

at the U of A at that level. So, yeah, it's an important distinction to make, that it's not a divinity college or anything like that.

Ms Sigurdson: A supplemental?

The Chair: Yup. Go ahead.

Ms Sigurdson: Yeah. Thank you. I just want to also – you spoke about it, but I just wanted to focus on it once again, that you're really introducing this legislation or amending it to actually create an equity as opposed to an inequity, and you based this, I think, on King's University, the changes that they made a few years back. So it is pretty standard protocol for universities, colleges like that you want to be. I just want to confirm that again.

Dr. Flynn: Yeah. In 2015 now The King's University updated its act, and we – especially the section in 1.2, programs, degrees, the primary meat of the matter, is primarily lifted from King's language. We just wanted a precedent of where we were coming from and where we were going and not try to create it ourselves, right? The things that King's does – and we worked with Dr. Humphreys, the president of King's, on that as well.

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you so much.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Any other questions from members?

Mr. Wright: Thank you for coming and giving such a great presentation. You discussed about establishing a senate for St. Joseph's College. I'm just wondering what that framework is going to look like, how individuals are going to be positioned on that board. If you could dive a little bit further into the minutiae, if you will, of what that's going to look like, I would really appreciate that portion of that.

Dr. Flynn: Madam Chair, thank you for Member Wright's question. A senate is needed for the academic workings of any university or college. We currently have a faculty council which mirrors the faculty councils at the University of Alberta, and actually two members from the University of Alberta sit on our faculty council currently. So our practice would likely be mirrored into the senate as we go. What you see in the legislation is the simplest possible form, and then our bylaws or board-of-governor-decided things would have all those types of details.

I'm going to give it over to Dr. Kostecky for any more details of what that could look like in relation to what our faculty council is currently.

Dr. Kostecky: Sure. Thank you very much for the opportunity. The senate would look very much like our faculty council does currently, and there are requirements to be able to sit on the faculty council. You have to be tenure, tenure track, or teach a number of courses. It would also allow for board members to sit on it because we would be moving from a unicameral board structure, where the board has all fundamental authority currently in the college, to a bicameral, where it would be offset.

10:20

The board has certain rights and duties, and then the senate would be able to decide things regarding academic matters, what the curriculum is. Really, it falls within the purview of the senate to decide what curriculum looks like. It has board membership on it but primarily and predominantly faculty as well as the president as statutorily according to the amended legislation on it as well.

Mr. Wright: So with this it also looks like members will be able to be elected under “other individuals.” What would be the criteria of those other individuals, and what roles would they potentially carry in regard to impact on the senate?

Dr. Kostecky: Right. So it would be other individuals that would be decided upon by our statutes or bylaws. The bylaws will have to be amended so that we can clearly stipulate who that would be and what the criteria would be, but it would have to be somebody that is a useful participant in the ongoing discussion, perhaps somebody, for example, from the U of A, right? It’s a useful relationship for us to continue. Currently we do have members from the Faculty of Arts at the U of A on our faculty council. That’s very valuable for us for all sorts of reasons, so it would be that kind of thing.

The Chair: Any other questions from members in the room?

Member Ceci: How soon will students who are graduating there be able to hold up a diploma that says St. Joseph’s College, that they’ve got the degree from there?

Dr. Flynn: I thank Member Ceci for his question. It depends who you talk to, I think, the president or the dean. I think we have to take our time. We have a lot of things in place. We have our professors in place. We have a lot of our structures in place. We have our coursework in place, but we don’t have a registration system yet. So we have to go out and we have to get that right. How much will we partner with the university? How much will we create our own? Those are all open discussions. But to answer your question, we hope within the next – well, starting class in the next two years. Is that safe to say?

Dr. Kostecky: Yeah, if I can jump in. Also, the passing of this legislation then allows us to apply to CAQC. There’s a distinction, to me, between – like, it’s not that magically we become a degree-granting institution right away. We have to go through a process of a quality standards check by the province of Alberta through the Ministry of Advanced Education, and our intention in the first instance is not to offer a bachelor’s degree but to offer a diploma in liberal arts, which would be a net and a funnel, a net to help people get into the U of A or U of C or MacEwan or what have you. They would spend two years with us for their first two years and then be able to go straight into their third and fourth year. We’re looking at a graduated approach, and our first intention is to approach CAQC with that two-year diploma program, which would be a credential, but it wouldn’t be a bachelor of arts. But it would hopefully be fully transferable into the U of A and other Alberta institutions.

Dr. Flynn: I should also add that we have been in touch with that ministry, and they’re well aware of our plans and what we’re doing. It was actually that ministry – in early consultations about three years ago we finally realized we couldn’t do what we wanted to do without a change in our legislation, and it was their legal advice to us that we needed to update our act if we wanted to go in that direction.

Member Ceci: I got my undergraduate from the university of western Ontario, but I went to King’s College. I think King’s can now grant degrees, but then they couldn’t. So I understand the process here. Congratulations.

Mr. Dyck: Well, thank you very much for coming to present. Even though I am from Grande Prairie, I have known of your college for a little while. I believe my grandfather was a participant at some level, so that’s kind of fun. It’s full circle here. You guys don’t have

any sort – you currently don’t recruit your own students. Is that correct? Like, you guys go through U of A, and they place their students with you. Is that correct, that I’m understanding the relationship correctly currently?

Dr. Flynn: I’ll break it down a bit. We do have to advertise our own residence program, so that’s one thing we have to be very active on. But once you’re a U of A student and you’re in the U of A and you’re picking your options courses, all our courses are available to U of A students for options courses.

Mr. Dyck: Perfect. And then, I mean, degree granting is a pretty powerful opportunity. I will say that. That’s fantastic that you guys are going down that direction. What’s your potential student recruitment looking like for yourselves? I know it can be quite challenging for anyone to go and start a college and then also recruit for that college or university. Where are the majority of your students coming from? Are you just simply looking to funnel more officially from U of A or other colleges and then push them back? What’s the game plan here?

So it’s two parts. What’s the structure there? And then, two, pushing back to other colleges or universities: do they have room also to absorb your, hopefully, expanded student base as well? If there are more people coming to you in a separate way, does, for example, the U of A have space to absorb extra students because they’re no longer going directly to the U of A?

Dr. Flynn: To the member’s first question – sorry. I’ll answer the second question first. I mean, all of our postsecondary partners realized that this could be a helpful, as Dr. Kostecky described it, net and a funnel, so a funnel into other programs later on. I think they believe they have the capacity. Like, the U of A is definitely not opposed to this at their highest levels because they have goals of expanding in the next couple of years. And if we’re holding students for a couple of years – I also might add, you know: are we talking about 200 students in the next five years maybe? That’s a very modest amount.

You’ll have to remind me of your first question, though.

Mr. Dyck: Oh, I was just asking about potential student recruitment. Currently you don’t have a registrar department, I believe you said. Building that also, I’m assuming, means student recruitment as well. So you’re adding another university in the mix. That does pose opportunity, and I think that’s awesome, and it builds choice for Albertans and anybody across, hopefully, the world. That opportunity to gain students is fantastic. But where the question comes in, really, is: are we simply drawing away from other universities, or do you think there’s enough market share there available for you to expand this program? Or is it just head to head with somebody else?

Dr. Flynn: Yeah. I’ll let you piggyback on it.

I really do think that our experience with students over the last 100 years but over the last 10 years especially – university is a stressful time. It’s a very difficult time, and sometimes the smartest students that get into the University of Alberta or the University of Calgary really struggle because of support systems, small classes, teachers knowing who they are, life situations, anxiety, depression, mental health. We experienced that with our students in our classes and especially the students in our residence. Sometimes students just need a small place that’s a soft landing pad. We are that small place but right smack in the middle of a 40,000-student public research university. So we have a really unique positioning that I don’t believe Red Deer college – you know, they have a whole bunch of things we don’t have, but we have a unique perspective

and experience to help students in those first couple of years of their university journey.

That's why we feel that going with a diploma in the first couple of years is the right mix. Once it is clear that students want to finish a degree with us, then we can explore that at that time, and maybe that's more of a conversation with the university and our other partners.

Dr. Kostecky: Just to add on to that, I think we would be looking to recruit students from across Alberta as well as British Columbia, Saskatchewan. So we're looking to recruit, but we're also going for students in particular who, for any number of reasons, aren't entirely either ready to go to one of the big public universities or who just value the programming that we offer with our small class sizes, right? I don't think it would be overburdening the larger system. If anything, I think we're taking a little bit of pressure off in those first two years.

Mr. Dyck: Thank you very much.

The Chair: The hon. Mr. Stephan has a question.

Mr. Stephan: Thank you. I just want to confirm. St. Joe's is designated as a college under the postsecondary learning system in Alberta. Is that correct? It's not a college?

Dr. Flynn: We have an act to incorporate. We are a college, but we don't officially exist under the Post-secondary Learning Act.

Mr. Stephan: At all.

Dr. Flynn: Yeah. And there are a couple of colleges across Alberta that kind of fit into that category. We're looking to correct that and just be a partner. Yeah.

Dr. Kostecky: We are a college due to the act of the Legislature from 1926, not because we fit under the Post-secondary Learning Act. If you look at the Post-secondary Learning Act, you won't find affiliate colleges mentioned.

Mr. Stephan: Right. And will this bring you into that?

Dr. Flynn: Correct.

Mr. Stephan: And what will it bring you into the postsecondary learning sphere as? A college?

Dr. Flynn: A college, and then it would be up to the minister how they'd want to define us. But one possibility is that . . .

Dr. Kostecky: IAI, independent academic institution.

Dr. Flynn: Like King's, Ambrose, for example.

Mr. Stephan: Yeah. King's is a university. I guess I just want to kind of clarify, you know, presenting as a college. I see that in the proposed act it talks about the college being able to grant bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, and typically I've thought of universities as having that authority on the master's and doctorate degrees. I don't think that's your plan here, you know, at least in the short to medium term. I'm just wondering: does that kind of fit within what St. Joe's – like, in terms of the postsecondary sphere, that's only available for universities. So I'm just wondering how St. Joe's would be able to give doctorate degrees if it's a college.

10:30

Dr. Flynn: I mean, I myself am not too hung up by the name in terms of college versus university. It would have to have a legislative authority to do what it does. Some choose to update their name; we didn't take that opportunity at this stage. Then the bachelor's, yes, it's more of a thing for colleges in the first couple years, but to update our legislation, which usually happens once in 100 years, we wouldn't want to limit – there might be a space for us in the next 50 years where a certain type of master's degree might be needed across the sector, and St. Joe's is best equipped to respond to that need. That's not currently, but I wouldn't want to go back in 20 years and try to re-update the legislation.

Mr. Stephan: Okay. I'm just wondering in terms of Bill Pr. 1: has the Ministry of Advanced Education reviewed this bill?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Stephan: They have?

The Chair: Yes. Our committee has provided it to the Ministry of Advanced Education, and they actually respond to the committee.

Ms Govindarajan: Yes. This is attached to the opinion that was provided to the committee, the response from the Ministry of Advanced Education.

Mr. Stephan: And they are satisfied with the wording? Okay.

Dr. Flynn: We have certainly been in touch with the Ministry of Advanced Education and three chiefs of staff.

Mr. Stephan: Yeah. I'm sure you have. I'm just wondering, in terms of the content of the bill, if they've looked at that specifically, but it sounds like they have.

Dr. Flynn: Both from the ministry, the director of CAQC, Parliamentary Counsel, and from all our presidential colleagues there's been no question around the name "college."

Mr. Stephan: Or this bill?

Dr. Flynn: Not the bill, no.

Mr. Stephan: Okay. That's all my questions. Thanks.

The Chair: All right. Any other members with questions? Seeing none, any questions from Parliamentary Counsel?

Ms Govindarajan: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to clarify one point, that Parliamentary Counsel does provide assistance to the petitioners, but we are not their legal counsel. And I just had one question on the affiliation agreement. You mentioned that it would continue. Could you please just clarify if there would be any changes to that affiliation agreement as a result of the amendments, if these were enacted?

Dr. Flynn: No, there wouldn't be. The University of Alberta was quite concerned that we continue our affiliation agreement. Just so members understand, the act in 1926, the historic act – and then three weeks later there was an affiliation agreement with the University of Alberta – is a historic document, and then we've had various agreements with the U of A since then. So we have a good, positive working relationship with the U of A, and we'd want to continue that affiliation.

Ms Govindarajan: Thank you. And just for the record, are you aware of any third parties that object to the proposed amendments?

Dr. Flynn: No, we didn't receive anything through the public notices, neither the first time we did it nor the second time, and I heard from the first committee that you also didn't receive anything.

Ms Govindarajan: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Dyck has one more question.

Mr. Dyck: Thank you for taking my question, Madam Chair. For the board itself, are any board members required to be in an order in council from the Advanced Education minister, or are these purely from your own selection as a college?

Dr. Flynn: Our own selection in relation to legislation. Yeah. The whole board update is just: in the early historic act you list historic members and laymen. I think we all agree women can serve on boards now, so, you know, it's just getting rid of some of that historical language and making it simpler.

Mr. Dyck: Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Flynn: No problem.

The Chair: Well, thank you for attending today. Thank you for your submission. You're welcome to stay while the committee deliberates, or you can leave and watch it online and get notice from the committee.

Dr. Flynn: Thank you.

The Chair: Wonderful. Thank you.

All right. Perfect. Hon. members, it's now time for this committee to begin its deliberations on Bill Pr. 1, St. Joseph's College Amendment Act, 2023.

As mentioned earlier, this committee must ultimately decide whether the bill should proceed, proceed with amendments, or not proceed at all. We will now open the floor for discussion on the committee's recommendations.

Here we go. The hon. Ms Sigurdson.

Ms Sigurdson: Yeah. Well, certainly, we would like the bill to proceed, and I don't think there are any amendments that are needed. I think the president, Dr. Flynn, explained sort of that it really is kind of standard updating of legislation from many, many years ago, over, you know, almost 100 years ago, and it is based on what already exists, so there's nothing to be concerned about. I think he also was able to articulate very well the uniqueness of St. Joe's College and what it provides to students who choose to go there for many of the reasons that he discussed. Certainly, I would vote that we support this to go ahead and proceed.

The Chair: Would you like to move that motion?

Ms Sigurdson: I would, yes.

The Chair: Okay. Any discussion on the motion for the bill to proceed? The hon. Mr. Wright.

Mr. Wright: I was just going to comment very similarly that there's no reason that we shouldn't be moving forward with this. They answered all the questions, they made clear their mission, vision, values, and I think that it adds to the ecosystem of postsecondary versus anything detrimental that could come from it. So, to me, this seems like the right call to make and rather swiftly, too.

The Chair: Perfect. Any other questions? All right. We will read the wording. Ms Sigurdson moves that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills recommend that Bill Pr.

1, St. Joseph's College Amendment Act, 2023, proceed.

All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no.

That is carried

Hon. members, this committee has finished its deliberations on Bill Pr. 1. We should now consider preparation of a report with the committee's recommendations. I know at our last meeting members expressed a desire to move this process along quickly. If there are no objections, the committee could consider a motion directing staff to prepare the committee's report for presentation to the Assembly this afternoon. Is there a member wishing to?

The hon. Ms Sigurdson.

Ms Sigurdson: Yes, I'd like to move that motion.

The Chair: Ms Sigurdson moves that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills (a) direct the Legislative Assembly Office to prepare a draft report on the committee's review of Bill Pr. 1, St. Joseph's College Amendment Act, 2023, which includes the committee's recommendations; and (b) authorize the Chair to approve the committee's final report to the Assembly on November 29, 2023.

All those in favour of the motion, please say aye. Any opposed, say no.

Member Ceci: Can I ask a question?

The Chair: Yeah.

Member Ceci: Through the chair, when will this be in front of the Legislature?

The Chair: The 29th. Today.

Member Ceci: Oh. I didn't hear that. Okay. Great.

The Chair: Sorry. I read it quickly.

That is carried.

We have a plan in place.

Any other items for discussion under other business for this committee?

Our next meeting date will be called as a petition for private bills comes in. We don't have any at this time.

Would a member like to move to adjourn? The hon. Mr. Ceci. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, say so now.

[The committee adjourned at 10:39 a.m.]

