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The 30th Legislature
Third Session

Alberta Hansard

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Day 37

The Honourable Nathan M. Cooper, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 30th Legislature
Third Session

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

9 a.m.

Thursday, May 26, 2022

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Lord, the God of righteousness and truth, grant to our Queen and to her government, to Members of the Legislative Assembly, and to all in positions of responsibility the guidance of Your spirit. May they never lead the province wrongly through love of power, desire to please, or unworthy ideas but, laying aside all private interest and prejudice, keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all.

Ordres du jour.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

Bill 10

Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Chestermere-Strathmore.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. Can I just check: are we moving then, today, into third reading?

The Speaker: Correct. You're moving.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, sir. I just wanted to make sure I was in the right spot.

It is with great honour that I rise today to move the third reading of Bill 10, Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022.

First of all, I have few people that I would like to just take a moment to thank. As the former minister for the status of women it's my absolute privilege to have worked with the present Associate Minister of Status of Women on this bill. It takes an entire House of people to bring these kinds of things together, and when you're able to do this work together, it just feels incredibly special. It's one of those moments that I won't forget in a very long time, so thank you so much, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the present Status of Women associate minister. I am absolutely and beyond grateful – and to the Minister of Health as well.

There has been so much consultation and work that's gone into this. It's been a passion project for many of us, but mostly I would just like to be very clear in understanding that we are supporting leaders in their fight against female genital mutilation globally, including women affected by this in the diasporas that have really led this discussion and have created organizations and foundations, including – and if you have a moment to take a look at these foundations, it's extremely enlightening to understand the work that is going on globally – Dear Daughter campaign, the Irfaa Foundation, and broader networks like End FGM and End FGM Canada.

With the summer holidays that are coming up – and we're all looking forward to spending time with our families – for some girls: they will be shipped off for the cutting season. Bill 10 offers a chance for all of us to have a discussion and raise awareness around issues of female genital mutilation, and subsequently we'll give

voices to all of those who have suffered and to understand the practice but, hopefully, to be able to end this practice.

Bill 10 will offer supports to victims, including supports for necessary protections for children at risk and supports to manage the resulting physical and psychological trauma for girls and women who have underwent FGM.

When a society displays that it understands and it empathizes with girls and women who have undergone this practice, it actually elevates a whole bunch of discussions around sexual assault and domestic violence, around the protection of girls and women, child marriage, honour beatings, and honour killings. That elevation and that discussion raise all of the discussions that are so important to so many people in this province. When we display that empathy, we will be able to show not only support for people who are coming forward, the stigma and the terrifying positions that some of these women and families have found themselves in, but be able to support them on their journey to healing and well-being and to potentially even be able to come forth and speak about it.

That's been one of the most profound moments for me in this journey with speaking to women who had actually undergone this process and hearing from them not only the trauma that they've gone through but also the questions that they had about their own selves and their families and what to do in the future for their own daughters. What we're seeing now is that this movement of women and men and folks across the world is that they're paving a way so that it doesn't happen to their daughters.

I also want to thank ministry folks, past and present, that are in the ministries right now. Also, a dear friend of mine, Giselle Portenier, who, as you know, has a documentary in the name of her daughter, and it was, again, another one of those moments in my life that profoundly changed the way that I look at things.

It was sort of a moment in time for me four and a half years ago, when human trafficking, female genital mutilation, and all of these – we know that it's happening, we know that it's going on, but we actually started honest and forthright discussions about these issues. As you know, for all of us in this House these conversations and the legislation that have been brought forward in this House, that we've all shared and worked on, will hopefully work towards prevention but give us all tools in our tool kits to be able to help not only survivors but work in the area of prevention of these horrible things that are going on after decades and even centuries of suffering under harsh practices inflicted onto women and girls. These are in the name of cultural practices, patriarchy, and traditional gender norms. It's really time to change the status quo and to stand in support of women and girls and in their quest for equality and justice.

I would just like to thank again the folks in this House and also the opposition for their wonderful contributions to this, for asking such very, very important questions, and for the robust debate. I've learned so much in the questions that folks asked in here, pushed even harder for us to find and get details and to make sure that we were able to make sure that this legislation was what it was and that the intention is extremely honourable for the work that needs to be done. Thank you again, because this is one of those moments where we stand together. When we say that we're going to protect women and girls, we're actually going to do that. In Alberta we are the first province in Canada to bring legislation forward like this. We were the first province to do the proclamations and the declarations about female genital mutilation. Again, very, very grateful for the opportunity to stand here after 11 years of working on this. It's been very emotional, and I'm very honoured.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. members, are there others? The hon. Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to third reading of Bill 10, Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022. Let me start off by thanking the Member for Chestermere-Strathmore for bringing forward this piece of legislation. Certainly, it's an important piece of legislation. It's important to raise awareness about this practice and violation of basic, basic human dignity and right.

In this day and age, Mr. Speaker, there are still, according to WHO, World Health Organization, 200 million girls and women alive around the globe who have been put through this horrible, horrible practice; 200 million women. As the member mentioned even in her remarks this morning, in some way, shape, or manner it's still happening in Canada as well, that girls and women are shipped over to their countries to undergo this torture. I think the said bill is important to raise awareness, but at the same time this bill doesn't go far enough to provide tools to the relevant departments, be that law enforcement, be that some other department, to find out: who are those people who are co-ordinating that practice, and why is it that women and girls are shipped off to undergo that practice in this day and age? Nonetheless, it is a good piece of legislation. It gave us as legislators an opportunity to discuss this practice here and an opportunity for all Albertans to learn about this basic violation of human dignity and rights of women.

9:10

Speaking of human rights and women, when we talk about human rights, when we talk about women's rights, when we talk about women's dignity, when we talk about their equality, when we talk about justice about them, then we shouldn't be selective. We should be supporting all of their rights, and we should be supporting their equality and their ability to control decisions impacting them as well.

Three weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, three or four weeks ago now, the Supreme Court of the United States overturned Roe and Wade. That was a decision that was in place for almost five decades protecting a woman's right to get an abortion, protecting the basic woman's right to their bodily autonomy, and in this Chamber many times my colleagues asked the current Associate Minister of Status of Women and the Health minister whether they will get up and affirm women's rights to their bodily autonomy and condemn the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States. The answer we were getting was that it's a decision of a court of a foreign jurisdiction that we don't have any influence over and all that.

Here this morning we were listening to the Member for Chestermere-Strathmore on how it's important to be a part of a global cause even though this practice is criminally banned here in Canada, but it's important for us that we be a part of a global moment for a basic human dignity and women's right issue. I wholeheartedly agree that we should. We cannot stay on the sidelines. We cannot stay silent, that if it's not happening here, it doesn't impact us. I totally agree with the Member for Chestermere-Strathmore that events happening around us, violations of human rights happening around us, violations of women's rights happening around us: it's important that we weigh in and we stand against those violations.

It's critically important, and it is for that reason that we ask this government to take a clear stance on the Supreme Court of the United States issue as well, because that impacts women's rights across North America, but we didn't hear a word about that, because then it's an ideological consideration for this government.

Again, when we are talking about basic human dignity and rights, then we should talk about that by rising above and beyond our partisan interests.

Mr. Speaker, you may recall this, that back in 2018, when the NDP was in government, we brought forward a bubble-zone legislation.

The purpose of that legislation was to put a bubble zone around facilities that provide abortion services so that women seeking those services can do so without any harassment, without any intimidation, and be able to exercise their right over their bodily autonomy in a harassment-free manner. In this Legislature, with members of this UCP – the PC and Wildrose; I think that at that time they had merged – every time that issue came to a vote, they ran out of this Legislature; 13 times.

There was also an issue of human rights. That's an issue of women's rights. We should not put partisan qualification on women's rights. We should stand for all of their rights. This practice of FGM is a horrible violation of their bodily autonomy and their rights. We should stand against that, and based on the same principle, when there is an attack on women's right to exercise their bodily autonomy – it doesn't matter where it happens – we should also stand against that. Instead of dodging questions – that somehow on decisions of some foreign jurisdiction, of some foreign court, that this government has no control over, we should not say anything – I think we should stop peddling those kinds of double standards. Violation of one's human rights, regardless of where they are, is a violation of every human's rights.

The second thing. I also want to mention – and I guess that was just recent – that 21 kids were shot in Texas. Mr. Speaker, I will explain why it relates to this debate. They were killed mercilessly. In 2020 the leading cause of death of kids in the United States was no longer motor vehicle accidents; it was shootings. Those are the stats publicly available. Most parties of conservative leanings, whether they are in the States or in Canada, will passionately engage in debate against abortion based on their right-to-life arguments, and they will stand against a woman's right to choose, a woman's right to exercise bodily autonomy in their decisions. But now that so many kids are getting killed – and that will impact us as well. There was a gun found in Bowness high school just a week ago. I'm glad that the administration and police were able to safely handle that situation.

9:20

When we talk about these issues, we get so partisan about access to abortion services and women's right to exercise their own will in their own decisions that we will go as far as blocking these efforts and not say anything about what impact Roe versus Wade will have in Canada.

We will never engage in debate around proliferation of guns. That is actually killing more kids in the United States than anything else. That certainly is happening in Alberta, too. In Calgary alone there were 59 shootings this year alone, and more than 50 per cent of those guns are not lawfully obtained or anything. Those things are also impacting people's rights, are impacting Albertans' safety and security.

But back to this bill, I would say that it's an important piece of legislation. It will certainly help us raise awareness around this practice. As I said, it doesn't go far enough to create means and tools so that we can find out who those groups are who are sending girls and women back to those countries where they can still be subject to this kind of inhumane treatment, inhumane torture. We should do everything in our capacity to block these practices and uphold basic human rights, basic women's rights, and basic dignity of all girls and women.

Whenever there is an issue, whether it's happening here or somewhere in our neighbourhood, somewhere around the globe, that impacts basic human dignity, we should rise above our partisan interests and speak in favour of human rights and human dignity without any qualification.

With that, I will take my seat on this side of the House. I will be supporting this piece of legislation, and I hope my colleagues will do the same.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this very, incredibly important bill. I'd like to thank the member for bringing it forward and for shepherding it through this House and ensuring that it passed in an efficient and speedy manner.

You know, there is really nothing that I would support more than the central argument of this particular bill, and that is the ultimate right for people to have bodily integrity and not to have other people assault their bodily integrity and take that away from them.

I'm sure everyone in the House knows that I spent many years working in the area of child sexual abuse, and that again is the core issue of that area of concern. You know, the resulting trauma from having your bodily integrity violated is really one of the most fundamentally abusive experiences that anyone can experience, whatever the cause, whatever the nature of the assault is.

As a result of that, we have come, thankfully, to a place now in modern society where we understand that that has to be underneath everything else that we do. We certainly can make rules and regulations and ask people to engage in things, but your bodily integrity is something that must be maintained. It's a complex argument, isn't it? It's a very difficult line to walk sometimes because sometimes it's very clear for us.

When I was working in the area of child sexual abuse, it was very clear to me that one should not rape a six-year-old child. Nobody would disagree with that. But by the time I got up to working with kids that were 16 years of age, suddenly there were arguments: "Well, maybe there was some reason that this should happen or not happen. Maybe we should treat it differently." What was happening was that people were losing the underlying argument about human bodily integrity being the fundamental issue here, and I sometimes find the same thing happening with female genital mutilation.

For me, it's absolutely clear: there's absolutely no circumstance where a nonmedical procedure should be done to anyone's body. I think it's fundamental that we respect that integrity of the human body. But we see groups coming forward saying, "But it's part of our culture, part of our faith" or whatever else, and I just really want to spend a few moments trying to talk about that. First of all, it isn't part of any religion, for no one at all. It isn't a doctrine of faith for anyone. It simply is a cultural practice. It's a habit done by a group of people sometimes using religion as the shield for doing it, and we have to be very careful not to allow that kind of imposition of cultural habit or excuse to suddenly make us forget the fundamental question here, and that is the question of bodily integrity.

You know, I think that we are in a difficult place here in this province because we are trying at the same time to welcome people into our province, to celebrate the various attitudes and cultural practices and belief systems from around the world because we know that that kind of plurality of ideas and expressions of self actually lead to a better society. But at some point, sometimes we have to be able to say that you cannot claim our desire for multiculturalism, our desire for a diverse society as a right to take away some fundamental underlying right, and that's essentially what's happening here in the area of female genital mutilation.

We then have a very difficult argument, because we need to be able to say: we welcome you, whoever you are, however you express yourself, and we accept that you may want to do things in a way that is different than we do things. But there's a point at which we have to say no. There's a point at which we have to say that we understand that it may be a habitual practice in a place where you come from, but it cannot ever find root as a habitual practice or a practice ever under any circumstances in a place that has an underlying philosophical belief system in the integrity of the human person and the human rights that are associated with that person.

I think that legislation of this kind is very important because it signals very strongly that we have drawn that line, that we have said that while we're open to all kinds of diversity, there are some things we simply cannot because they are a violation of human rights. We understand that human rights imply the ability to choose how you live your life, but at some point, if your choice of human rights violates the rights of another person, then we can no longer support your choice. It's a difficult line to draw, but I'm glad that this member has been focused on what is important and has worked through that and gotten us to a place where we can say that this is a clear statement about the underlying value of humanity and the underlying value of an individual to determine control of their own body.

9:30

I really think that we have to take a little bit of time to look at: why would this even exist in this world? Unfortunately, I simply have to say that this is a reflection of a history that we all share in this world of a culture of patriarchy and misogyny. The purposes of this practice, even in the places that are doing it, are not for the benefit of the person who is subject to the female genital mutilation but, rather, for the benefit of the male segment of society so that they can fulfill some fantastical belief about the purity of the person that they're going to marry or the daughter that they're essentially going to sell off to another community, to another person. It's a reflection back to the idea that somehow women are the chattel of men and that women's only existence is to satisfy the needs and desires of men, including the needs and desires to marry a woman who is deemed pure within a culture. This kind of absolute patriarchal violence towards women is completely unacceptable.

It's really important for us in this House to be absolutely clear that the issue isn't just female genital mutilation, but it is the philosophical ideas that lead to that kind of thing becoming a possibility. Those ideas were encapsulated in patriarchy and misogyny. It's very important for us as citizens and government representatives in this province to take a very clear stance against patriarchy and misogyny, to understand when it is being played out in our society in any manner, whether it's directed towards female genital mutilation or any of the other violations of women's rights, and to exorcise that horrendous approach and that dictation of what is right or wrong to women and who they are, how they express themselves, and to the integrity of their body.

It is important that we continue the process of rooting out that horrendous philosophical idea that somehow men can make decisions over women and over women's bodies, the same way we have done that with saying that slavery is illegal and wrong because it is taking control over someone else's body, the same way we have said that child sexual abuse is wrong because it is violating the integrity of that person's body. Whenever we see an expression of that patriarchy in any area of society, it is requisite upon all of us to stop it and to eliminate that expression in all of its various forms so that we can stop that which is underpinning these kinds of

horrendous things such as female genital mutilation. That's hard to do because, like most people, individuals who are involved in the patriarchy believe that they have come to that place by a birthright. They have that right because of just who they are: that's the way it's always been, that's the way my dad was, that's the way my grandfather was. They cite history and tradition as somehow being correct and therefore being inviolate in terms of assault from those of us who understand that that kind of attitude is really and completely unacceptable.

I want to spend my last few minutes calling on, particularly, the men in this House and the men in society to work very hard on an antimisogynistic set of laws and practices in this House and in society to ensure that we root out that which supports the violence of female genital mutilation. We've got a long way to go. It has only been in the last 100 years that we've even begun to recognize some of the ways in which this is going on. We still have many traditions that seem small and minor, but in fact they're actually a reflection of that.

You know, still at most weddings the father gives away the bride. It's a fascinating expression that she does not give of herself freely to a partner, but her father gives her away. Now, I understand that there's family tradition around what that's about and so on, but I also want people to reflect on the fact that that says, on some level, that that father owns that daughter and is giving that daughter away, that the daughter is not freely choosing to do that. I think that those are the kinds of things that we have to start to change.

There's nothing wrong with a family coming together and celebrating the marriage of a daughter, but to believe that somehow this is not her choice but, rather, the family selling the daughter off is one that we have to be very careful about. This is a minor example, but it's just an example about how you don't think about the things that are part of the patriarchy. They just seem kind of normal and natural and kind of even fun and nice, yet when you examine "What is the root of that? What is that a reflection of?" you realize that we have to do more self-reflection and understanding about the ways in which patriarchy is inherent in our society, and we have to begin to act in a way that does not do that. This is not a new concept. When I was married, I didn't choose to have that sort of father-giving-away-the-bride kind of thing happening; instead, both parents came together to celebrate the union of their children.

This kind of thing has been happening for a long time but not by everyone, and it's time for all of us to get together to focus on the horrendous, traumatic abuse that exists in areas such as female genital mutilation and child sexual abuse and understand that there are ways in which our culture supports that kind of mentality and that our job is not only to stop the outcome but to stop the inputs, and that is inputs through a philosophy of misogyny and patriarchy. All of us here in this House are in positions where we can choose to do that in a way that would lead the community that we serve.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Are there others? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Decore has the call.

Mr. Nielsen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's definitely a privilege to be able to rise this morning to add a few comments to Bill 10, the Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022. Of course, I will also start by thanking the Member for Chestermere-Strathmore for bringing this forward, for all of her work – you know, I think what was said was shepherding this through the House – for her passion on the subject. But I also want to thank her because she has also given me an opportunity to

reflect where we've been, to think about where we're going, and also given me the opportunity to reaffirm something.

You know, perhaps the member might remember that I got a chance to do this back in the 29th Legislature, and it all revolved around my time as I was learning how to be a relief rep for my union, and the individual that was teaching me taught me something very, very critical. She was the embodiment of a mentor, somebody who today I still consider a mentor to me. Up until my opportunity to work with her, essentially, I always felt that when it came to women's issues – I mean, what could I say? I'm just a man. Like, I can't have an opinion about that. She taught me that that was wrong. She taught me that I can actually have an opinion on these things, because by not having one, my silence promoted that, I guess, complicity in things.

9:40

You know, I was able to be able to stand up with confidence and say that these things that are holding women back, that are making their lives more difficult: I can actually say that they're wrong. I have that permission now to do that. Because of this bill, you've given me the opportunity to be able to reaffirm that yet again, like I did back in the 29th Legislature. That's very exciting.

Now, upon the reflection – and I know my friend from Edmonton-Rutherford had talked about this a little bit. I mean, we've certainly come a long way with regard to women's rights, equality, equal pay, but we're not there. There's still an incredible amount of work to do, and it's incumbent upon us to be able to support those types of things with things like the strongest language possible that, you know, there's no doubt about it, there's no room for interpretation where people can sometimes get creative. You know, I'm very much in favour of the language that I see within Bill 10 because it's clear. It's saying: "No. This is wrong, full stop." There's no room for interpretation around that, and that's the kind of thing that I like to see.

With all that work that has yet to still happen – and, you know, fingers crossed, I'm hoping that maybe I'll even see that work completed in my lifetime. It's funny how here we are in the 21st century. There are signs that fights that have already happened to try to advance women's rights now may be at threat yet again. We're seeing that south of the border. I honestly thought that maybe those discussions were finally done. We're there. We've arrived. But now we seem to be backsliding, and it's incumbent upon all of us in this Chamber to make it absolutely clear that we won't stand for that. It will not be allowed to fall back. Bill 10 allows us to do something like that.

Now, you know, as was mentioned earlier, Roe versus Wade: I mean, that was a Supreme Court decision and enshrined in legislation, and now all of that is at risk. Fingers crossed again, I hope this will never ever become at risk. If it does, those that come after us, I hope, will fight as hard to protect it as we're trying to do today with this piece of legislation and others going forward.

Standing with the Member for Chestermere-Strathmore, you know, I am going to continue to ask the government to do everything they can, for instance with the health care system, to fund it as fully as possible so that women and girls have every single opportunity to access the health care they need when they need it, and that means doctors in rural Alberta, no doubts about what they're able to access, no hurdles to get around. Anything less, I think, will do a disservice to Bill 10, and we can't allow that. We just absolutely cannot allow that.

I don't know if there's a lot more that I can actually add to that. Again, I do want to thank the Member for Chestermere-Strathmore for bringing this forward. There's much more work to do. Again, maybe I'll reiterate the call that my friend from Edmonton-

Rutherford made. As the men in this room we must stand united behind women to make sure their rights are upheld, that we get to actual equality, because we're not there yet. We don't have that. Women are not equal, and they should be. My gosh. We're in the 21st century already. We have to step up to fight.

Not only do we have to do that; we also have to be willing to call out those that don't. Hence my recommitment to being able to say: I can have an opinion. It is all right. I can stand and say: female genital mutilation is wrong, period, full stop. No other excuses apply.

I really appreciate the opportunity available to add those comments, to be able to stand with the member in support of Bill 10. I would certainly urge every member of this House to stand firmly in support of it. My hope is that, going forward, again, hopefully maybe in my lifetime, we will actually see full, one hundred per cent equality and the chance for women to shine the way they should have many, many, many years ago. I look forward to that time.

Thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to be able to add some comments around this.

The Speaker: Are there others?

Seeing and hearing none, I am prepared to call on the hon. Member for Chestermere-Strathmore to close debate.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you so much to everybody today who contributed to this debate. I thought I would close out our debate today by reiterating some of the very important parts of the legislation that are very strong and have enhanced the legislation that came before us with respect to the prohibition and the procurement and the performance of female genital mutilation. Some stuff that had come up earlier when we were talking was about what this legislation actually does in order to draw that line in the sand, and thank you so much, through you, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues across the way for those comments. It is so important to have clarity.

I'd also like to say that I stand with women and I stand for women's reproductive rights, and I will do everything that I can from my side to make sure that as we go forward on all of those issues, we are working collaboratively every single moment on all of that. I am so grateful for this debate.

The approval of the proposed legislation, should we pass this today, will expressly state that:

1.11(1) A regulated member shall not procure or perform female genital mutilation.

(2) A person who has been convicted of a criminal offence related to the procurement or performance of female genital mutilation is not eligible for registration as a regulated member under this Act.

Requiring that notice, information, or a complaint alleging the procurement or performance of FGM be automatically referred to a law enforcement agency.

Prohibiting a complaint alleging procurement or the provision of FGM made against a regulated health professional to be referred to an alternative complaints resolution.

Requiring that a regulated member's practice permit and registration be cancelled immediately after the regulated member has been convicted of a criminal offence related to the procurement or performance of FGM.

Prohibiting a person to apply for reinstatement of their practice permit and registration if the practice or the registration have been cancelled as a result of a decision of unprofessional conduct based in whole or in part on a conviction associated with the procurement or provision of FGM.

Requiring that a regulated health professional, while acting in their professional capacity, or a college if they have reason to believe that a regulated health professional has procured or performed FGM.

Requiring that if the governing body of a similar profession in Canada, the U.S., or another performed FGM, that the college cancel the regulated member's registration.

Requiring a college council to adopt standards of practice respecting FGM. Standards of practice would address matters ranging from education or training related to the prevention and prohibition of FGM, supporting its victims in securing or providing further supports that may be necessary to protect a child at risk, and also how to manage the resulting physical and psychological trauma to support a victim.

I'm so grateful to have been able to share this time with you. I also wanted to state that we have come a long way. Legislation like this helps us to keep building and to be adding to the discussion around the safety of our girls and women not only in Canada but globally. This gives us all a little bit more permission today in Canada to say that the things that we believe in and we stand by, we are going to legislate on to make sure that they are protected.

9:50

I would like to end with this. The exercise of being able to come before this space for legislation is not about pointing fingers or having a western philosophy imposed, what we believe is something we need to change on another culture or their practices. Some of these practices have been going on for thousands of years. It's taken the entire globe to come forward and have a discussion around this to decide where we need to go and what needs to happen, particularly in women's equality and equity and standing up for women's rights globally.

The most important thing that we can do is elevate the discussion and have those educational tools but also strengthen existing legislation to give people the opportunities to make sure that there are outcomes that lead towards prevention, that lead towards maybe saving one little girl from this happening to her but that also strengthen legislation so that there are consequences for this behaviour. In Canada we have the opportunity to do that. When we talk to folks in Africa or other nations, they're dealing with this from the perspective of their culture and how they're trying to fix this, and I respect that so much. I've learned so much from them.

Thank you again for the debate. Thank you for the opportunity. I'm absolutely blown away and honoured to have had the opportunity to bring this before the Legislature.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 10 read a third time]

Bill 24

Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2022

The Speaker: The hon. chief government whip on behalf of the Government House Leader.

Ms Issik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the Government House Leader today to move third reading of Bill 24, the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2022.

As noted previously in the House, the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act allows lawmakers to make minor changes to laws to correct anomalies, to correct inconsistencies, outdated terminology, and errors, or to provide clarification in provincial laws. I want to thank everyone for their support yesterday, through

you, Mr. Speaker, and urge all members to vote in favour of third reading.

The Speaker: Hon. members, third reading of Bill 24, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2022. Are there others wishing to join in the debate? Questions, comments, or otherwise?

Seeing none, I am prepared to call on the minister to close debate.

[Motion carried; Bill 24 read a third time]

Ms Issik: Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn the Assembly until 1:30 this afternoon.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 9:54 a.m.]

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