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Bill No. 172 – The Naturopathic Medicine Act

Mr. Forbes: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to enter into this debate this afternoon on Bill No. 172, *An Act respecting the Practice of Naturopathic Medicine and the College of Naturopathic Doctors of Saskatchewan*. And it's a relatively straightforward bill. We've seen this kind of bill come before the House many times when we were talking about recognizing the professional attributes and qualities of a certain group of people in our society. And today we're going to be talking about naturopathic doctors and the practice of naturopathic medicine.

And as the Minister of Health has recognized in his opening comments for the second reading, he talked about how this has had an established history here in Saskatchewan, well over 60-some years, going back to the '50s. And so we're not talking about a new field in medicine. This is one that has been alive and is present in Saskatchewan here. And so it's only fair and reasonable that they have their own piece of legislation that will guide them in their creation of their college and their council.

Of course we always want to make sure that there has been appropriate consultation and that we're not back fixing some of these things up at a later date, and that there has been appropriate and sufficient consultation, that the folks involved feel like it is the right fit, It's the proper way to go forward.

And of course I assume, and I'll be looking at section 18 that talks about membership and people on the board, that there are . . . Actually it's section 9, the public appointees. Always very important to have, particularly in the health councils, that we do have an eye on the affairs and that it's a professional approach to it — but still a public approach, that it doesn't become a silo and there's no connection to the real world, but there's a sense of common sense, because when we get into these professional colleges and councils, that in fact they are professional and they should be acting professionally. But we need to make sure they have their . . . [inaudible] . . . grounded in some common sense too, and I hope that's what the public eye brings, and the public appointees bring to the table.

So we'll have some questions to make sure this is a reasonable framework. It's probably a typical template in terms of how this professional organization is organized. We do recognize that it's unique and very special. They offer a unique and alternate approach to medicine but one that is very legitimate and one that has been successful. And it has been successful for many decades here in the province, and therefore they do deserve the recognition of a professional college and council.

And so this is important, particularly when it comes to protection of the title and protection, doctor of . . . a naturopathic doctor, and that there is some protection. And we know that if you see some advertisement or some notice around that, you know that they have a way of making sure they are certified, that they've trained according to standards and that there are processes in place in terms of discipline and that again, as I say, it's not totally internal but there is some public scrutiny through the public appointees. It's very, very important to have this.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that many others will want to speak on this for sure. It's one of those pieces of legislation that we will all want to think at some length on. But clearly, as I said, it's probably a framework piece of legislation that's applied to professional organizations. And we do want to make sure that that's pretty rigorously followed too, because you don't want too many organizations having a unique approach to it, that we understand that there is a training aspect to it, recognition of that training, protection of title and what that means, and a disciplinary aspect of it as well.

So that's laid out in the Act. And so with that, at this point, I think with Bill No. 172, *An Act respecting the Practice of Naturopathic Medicine and the College of Naturopathic Doctors of Saskatchewan*, I would move that we adjourn the debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.