Mayor, councillors, speaker,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

The issues of mosquitoes and pesticides inflame the passions of Winnipeggers like few others. Recently, there is a lot of heated debate on some media websites, we have seen a lot of attacks against individuals and groups, with considerable vitriol coming from various sides. We need to turn down the temperature on this debate, have some rational discussion and ensure we achieve what I am sure we can all agree are shared goals for our insect control policies:

We should seek to be effective in limiting nuisance insects while maintaining the maximum level of safety for humans and the environment.

I am all in favour of revisiting Winnipeg's pesticide policies, but these changes should only be made in the context of open discussion, backed by science and giving all the citizens the right to have their concerns heard.

There is currently no urgent health emergency as the City has found that there are few disease carrying mosquitoes present in our environment. It is unfortunate that this item is being rushed onto the agenda with little notice or time for others to comment.

The right to choose is a cornerstone of our political and health systems. Having notice if one wishes to have one's home sprayed is also an important element of a fair and transparent public health system. Thousands of Winnipeggers suffer from multiple chemical sensitivities, across Canada, Statistics Canada estimates 650,000 people

suffer, about 3 percent of the population. Others have concerns about their children and pets being exposed to potentially dangerous chemicals. The rights of these citizens must be respected. Some of the proposed changes could limit the rights of these citizens.

Further study of the effectiveness of our fogging program is needed before we consider expanding it. Other jurisdictions have found mosquito populations have increased with fogging because it kills not only the target insect, but also its predators. The most recent trap counts show that some areas that have been sprayed continue to have high counts like area 'w' in Charleswood has a count of 146, while some areas that have not yet been sprayed have much lower counts. Increasing the amount we fog may turn out to be counterproductive.

Increased fogging will mean increased costs. Already we do not have funding to undertake the biological larvicide controls our insect control department tells are the most effective way to deal with insects. We need to ensure that it is good science that drives debate on how we deal with mosquitoes and other pests.

Thank you.