



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Charlie Parker

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Second Session

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2010

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2010

Sixty-first General Assembly

Second Session

2:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Charlie Parker

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Mr. Gordon Gosse, Mr. Leo Glavine, Mr. Alfie MacLeod

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We'll get today's proceedings underway, but before we go to the daily routine, I'll recognize the honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture on an introduction.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I want to bring the attention of the House to the east gallery. It gives me great pleasure to welcome members of the visiting delegation from the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. This delegation here is meeting with our government and environment and industry representatives. Visiting with us today, the Honourable Chandresh Sharma, Member of Parliament and a Minister of the Local Government. He has been MP since 1991. He is joined today by his beautiful wife, Lynn. I ask for the delegation to please rise and for the House to give them a warm welcome.(Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction to the House. In the west gallery this afternoon is Mr. Richie Cotton, he is the former warden of Richmond County and a great Nova Scotian. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our visitors here this afternoon and hope they enjoy the proceedings here in our Legislature.

The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill on an introduction.

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to do an introduction today, please. We have students today from Grade 11 at CEC, Cobequid Educational Centre, in Truro, with their teachers, Pete Keaveney and Rob Langille. Would you please stand and receive the recognition of the House today. Thank you for coming.(Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We'll begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Eastern Shore.

MR. SIDNEY PREST: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition from the Eastern Shore constituency. The operative clause is: We, the undersigned, petition the Government of Nova Scotia to recognize the need for the West Jeddore Road to be paved and repaired and be made a priority.

I, too, will affix my name - there are 112 names besides my own.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development.

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to bring to the House today, JobsHere, this government's plan to grow Nova Scotia's economy.

Nova Scotia has seen its lowest economic growth in the last 20 years. It's time to do things differently. JobsHere outlines how we will innovate, compete, and learn our way to a brighter future for all Nova Scotian families. This plan includes strategic investments in innovation and productivity to increase the competitiveness of local companies and create

high-value jobs for Nova Scotians. Our work will ensure local businesses are innovative and competitive and our people have the skills and learning for good jobs. It encompasses all areas of the province and all sectors of the economy. Mr. Speaker, everyone has a role to play.

JobsHere focuses on three key priorities: growing the economy through innovation; helping businesses compete; and learning the right skills for good jobs. Each priority is supported by several new and existing programs and initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, government will grow the economy through innovation by investing in companies and sectors that show a commitment to productivity, innovation and building a skilled workforce; also creating a one-stop access to provincial funding programs for innovation and productivity; expanding the Equity Tax Credit; creating a new venture capital fund; as well as encouraging and supporting new technology, clean energy opportunities, mentoring, and entrepreneurship.

[2:15 p.m.]

Some of the ways the plan will help business compete are by creating a new global business partnership initiative, creating a new international growth fund, helping businesses to connect with investments and trade partners through targeted missions, and ensuring government and the public sector are working together to be more efficient and increase their purchasing power.

Our people are our greatest assets and we need to continue to develop our workforce and create good jobs here in Nova Scotia for educated and skilled workers. Nova Scotians will learn the right skills for good jobs through investments - investments in the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning and the provincial apprenticeship system - more diversity in the workplace for international workers and diverse Nova Scotians, better support for our young entrepreneurs, and a volunteer sector professional improvement initiative.

Mr. Speaker, jobsHere supports the objectives of the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act and fully integrates environmental sustainability and economic prosperity. It challenges government, but it also challenges businesses, educational institutions, unions, associations, and not-for-profit organizations. It challenges communities and industries to help work together toward a single vision for economic growth in the province. Co-operation and collaboration help us to focus our energy and our resources to where they will have the greatest positive impact on our economy; jobsHere is a product of consultations with numerous stakeholders, including local businesses, industry associations, the economic council, and Donald Savoie.

We had many of these stakeholders join us at the launch of the plan today. I want to give a special thank you to a few people who have shown great support throughout the process of creating this plan. First, and not in any order of priority: Ann Janega, vice-

president of the Nova Scotia Branch for the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters; Rick Clarke, president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour; Ray Ivany, president and vice-chancellor of Acadia University; and Jennifer Berry, chair of FUSION Halifax.

These people are just a fraction of the people who contributed to jobsHere. Our hope is that because of the input from them and from so many others, all Nova Scotians - I reiterate, all Nova Scotians - can see themselves in this plan. jobsHere has a number of measures and incentives to make sure our businesses are innovative and competitive and our people have the skills and learning for good jobs. This is not just another government plan. This is a real plan for real people which will have positive results and improve the economy and the lives of the people of this province. This is a plan for all areas of the province and for all sectors of the economy. Everyone, and I mean everyone, has a role to play. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate that this government is putting forward an economic plan for the province, I do feel that there are some very important goals laid out in this plan, but I do sincerely believe that the plan is lacking in substance in a few key areas.

I've been informed by the member for Cape Breton South that he gave a very similar speech 12 years ago when he was minister and that just speaks to the longstanding economic issues that this province is facing, Mr. Speaker, and what we need to do is come together to address them appropriately.

There is nothing in this plan to help the many Nova Scotians who have lost their jobs in the past 18 months. In the past few months alone, close to 10,000 Nova Scotians have lost their jobs, that's back since October, and just this past week 300 people found out that they would lose their jobs in Berwick, 40 people in Pictou have been sent looking for work, and just yesterday 39 people at Oland's Brewery have been told that they'll have to search for new jobs.

We are now hearing that 100 managers of Bell Aliant in Atlantic Canada are being told this week their jobs are going to be gone, the majority of which are likely going to be in Nova Scotia. What this plan is lacking in is some concrete immediate support for those people who are losing their jobs right now, to ensure that they can stay in this province and continue to work in this province with their families.

Nova Scotians do want to know what this government has been doing for the past 18 months, Mr. Speaker, which is a very long period of time. Last year in December, this government deeply hurt the tourism industry in southwestern Nova Scotia by cutting funding to the international ferry service without a plan to support tourism operators and small businesses that needed the money that came from that ferry to support them so that they

could continue on. Tourism operators in the region are still suffering and this government has yet to give them assurance that something is going to be happening in 2011 to help them.

There have been other decisions, Mr. Speaker, that have hurt our economy and our competitive position as a province. The HST was hiked 2 per cent - something that this government said that they wouldn't do when they ran. The NDP electricity tax is causing the power rate to climb even higher. Nova Scotians are still paying higher prices at the pumps when they're not crossing the border to buy gas in New Brunswick. Our whole tax regime is uncompetitive and unfair and it is as if this NDP Government thinks they can balance the books on increasing taxes alone.

They can't, Mr. Speaker. Even their own consultant says so. Donald Savoie told the Premier, "I have long believed that a competitive tax regime is a powerful economic development instrument. Nova Scotia's tax structure is not competitive, at least when compared to other provinces." This plan does not include a holistic review of our tax system, which is problematic because tax policy is the most fundamental way that government can help our economy by making the province more competitive so business can come and thrive here and so that jobs can grow.

Right now, Nova Scotia's tax structure is not competitive. On just about every tax measure Nova Scotia ranks at the very bottom. The minister and the Premier talk about making Nova Scotia globally competitive but, in fact, we aren't even competitive in our own country right now, in terms of our tax structure, or even in Atlantic Canada for that matter. Mr. Speaker, we need to invest in our economy, we need to encourage innovation, we need to foster entrepreneurship in this province, and we do need to have a holistic review of tax system. That is something that our caucus has been demanding for quite some time.

In the past 10 years, the Progressive Conservatives failed time and time again. Right now, this government is failing in addressing the tax concerns of Nova Scotians. Jobs continue to move elsewhere, students continue to leave the province to find work, and this is another thing that I think is missing from this document, a plan to increase participation rates amongst young people in Nova Scotia. Right now our university participation rate is about 30 per cent. When you look at individuals from certain demographics - whether low income backgrounds, Aboriginal communities or rural communities - the number of those young people participating in our education system is much, much lower. There's nothing in this plan to help ensure we have the skilled workforce we need in this province to fill the jobs we have.

If we do want to improve our economy, we need to start by ensuring we have a competitive tax system. We need to review our tax system and ensure we have one that is able to allow business to thrive in this province. We need to ensure that the Nova Scotians that have been hurt right now have the support they need so they can stay in the province, work in the province and so their children and their children's children can do the same thing.

We need to ensure we have an affordable education system. Right now we're talking about increasing the skills of Nova Scotians when this government's actually flirting with tuition increases. We need to ensure we have an affordable education system here in this province and one that's accessible to all Nova Scotians.

I hope these comments will be taken very seriously by the members opposite. Thank you so much. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I will begin by thanking the minister for providing a copy of his statement before the House began today.

The minister began his remarks by saying that it's time to do things differently. But there is nothing new or different here, there is only more and more and more of the same. Only an NDP Government would raise the HST to 15 per cent and then turn around and propose to spend \$200 million on an economic development strategy.

I note that the minister credits Donald Savoie, among others, for his contribution to this document. I find it odd then that the minister ignored Mr. Savoie's single most important recommendation to this government. Reiterating the quote so wisely brought up by the previous speaker, "I have long believed that a competitive tax regime is a powerful economic development instrument. Nova Scotia's tax structure is not competitive, at least when compared to other provinces."

That's good advice that this government tossed aside. Instead they opted for a formula that would only take Nova Scotia and all Nova Scotians in the wrong direction. With this document the government had an opportunity to deliver on its promises. They had a choice but they decided to bury job creation with high taxes, with more bureaucracy, with more red tape and a complicated maze of programs.

This program is called jobsHere. The only jobs this announcement will create today are for economic development consultants. (Interruptions) Fancy or otherwise. The government simply got it wrong. I expected more and Nova Scotians deserve better.

The minister says everyone has a part to play in this plan, but it seems to me that with this strategy, the government has refused to play its part. This document does not include a single goal, a single target, a single tactic or costing or any estimate of the return on investment that taxpayers can expect. That is what a strategy would truly have. It is, in reality, no strategy at all.

There is a better way. There is a way that will build a stronger economy, there is a way that will create real jobs for Nova Scotians and that is by cutting bureaucracy, cutting red tape, giving us back a competitive tax structure. In that way the government would truly

have outlined a brighter future for our province but instead they are so obviously blinded by their own political ideology. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: We have a request to revert to the order of business, Presenting Reports of Committees.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

[2:30 p.m.]

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise today in the House to present the report from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts for the 61st General Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 2280

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas LED Roadway Lighting Ltd., a world leader in the development of energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly light emitting diode based (LED) lighting, located in Amherst, Nova Scotia, works with clients across the globe to not only conserve energy through retrofitting with LED but also provides municipalities and utilities with an easy-to-maintain way to help reduce greenhouse gases; and

Whereas on October 28, 2010, a letter from Premier Alward of New Brunswick thanked me for the information I provided him regarding LED Roadway Lighting and also informed me that LED Roadway Lighting Ltd. had been the successful bidder on two New Brunswick provincial lighting tenders, for the Saint John Harbour Bridge and the Centennial Bridge in Miramichi; and

Whereas Premier Alward concluded his letter by conveying his confidence that products manufactured by this company, LED Roadway Lighting, will be used in future projects for the Province of New Brunswick;

Therefore be it resolved that the House recognize the continuing success of LED Roadway Lighting Ltd. of Amherst, congratulate them for the recognition they are gaining not only in Atlantic Canada but around the world, and thank the Honourable Premier Alward of New Brunswick for his praise for this great Nova Scotian product.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Education.

RESOLUTION NO. 2281

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust supports research infrastructure in Nova Scotia by matching national funding from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation and benefits researchers in areas of health, environment, and technology; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust provided \$5.1 million for 21 research infrastructure products across Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the beneficiaries of this funding for research projects include Acadia University, Cape Breton University, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, and Saint Mary's University;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize the remarkable opportunities and solutions for job creation, healthier populations, environmental sustainability, the increased knowledge base, and an improved economy for Nova Scotia made possible by the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Just a comment that some of the resolutions are getting a little long. I would ask that you try to shorten them up a bit, if you could. It would more in line with our policy here in the House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 104 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 132 of the Acts of 1948. An Act to Incorporate the Trustees of Liverpool United Baptist Church. (Ms. Vicki Conrad)

Bill No. 105 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 1 of the Acts of 1995-96. The Education Act. (Hon. Marilyn More)

Bill No. 106 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 194 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Handicapped Persons' Education Act. (Hon. Marilyn More)

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that these bills be read a second time on a future day.

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 2282

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas last evening an event was held in Halifax commemorating Lebanon's National Independence Day; and

Whereas each year during this event an individual is recognized for their continued support to the Lebanese community; and

Whereas the honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park was chosen as the recipient for this award for her outstanding leadership in her community;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Legislature extend their congratulations to the honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park on receiving this prestigious award and thank her for her dedication to Lebanese Nova Scotians. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 2283

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas yesterday the Lebanese community in Nova Scotia celebrated Lebanese Independence Day; and

Whereas Lebanese Independence Day marks the day, in 1943, when the nation of Lebanon gained its independence from France; and

Whereas in Nova Scotia the Lebanese community is vibrant and enriches the cultural fabric of our province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Nova Scotia's Lebanese community on the occasion of Lebanese Independence Day and thank them for the community's many contributions to our province.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

RESOLUTION NO. 2284

MS. MICHELE RAYMOND: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the predecessor of the Nova Scotia Agriculture College was established in 1885, and since then has assisted countless Nova Scotia farmers and food researchers to learn and further the art, skill, and trade of feeding our province; and

Whereas the proud graduates of NSAC have until now had no unifying symbol of their shared experience; and

Whereas craftsman Donna Hiebert, of Purcell's Cove, has designed an official ring for the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, being a circle of stylized husks of barley like that widely cultivated throughout the province and first planted on the campus in 1890;

Therefore be it resolved that this House congratulate Donna Hiebert Designs and Nova Scotia Agricultural College graduates, past and future, on the graduates' ring, which celebrates the accomplishments of the students of an institution of learning upon which all Nova Scotians depend.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 2285

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas this morning the Canadian Diabetes Association released findings from its Nova Scotia Diabetes Cost Model, which is forecasting a 44 per cent rise in diabetes prevalence in our province over the next 10 years; and

Whereas it is estimated that 87,000 Nova Scotians are currently diagnosed with diabetes, with this number expected to increase to more than 125,000 by 2020; and

Whereas the direct and indirect cost to the Nova Scotia health care system resulting from diabetes currently stands at \$383 million, and without government action will grow to a \$0.5 billion in the next nine years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members acknowledge the leadership of the Canadian Diabetes Association for this report and urge government to develop a comprehensive secondary prevention strategy for those living with diabetes to prevent or delay costly diabetes-related complications.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 2286

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Sesagasi Unamakik 355, the Sea Cadet Corps 355 Cape Breton led by Lieutenant John Burt, Commanding Officer, provides public speaking and recreation

experiences and an opportunity to learn about the spirit of co-operation while building bonds of friendship; and

Whereas leaders are being shaped by these activities in the community of Waycobah; and

Whereas 355 Cape Breton placed well amongst peers in the Cape Breton Sea Cadet Competitions 2010, with Starla Bernard placing first in public speaking, Leading Seaman William Michael placing third out of 141 in the skills competition, and basketball and soccer teams both finishing third;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize the achievements of Sesagasi Unamakik 355 and wish them continued success in leadership development.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

RESOLUTION NO. 2287

MR. GARY RAMEY: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Harold Conrad has been a volunteer firefighter for the past 63 years, serving in three Nova Scotia departments: Kingston, Bridgewater, and Hebbville; and

Whereas Mr. Harold Conrad has been a valued community member, a valued member of his church, and a valued educator, as well as a volunteer firefighter; and

Whereas Mr. Harold Conrad recently received the 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Volunteer Fire Services Association, which is one of the highest honours available in the Canadian Fire Service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Harold Conrad for receiving this prestigious award and thank him for being a dedicated community member and loyal volunteer.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 2288

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Alice Housing was founded in 1983 to provide affordable housing and support programs to women who have experienced family violence; and

Whereas Alice Housing has helped more than 900 families leave domestic abuse situations; and

Whereas the Donner Canadian Foundation Awards recently recognized Alice Housing in Dartmouth, awarding them the Peter F. Drucker Award for Non-Profit Management;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Alice Housing on this special occasion and applaud their consistent record of excellence and innovation in management and the delivery of significant services in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

RESOLUTION NO. 2289

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Louisbourg Seafoods strives for the highest levels of control and expertise at all stages of its seafood production; and

Whereas recently this well-known Nova Scotian seafood company was recognized for the superior taste and the quality of the company's Mira Bay product; and

Whereas these recent awards will raise the awareness of their product and open up new markets and represent a tremendous opportunity for the Louisbourg Seafoods team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Louisbourg Seafoods for winning the One-Star Award for superior taste of their shrimp and letting the world know what Nova Scotians have realized for generations, the superiority of the quality of our seafood.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville.

RESOLUTION NO. 2290

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas on November 3, 2010, Hammonds Plains native and Boston Bruins forward Brad Marchand scored his first ever NHL goal against the Buffalo Sabers; and

Whereas the first period goal helped lead the Boston Bruins to a 5-3 win that evening; and

Whereas the local celebrity was drafted into the NHL in 2006, after playing years in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League for the Moncton Wildcats and the Val d'Or Foyers;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Hammonds Plains native and Boston Bruins forward Brad Marchand on his first ever NHL goal against the Buffalo Sabers, which led to the 5-3 win for the Boston Bruins on November 3, 2010.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

[2:45 p.m.]

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 2291

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Gerry McConnell and the late Dara Gordon purchased a farm in the Gaspereau Valley about 10 years ago; and

Whereas Gerry and Dara, in the course of extensive research on climate, discovered conditions in the Gaspereau Valley are strikingly similar to those in the Champagne region of France; and

Whereas their vineyard, Benjamin Bridge, has now produced two limited editions of méthode classique wines that were recently rated as having exceptional value in their price ranges;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Gerry McConnell on the success of Benjamin Bridge and be mindful of his remarks at a launch event this month, "Every Nova Scotian should be aware of the excellence that we can create when we put our minds to it."

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2292

HON. CECIL CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Crystal Dandy, a native of Sydney Mines, is making a difference a world away, in India, where she is working with CARE India; and

Whereas Crystal is employed with Pfizer Canada and each year this company sends 40 of its employees to non-profit organizations in the developing world; and

Whereas Crystal is developing strategies to support project management, finalize a business plan and evaluate projects as CARE accesses education, health care entitlements and discovers livelihood opportunities for local people;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in congratulating Crystal Dandy for her volunteer work with Palliative Care, Habitat for Humanity, Marathons for Charity and her ongoing work with Pfizer Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg.

RESOLUTION NO. 2293

MS. PAM BIRDSALL: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Dr. Andrew Eisenhauer, a Lunenburg native with a degree in mechanical engineering from Dalhousie University, an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from the Atlantic School of Theology and an honorary Doctorate of Laws from Dalhousie University, passed away on October 28, 2010; and

Whereas Dr. Eisenhauer left his mark on many Atlantic boards and corporations, serving on the board of the Atlantic Institute of Biotechnology, the National Research Council and chairing the boards of the Technical University of Nova Scotia and the Canadian Manufacturers Association and being a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering and the Engineering Institute of Canada; and

Whereas Dr. Eisenhauer, a long-time pillar of Lunenburg social and business community, - co-founded the Atlantic Bridge Company, now Atlantic ABCO Group of Companies, in 1947, and created a large and prosperous industry in the Town of Lunenburg, and fostered a sense of community through his involvement in the Bluenose Golf Club, the Lunenburg Curling Club, the Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 23 in Lunenburg and his work in the restoration of St. John's Anglican Church;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize the passing of a great Nova Scotian, Dr. Andrew Eisenhauer, a man of many achievements, awards, passions and convictions and send condolences to his surviving family.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 2294

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas 87-year-old Sarah Bundy moved from Toronto to Cherry Brook in 1990 to look after her ailing aunt and decided to remain after her aunt's passing; and

Whereas every Saturday, Ms. Bundy sells out of her homemade pies, lemon loaves, cookies, baked beans, and rolls, et cetera, at the Dartmouth Market and at Christmas gives many of her jams and jellies to the seniors and shut-ins in her community; and

Whereas Ms. Bundy belongs to the Cherry Brook Senior Citizens Club, the Cherry Brook United Baptist Church, the Dartmouth Christian Women's Group, and the Bible study group at St. Paul's Church;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize Sarah Bundy for her community involvement and thank her for the generosity she shows to others.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2295

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Nova Scotia's civil servants are committed to working to provide the best quality of service to families, to businesses, and to communities across the province; and

Whereas each year the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission says thank you to its long-serving members through the Long Service Award Program; and

Whereas Raymond Ernest Dwyer from Manganese Mines, Colchester North, was recognized for his 35 years of service with the Department of Agriculture;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Dwyer for his service to the Government of Nova Scotia for the past three and a half decades.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 2296

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Prince's Lodge, Birch Cove, and Rockingham are three communities located along the western shore of the Bedford Basin at the head of Halifax Harbour; and

Whereas Sharon Ingalls is a founding member and archivist of the Rockingham Heritage Society who writes articles on Nova Scotian history, and Wayne Ingalls is a former history professor and administrator at Mount Saint Vincent University; and

Whereas the Ingalls have written a thoroughly-researched and delightfully detailed account of these three communities from 1746 to 1946 in *Sweet Suburb: A History of Prince's Lodge, Birch Cove & Rockingham*;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Sharon and Wayne Ingalls on the publication of their book and thank them for chronicling the history of these three Halifax suburbs in such an informative and entertaining manner.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 2297

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Collaborative Partnerships Network is a Nova Scotian organization that serves persons with disabilities who face obstacles gaining employment and training; and

Whereas the Collaborative Partnerships Network began in 2001 by speaking with a unified voice on behalf of people with disabilities to ensure their access to the labour market, and they've achieved a remarkable 65 per cent success rate through their Return to Work Action Plan; and

Whereas the work of the Collaborative Partnerships Network annually contributes \$20 million to the economy by way of employment successes and a further \$10 million saved on government programs;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate and support the mission and work of the Collaborative Partnerships Network as they assist disabled Nova Scotians find employment opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 2298

MR. HAROLD THERIAULT: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the tidal power industry in the Bay of Fundy is in its infancy and will be a major industry for the province with the potential to produce enough electricity for the entire Atlantic Region, if not the whole country; and

Whereas the only suitable harbours with access at any time of tide, whether high or low, are Digby, Nova Scotia or Saint John, New Brunswick; and

Whereas being that Nova Scotia is the leader of this great source of hydro power from the Bay of Fundy, this government should make sure that Nova Scotia fully benefits from this great project;

Therefore be it resolved that this government work to make sure Digby, Nova Scotia, receives what is needed to be the service harbour for this great project rather than the Province of New Brunswick, which in turn will be even a greater economic benefit for the Province of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 2299

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the NDP Government's idea of a job creation strategy is to first raise taxes and then turn around and spend \$200 million on so-called economic development ideas that are unlikely to create any jobs; and

Whereas the Premier's idea of an aggressive plan takes one and a half years to design and three years to roll out, instead of addressing the immediate economic concerns of Nova Scotians; and

Whereas the job strategy is silent on the government's misguided tax policy and instead proposes more bureaucracy, more programs and red tape;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House urge the NDP Government to build a stronger economy and create real jobs by actually cutting red tape, reducing bureaucracy, and putting in place a competitive tax regime.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 2300

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Kidzact is a non-profit dance organization under the instruction of founder Deanna McCarron, consisting of young people between 5 and 18 years of age who choose to take a leadership role for youth in Yarmouth and give back to their community; and

Whereas Kidzact's members embody their mission to keep fit and healthy, to work together for a common goal, and to strive to be the best they can be; and

Whereas Kidzact's members are vital role models for other youth by promoting their alcohol-, tobacco-, and drug-free motto and by raising money for underprivileged children around the world;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly recognize instructor Deanna McCarron and the young members of Kidzact for making such a positive contribution to the youth of Yarmouth and for being young leaders in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2301

HON. CECIL CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Richard Penny is a familiar site as he sweeps the downtown areas of North Sydney and Sydney Mines, picking up cigarette butts, coffee cups and other litter along the sidewalks and parking lots of both towns seven days a week; and

Whereas in appreciation for his dedication to the environment, Shirley Boutilier, an educator with the Cape Breton Regional Municipality Solid Waste Management Department, presented Richard with some items to recognize his good work and to help him to continue to protect the environment; and

Whereas Councillor Gordon MacLeod of the CBRM presented Richard with a plaque in recognition of his ongoing dedication to the community and its environment, showing the appreciation of the residents of North Sydney and Sydney Mines;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Richard Penny for his ongoing work to keep the streets of North Sydney and Sydney Mines clean, and send him our best wishes.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 2302

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Isle Royal Chapter of the Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire celebrated their 75th Anniversary in Glace Bay in October; and

Whereas the Isle Royal Chapter is dedicated to combatting the many challenges related to education, social services and citizenship, and includes support to Glace Bay High School, the Town House, the Glace Bay library, Meals-on-Wheels and transition house; and

Whereas the Isle Royal Chapter of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire are actively searching for new members to build their organization and continue to provide vital services to our community and our region;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in congratulating the 19 volunteers of the Isle Royal Chapter on their 75th Anniversary, and wish them continued success with their endeavours and best of luck in recruiting a new generation of community-minded citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

[3:00 p.m.]

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 2303

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Mary Jane Lamond, of Glendale, has been selected as the recipient of the 2010 Portia White Prize; and

Whereas the Portia White Prize recognizes citizens who have achieved levels of excellence in their artistic field; and

Whereas Mary Jane's achievements as a Gaelic cultural interpreter and musician have made a significant contribution to Nova Scotia culture;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mary Jane on winning this prestigious award and acknowledge her for her leadership in Nova Scotia's cultural community.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 2304

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Scotia Chapter was founded in 1964; and

Whereas the foundation promotes activities and programs that raise awareness of cystic fibrosis, raises money for research and development, and offers support to families with members suffering from cystic fibrosis; and

Whereas the Scotia Chapter hosted a “Tea, Tiaras and Top Hats” on Saturday, November 20, 2010, at Nova Scotia Community College, Akerley Campus;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly thank the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Scotia Chapter for their work and congratulate the chapter on the success of Tea, Tiaras and Top Hats.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 2305

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Krista Dunn, of New Glasgow, has successfully made her mark on the rugby pitch as a rookie in the Quebec University Female Rugby League as well as receiving an invitation to try out for the Canadian Women's National Rugby 20-and-under team; and

Whereas this extremely talented 18-year-old has earned numerous athletic awards including North Nova Education Centre's 2010 Female Athlete of the Year, 2010 Female Hockey Coaches Award, 2010 Female Soccer MVP, 2010 Female Rugby MVP, 2009 Female Basketball MVP and led several provincial soccer and rugby teams; and

Whereas Krista is also a very accomplished student and musician, having earned many academic and music festival awards, and is well known for her community and school spirit;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly extend their congratulations to Krista Dunn for successfully representing Nova Scotia on the national stage and commend her on exemplifying the many talents and capabilities of Nova Scotia's future leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 2306

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Katie O'Connell, Minister of Volunteerism at Halifax West High School, helped organize the 2010 Halifax West team in the Run for the Cure; and

Whereas she brought together over 125 students and staff of Halifax West High School to participate in this event that is very close to her heart; and

Whereas the Halifax West team raised over \$9,000, more than any other school team, to support breast cancer research;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Katie O'Connell on organizing the most successful school team in the Run for the Cure and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 2307

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas in addition to being known as Nova Scotia's Apple Capital, the Town of Berwick is also renowned for its rich sports history; and

Whereas each year the Berwick Sports Hall of Fame holds an annual awards ceremony inducting athletes, builders, teams, as well as special recognition for individuals who have made a significant contribution to sport; and

Whereas 2010 marked the 12th Annual Berwick Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony, which was organized by a group of dedicated volunteers who have put in a tremendous amount of work to ensure the event is a success;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate committee chair Mike Trinacty and the committee members Rod Dorey, Earl Fuller, Ashlyn Sulis, Dale Lloyd, Connie Archer, Dave Johnson, Bill Walsh, Carol Boylan-Hartling and Amanda Connell for the success of the 12th Annual Berwick Sports Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 2308

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Yarmouth County resident Shirley Hubbard has been an active volunteer and engaged community member for many years; and

Whereas Shirley Hubbard has helped to raise funds for several projects, most notably the acquisition of pain pumps and the furnishing of rooms at the Yarmouth hospital for terminally ill patients and their families; and

Whereas Shirley Hubbard will be honoured with the Peace Medal at the YMCA of Yarmouth's Annual International Peace Dinner on Thursday, November 25th;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Shirley Hubbard on being this year's YMCA of Yarmouth's Peace Medal recipient and recognize the time, energy and compassion she has given her community and her significant contributions to Yarmouth.

Mr. Speaker, I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove on an introduction.

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the members' attention to the west gallery, where we are joined today by Rob LeForte, who is chair of the Alliance of Nova Scotia Student Associations. Rob, if you'd like to stand up and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Just a friendly reminder on the rules, to direct your questions here please, through the Chair, and your answers as well and, of course, no electronic equipment to be on during Question Period.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time now is 3:08 p.m. and Question Period will end at 4:08 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: JOB CREATION - ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

MR. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Today the NDP Government pledged \$200 million to new programming over the next three years but they never address the number one reason why we are losing jobs in this province, jobs that are going elsewhere and that is our out-dated, punitive, uncompetitive tax system. My question to the Premier is, how can you expect to create jobs when you won't even deal with the fundamental problem of our economy?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with the question of taxation. Small business tax is going down, the capital tax is being phased out. We have put in place tax credits for manufacturing and processing, for the Equity Tax Credit program. We are making sure that Nova Scotia is a competitive jurisdiction.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, businesses are making business decisions. We are uncompetitive with our neighbouring provinces. That is not just our opinion, that is the opinion of Donald Savoie, in the July report to the NDP Government. He states, and I quote, "Nova Scotia's tax structure is not competitive, at least when compared to other provinces." My question to the Premier is, why do you continue to ignore the advice, his single, most important recommendation?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, of course, it was also Donald Savoie who recommended that we increase the revenue of the government as part of the overall package. So we have balanced that by making sure that we do keep the province competitive for its businesses by putting in place things like reducing the small business tax, like the Manufacturing and Processing Investment Credit, which we are now moving into a different program so that we can also support investments and employees. That is the whole point of having a strategic approach to our economy.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, this government has already spent \$221 million through the Industrial Expansion Fund and we are losing jobs. The \$221 million is not open to public scrutiny, no business case made public, no accountability. Now the Premier says we are going to spend another \$200 million on new programs, but the Premier can't really tell us where that money is going to come from. So my question to the Premier is, can you ensure that every cent of this new \$200 million will be open to public scrutiny?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I believe the Opposition knows that it is this government that changed the way that the government operates, that we put in place the third-party oversight of things like the Industrial Expansion Fund. That was this government.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

FIN. - AG REPT. (11/10): DEFICIT - DETAILS

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you, sir, is to the Minister of Finance. Last week the Auditor General issued his November 2010 report. On Page 119 of that report he states, "The deficit of \$329.6 million (restated) for the year ended March 31, 2010 is the first deficit of this decade." I will again table that page of the report.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, since this obviously contradicts the fantasy that he is trying to create that he inherited an existing deficit, my question is, who is right - the Auditor General or the Minister of Finance?

HON. GRAHAM STEELE: Mr. Speaker, the thing that the previous governing Party refuses to accept is the thing that the Expert Advisory Panel told us, which was that it was a structural deficit that was left behind. The previous government had no trouble balancing the books as long as revenue was pouring into the Treasury, but when the recession hit and revenues went flat, they had no ideas about how to deal with the issue. It is a structural deficit they left behind and it is a structural deficit with which this government is coming to grips.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see we're making some progress today of getting a little closer to the truth because now we're no longer talking about real deficits, we're talking about structural deficits - whatever those are. I have with me the review opinion of the Auditor General for the estimates of the province. This review opinion of the

Auditor General is dated May 1, 2009 and I will table it for the benefit of the House. This opinion is for the original budget for the fiscal year 2010.

That budget, Mr. Speaker, showed a surplus of \$4 million and is the budget to which that review opinion of the Auditor General refers. My question to the minister is, does the minister agree with the Auditor General that the original budget for the year 2010, the last budget before he took over, was in fact balanced?

MR. STEELE: Mr. Speaker, I know, as all members of the House know, or at least those who have been here for any time at all, that the Auditor General does not give an opinion on a budget; they give an opinion on the revenue estimates. So, once again, the Leader of the Third Party is misquoting information. The reality of the situation is this. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Finance has the floor.

MR. STEELE: Mr. Speaker, the reality of the situation is this. When the recession hit and revenue went flat or even dropped, that government was absolutely out of ideas. The only thing they knew how to do was spend, spend, spend. This government has a plan and we have our challenges. Our challenges are significant, but we have the best plan, the best Leader, and the best team in the country. (Applause)

[3:15 p.m.]

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, when I hear those answers, the only words I hear are spin, spin, spin. The Auditor General certainly does audit the Public Accounts of the province. I should say this, my point in raising this today is not to say that Nova Scotia does not face real financial challenges because, of course, it does. My point is that this government has constructed a fantasy to justify its actions.

I have with me the audit opinion of the Auditor General dated July 15, 2009, in which he expressed his unqualified opinion on the Public Accounts of the province for fiscal year 2009, the last actual year before this bunch took over and I will table that opinion. These Public Accounts showed an audited surplus of \$19 million. That is the unqualified audit opinion that the Auditor General was referring to and I'll even table the page that shows that surplus.

But, I'm not done. As I get to my question quickly, sir, I will only add that the minister himself wrote a message from the minister to include in the audited Public Accounts in which he states, "The Public Accounts for the year ended March 31, 2009 reported a surplus of \$19.7 million." I will table . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, and your question please?

MR. BAILLIE: My question to the minister is, does he now agree with the Auditor General or at least with himself that the Public Accounts for the year ended 2009 were in surplus, not deficit and that not only did he inherit a surplus, he is, in fact, the creator of the first deficit of this decade?

MR. STEELE: Mr. Speaker, I'll tell the honourable member what I do agree with and that is in the budget documents from 10 years ago the total expenditure was \$4.3 billion. When that crowd was in office, expenditures went up between 5 per cent and 7 per cent every year for a decade. Spending almost doubled, almost doubled during the time that they were in office. This government has a discipline and a focus that crowd is so conspicuously lacking.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE - STRATEGY

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. It is 18 months into this government's mandate and unemployment gets worse. When the Premier came to office, the unemployment rate was high, but it is even higher now. Last month, 8,600 people alone lost their jobs in Nova Scotia. My question to the Premier is, what have we been waiting for your strategy for?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the strategy we set out today focuses on three very important things - on learning, on innovation and on competitiveness. This is the first time in the time that I've been in the House that there has been a real strategy designed to enhance our economy and to create jobs here.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, today the government learned two new words - competitiveness and economic growth. The single biggest hurdle to economic growth in this province is an unfair tax system which punishes businesses and makes us uncompetitive. It actually makes other provinces more attractive to businesses. Today the Premier talked about his initiative, he talks about competitiveness. Name one thing in your release today that talked about lowering the tax system in this province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we've been talking about making Nova Scotia a competitive jurisdiction since the very day we walked into office. That's why we lowered the small business tax, that's why we brought in the Manufacturing and Processing Investment Credit, that's why we enhanced the Equity Tax Credit program. We are dealing with the question of tax competitiveness.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is right, he's been talking for 18 months while the government does nothing to create jobs. Let's just look at last week alone: 300 jobs lost in the Valley heading to New Brunswick or Ontario, 40 jobs lost in a sawmill in Pictou

East; 40 jobs lost at Keith's Brewery in the north end of Halifax, heading elsewhere into the country - 8,600 jobs lost in our province.

Mr. Speaker, it would take a day for us to name all of the Nova Scotians who have lost their jobs. My question to the Premier is, why did you wait 18 months to develop a strategy?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the reality is that right from the day we walked through the door we have been creating jobs in this province - 500 jobs with DSME, another 150 down at the Irving Shipyards with the mid-shore patrol vessel, and the list goes on and on - more jobs with LED Roadway Lighting. All of the investments we have made have yielded jobs - real jobs for Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

PREM.: RATE INCREASES - TAX REVERSE

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, on November 2008 the member for Cole Harbour chastised the government of the day, the Premier of the day, for allowing electricity prices to rise by 40 per cent over six years. Now, just a year and a half into office, we're seeing power rates rise at a more rapid rate than what he was complaining about in 2008. That is because of Nova Scotia Power increases and, of course, the addition of the NDP's carbon tax for Efficiency Nova Scotia, which will cost ratepayers \$41 million for 2011.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier the exact same question he asked the Premier of the day on November 5, 2008, when he asked, given the decision of the Utility and Review Board that will see power rates climb on January 1st, and that now combined with the NDP's carbon tax, doesn't he think it is time to reverse the government's \$41 million tax grab?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, the rate set for Efficiency Nova Scotia was determined by the Utility and Review Board. What is important about this is that an energy efficiency program for this province is important, and I thought it was the kind of conservation measure that Liberals used to endorse, because Efficiency Nova Scotia is designed to conserve power for the end-users and, therefore, cut their power bills.

Mr. Speaker, I realize this is a kind of innovation and thinking that the Liberals aren't used to, but that is the reality.

MR. YOUNGER: Of course we support efficiency programs - what we don't support is a program that is set up in such a way that it is actually on the backs of ratepayers and really is just there to support the overhead of yet another bloated government agency. In fact, it's the Premier himself who didn't support it when he wrote, or his office wrote on June 4, 2009, "Nova Scotia Power will directly benefit from investments it makes in conservation.

The utility should not pass the costs on to its ratepayers. Nova Scotia Power itself should carry the costs and benefits of its conservation investments.”

Mr. Speaker, it was this government that said that in Opposition and went on to say, “This is the wrong time to impose a rate surcharge . . . The bottom line is affordability.” That from the now-Premier’s Office.

Mr. Speaker, let me ask another question that is the same as he asked on November 5, 2008, why is this government continuing to persist with ill-conceived plans to raise \$41 million in taxes on the backs of electricity consumers when jobs are being lost across this province due to lack of competitiveness?

THE PREMIER: Well, the member opposite supports efficiency programs and he apparently has a magic wand over there with which he can conjure them up. The reality is that Efficiency Nova Scotia was put in place as an independent agency in order to provide good conservation programs that will benefit the ratepayers of this province.

MR. YOUNGER: It’s just amazing that the Premier can spout these lines with a straight face when three days before the provincial election in June 2009 he was saying exactly the opposite.

Mr. Speaker, on November 5, 2008, the man who is now Premier said, “Seniors, laid-off forestry workers, people living on modest incomes in small towns and villages know it is hard to make ends meet when the cost of energy is so much higher. They expect the government to be on their side and not in their pocket.”

Mr. Speaker, the cost of power is an economic competitiveness issue and history repeats itself today. Today we learned dozens of sawmill workers are laid off in Westville, nearly 40 more jobs are lost at Oland’s Brewery, and 100 Aliant jobs will be lost, many of them in Nova Scotia. Power rates are one of the growing costs of doing business in Nova Scotia. So with Prince Edward Island looking at reducing rates, New Brunswick looking at freezing rates, have you explained to your Cabinet colleagues how increasing power rates, including the carbon tax you opposed just days before the election, is making Nova Scotia less competitive and is a job killer?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it is extraordinarily ironic that the Party that opposed taking the HST off of energy, opposed it, ran against it in the election, now talks about the good of consumers. It is this government that fought to take the HST off of electricity. It is this government that did that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

PREM. - JOBSHERE PLAN: TAX BURDEN - OMISSION

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Today he led an announcement about a new economic development strategy that will create jobs. Apparently the only jobs that it's likely to create are for fancy, economic development consultants. So my question to the Premier - the announcement today does little to address the root cause of Nova Scotia's economic problems. If the government were truly serious about this matter, they would have addressed our fundamental, uncompetitive tax structure. Instead, they didn't, they chose to throw more hard-earned tax dollars at a problem that the government itself has made worse by raising taxes.

My question to the Premier is, why does the announcement today make no mention of our increased tax burden, which is the main deterrent to business investment in this province?

THE PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to explain the tax system to the member opposite. He knows that the HST is an input tax credit, which does not affect business. He knows that, but he says it anyway. What he should know is that the small business tax is going down. The manufacturing processing tax credit assists business. The equity tax credit that we put in place and enhanced is helping businesses compete. The jobsHere plan addresses what we believe are the key strategic focus for our province: learning, innovation, competitiveness.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what economist the Premier is listening to. For him to say that taxes do not have an effect on business is mind-boggling. Perhaps he should listen to his own economist, Donald Savoie, who said, and I quote for the third time today with the help of the other Party, "I have long believed that a competitive tax regime is a powerful economic development tool. Nova Scotia's tax structure is not competitive, at least when compared to other provinces."

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Premier, why is your government ignoring this advice, the advice of one of its own consultants, and choosing to put its own political ideology ahead of Nova Scotia's economic well-being?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, jobsHere was released today. Mr. Savoie, in fact, has had an opportunity to look at it and this is what he says, jobsHere holds considerable potential. It is forward-looking and deals with both the economic challenges and opportunity for Nova Scotia. Cheers, Donald Savoie, Canadian Research Chair of Public Administration in Government.

I will table this so the honourable members can read it. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I hope the Premier will also table the invoice that he has to pay to that fancy consultant for that quote. (Applause)

[3:30 p.m.]

Perhaps the Premier should listen to the voice of business in Nova Scotia, the very ones he purports to want to help. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business reported that 65 per cent of businesses in this province cite tax and regulatory costs as their top concern and yet this government's announcement today is silent about its own misguided tax policies. I will table the report of the CFIB that shows that two-thirds of businesses list tax as their number one problem. Clearly, this government is not listening to the very business community that it looks to, to create real jobs. In fact, they are doing the opposite. Mr. Speaker my question to you . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party on your question.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, through you, when will his government finally realize that taxpayers and the business community do not want more expensive elaborate programs but they do want the government to reconsider its non-competitive tax policies?

THE PREMIER: Sorry Mr. Speaker, I was distracted while the light was going out, over there and things were growing dimmer. The reality is, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party knows because he was there today. We were joined with business leaders from right across the province who endorse jobs here.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

**JUSTICE: ROADSIDE BREATHALYZERS
- CALIBRATION ISSUES**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, on Friday the British Columbia Association of Chiefs of Police announced that they have discovered a problem with the approved screening device, better known as the roadside breathalyzer. They have discovered that there is a margin of error that can trigger a warning prematurely. This margin of error has never been considered an issue with the police in the past but due to changes in roadside suspensions, accuracy is essential. Mr. Speaker, my question is, is the Minister of Justice aware of the issues that British Columbia have uncovered with the approved screening devices and have the roadside breathalyzers in Nova Scotia been checked for accuracy?

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for that question. The answer to that question is the policing agencies have a system where all instruments are

recalibrated and evaluated with periodic screening. If that becomes a further issue, I'm sure they will look into it further.

MR. SAMSON: I think the short answer was no, Mr. Speaker, based on that answer. Just as Nova Scotia has done, British Columbia has enacted laws that allow for more severe roadside suspensions if someone is stopped and has a 0.05 mg blood level. The British Columbia Association of Chiefs of Police stated, we have asked all police departments in the province to immediately pull their devices out of use and send them to be adjusted. Instead of triggering a warning at 0.05 mg and allowing a margin of error to catch some people actually below this level, they will be set at 0.06 mg ensuring that anyone who now gets a warning signal from the device is actually in violation of the provincial law.

My question again to the minister is, what is he doing to ensure the accuracy of these devices and to ensure convictions in this province?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, well we have very competent policing managers, both at the municipal and within our provincial policing body. I have every confidence that they're monitoring patterns across the country and doing due diligence, I respect the fact that they will carry on with that operational procedure.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, it is essential that Nova Scotians who are impaired and are convicted with these roadside suspensions cannot go to court and appeal that the devices are not properly calibrated here in Nova Scotia. One would think that the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, who have enacted stricter laws here, would want to ensure the accuracy of these devices, so people cannot appeal based on problems with the device.

I would certainly hope that the minister, both ministers would show some leadership on this issue here in this province. But as well, what has been developing in British Columbia has been a lobby by both the restaurant and bar business, which is saying that because of the stricter rules around the 0.05 mg roadside suspension that patrons are no longer going to their establishments and the Attorney General in British Columbia has agreed to review the decision around these suspensions. So my question to the Minister of Justice is, is he as well getting lobbied by the restaurant and bar industry regarding these new changes and is he contemplating any changes to the tougher sentences that have been introduced by his government?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I'm somewhat confused by the question in and of itself because we had support from the Opposition in regard to taking a more firm stance and position dealing with impaired driving. I will say unequivocally that this government, that this minister says no to drinking and driving. For those businesses that are affected adversely because of that, we need to be more creative and supportive in the business from that aspect but when it comes to drinking and driving, it's a big no.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

ERD - FOREST INDUSTRY JOBS: MIN. - ADVISE

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question, through you, is to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development. I want to quote the minister something from his Party's 2009 brochure. It said, and I will table a copy of the document, "The NDP will create 2,200 secure jobs by rewarding investment in Nova Scotia companies, including those in key sectors like forestry."

Your Cabinet colleague has not even announced the regulations concerning your government's approach to forestry so we don't know the job impact that will result. Nova Scotia's largest sawmill today, in Westville, saw 40 people being laid off as of December 10th and employment in Nova Scotia dropped by 8,600 jobs from September to October, the second largest monthly decrease on record.

In your role as Minister of Economic and Rural Development, what does the minister say to the Nova Scotia forest industry today about securing the jobs in that industry?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what I can say is that these are tough times and do you know what? All Nova Scotians know that. Since June 2009 this government has created over 10,000 jobs in Nova Scotia, either created or sustained, maintained over 10,000 jobs. Some of those jobs are in rural Nova Scotia.

There are some things that happen in the world economy due to the market itself that nobody has any control over. We are creating jobs here and a good example of what we are doing was announced today in the jobsHere, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I find myself in a rare position where I actually agree with the minister because he is right, since these fellows took over government it is a hard place to live in Nova Scotia. He is rhyming off all these numbers and figures, I would ask him to table those so that we can share them with the rest of the House, if he is so sure of his numbers.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you, is again, to him. Your government's brochure, from the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, clearly indicates that forestry and logging employment decreased by 800 jobs in your first year of government. (Interruption) You're not allowed to talk, remember? They won't let you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

MR. MACLEOD: Eight hundred jobs were lost, according to this government and, in your own report, another 100 jobs are expected to disappear in the next year. Can the minister explain where the 2,200 jobs your government talked about in 2009 came from?

How do you propose to help the people in the forest industry? You say you had created 10,000 jobs, that doesn't mean it is so, Mr. Minister, it doesn't mean it is so.

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, for the member opposite and I think for all members of the House, this government has invested heavily in the forest industry - NewPage, we've helped maintain and create jobs with NewPage, \$3 million that this government invested in Elmsdale Lumber. These numbers are nothing to sneeze at, we are investing in the forest industry. The lumber industry throughout all of North America, especially Atlantic Canada, has taken a severe hit due to the recession. Construction is not rebounding as rapidly as the sector thought. That is unfortunate. That's a fact of life. History will show we have invested in the lumber industry and we will continue to invest to save jobs, maintain jobs, and create jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you, again, is to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development. There has been a dramatic decrease in house construction in the United States, meaning a lower demand for Nova Scotia lumber. The minister in his statement in the House a few minutes ago mentioned a new international growth fund - again, another fund created. With demands still low for lumber in the U.S., will the minister explain how this new growth fund will assist the Nova Scotia forest industry and find markets and keep open sawmills like the one in Westville, not just in his imagination?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, what this government is doing with jobsHere is we are talking about competitiveness. How can we be more competitive? In jobsHere, this is something new for the members opposite because for over 20 years they have not invested in Nova Scotians. Rural Nova Scotia has benefited from this government. We are investing in Nova Scotia with jobsHere by giving them additional skills. We are investing in Nova Scotians and we have a concentration on rural Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

PREM. - O'NEILL REPT.: STEERING COM.. - COMPOSITION

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, thanks to the work done by the Alliance of Nova Scotia Student Associations, we now know that Dr. Tim O'Neill was contracted to do a report of post-secondary education in Nova Scotia on February 25th of this year. The contract was signed by the Deputy Minister of Policy and Priorities. The contract states that the consultant will meet regularly with a steering committee of officials of the province to report on progress and findings of the review. My question for the Minister of Policy and Priorities is, who were the individuals on the steering committee?

THE PREMIER: If the member would just repeat the last sentence of that.

MS. REGAN: Who were the individuals on the steering committee?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, they would be members of the Policy and Planning Committee.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, it's becoming pretty obvious the Premier and his so-called "steering committee" had an agenda when they hired Dr. O'Neill. This was not the work of an independent, fancy-pants consultant. The contract states that a first draft report should be submitted to the Premier by the end of May 2010 and set out policy options. So it is clear that the Premier's steering committee and the Premier himself - and we don't know who that steering committee is because the Premier has refused to tell us - were keeping a close eye on Dr. O'Neill's work. Further, the contract stated that no work shall be considered complete until it has been accepted and approved in writing by the minister. My question is, did the Premier give instructions to Dr. O'Neill to alter the first draft of his report?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the Planning and Priorities Committee is a subcommittee of the Executive Council. It's a matter of public record for the member to look up. More importantly, the reason why consultants do things in draft is so we have an opportunity to look at where the work is going, it's not a complete report, and of course they take it back and they continue to work on it.

[3:45 p.m.]

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, Dr. O'Neill's contract was extended on July 28, 2010 and a Phase II was added. Phase II says the consultant will provide advice on implementation. He is now on contract until next month. The government hasn't formally responded to the O'Neill report and yet it appears it will be implemented. Let's be clear, implementing the report will mean removing the tuition cap. This is a striking departure from the government's move earlier this year to market our province as Canada's university capital. I will table the government's own media release on that. My question to the Premier is, why won't he be honest and admit he has gone behind the backs of students, he's already begun implementing the O'Neill report?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, Dr. O'Neill is an internationally respected economist. He's done a lot of work for governments right across the country. We value the work that he's done. We hope he will continue to provide the good advice. Yes, he is continuing on contract while we move through this and he is supplying, among other things, I understand, support for a forum that the Liberal Party is putting on.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

TIR - PAVING: FIVE-YEAR PLAN - TIMELINE

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. As an introduction to my role as critic, I had the opportunity to meet with the minister's staff. At that time they provided me with an overview of the department, including general issues, major initiatives and priorities. One of those priorities was the five-year plan for paving of roads. In response to a question on November 16th from the member for Clare regarding that very timeline, the minister used the word "soon" three times. My question to the minister is, what's your definition of soon?

HON. WILLIAM ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question, and of course the initiative she's shown as the Critic for Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Meeting with the staff is typical of how you do your job and I congratulate you on that. The answer is very specific, on Monday morning the plan will be announced. (Applause)

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted. I knew this minister would deliver. (Applause) However, I will continue to ask my question. The five-year plan does require time and I'm pleased that the minister has acknowledged the work of his staff in preparation. The members of the Road Builders Association also need time to plan, and the "what" and the "when" of the Premier's five-year plan is critical for their planning.

In response to the minister back in April 2010, he acknowledged the impact that his plan would have on the ability of contractors to ramp up for the upcoming paving season. The minister said in that response: It should be available within, I would hope, prior to the summer - I should say, paving season. We did miss that paving season for 2010, and it's quite understandable that contractors have remained anxious, so my question to the minister is, what comfort have the contractors received, from April 2010 until now, regarding the release of the plans?

MR. ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question and I can assure you we continue - I continue to have a very close relationship with a number of road builders. In fact, it's specific enough to say that the executive director of the Road Builders Association of Nova Scotia is a constituent of mine who regularly brings this particular concern to my attention. Mr. Grant Feltmate will be present for that announcement. It will be an announcement that will be well received based upon planning and an open approach to the issues at hand. I will completely concur with the fact that we were looking at trying to get this announcement done earlier.

Staff, in particular, has had the material ready. Unfortunately, because of commitments in another portfolio that I had over the last couple of days, the last couple of weeks, it was actually postponed because of my complicated schedule - if you want to go that far - as the Minister of Energy, but I thank my staff for their patience. They are ready

and willing to deliver this, and come Monday morning we'll be there to make sure the details are unfolded to the members present and for Nova Scotians.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I will address, through you to the minister, my comment that I believe this minister is sincere, I believed he would deliver. My final question is, do I get a special invitation to the announcement on Monday?

MR. ESTABROOKS: Thank you to the member opposite. There will be a hand-delivered napkin with your invitation.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

HEALTH: CAREGIVER ALLOWANCE PROG. - STATUS

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, my question will be for the Minister of Health. Many Nova Scotians remember last Fall when details started to emerge about the inadequate Caregiver Allowance Program. It could be described at best as a huge disappointment and at worse as a travesty. While the minister blamed others for the program shortcomings, she did state in the House the following, we're certainly reviewing the current Caregiver Allowance Program. We are identifying the deficiencies that are in the program with a view to developing our own in-home support program, which we will bring forward in the upcoming budget in the Spring. I would be happy to table that.

Mr. Speaker, having seen that quote, I would like to ask the minister through you, why didn't the minister table a new program for in-home support as promised in the Spring?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the member, and all members of the Legislature, that our Spring budget contained more than \$1.5 million of new program spending for an in-home support program. That's a commitment that we intend to keep in this fiscal year and the details of the new program will be announced very soon.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, as the minister herself has said, we've been left waiting and dangling all these months. We owe it to the individuals who have applied previously under the inadequate Caregiver Allowance Program and to the families that they are supporting, that they're keeping people out of emergency rooms, out of hospital beds, they're keeping their loved ones out of nursing homes, and we owe it to them to roll out this new program because we know full well the deficiencies of the ones that exist today. We've had six months to deliver on the program. So I would like to ask the minister, in keeping with the timeline, what does she mean by soon?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to tell the members that more than 900 families in Nova Scotia have benefited from the current Caregiver Allowance Program, but we recognize that there are many more families than 900 who could

benefit from supports, and in a very short order we will be announcing an expanded program for caregivers in Nova Scotia.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, although there may have been a number of people helped under the program, there are many more who were refused. Nova Scotians understand now that it took very particular requirements, that many were refused because they didn't meet them, and they were very unrealistic and unreasonable. So being denied access has become the routine response from the government and not the norm. So we are not impressed with that.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister about the new program coming in that she is saying is soon, or in short order. We still didn't get a good answer like we had from the previous minister who had a date in mind. My question through you is, can the minister please confirm whether the new in-home support program will be fair and accessible to Nova Scotians who meet the criteria or will it be limited to only those individuals in the community waiting for a nursing home bed?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I'd like to correct some erroneous information in the honourable member's former question. It's not the case that there were more applicants refused assistance than there were people assisted. We had approximately 1,200 referrals for the Caregiver Allowance Program. As I said, more than 900 families have benefited from the program. It's important to state the facts of the matter accurately.

The approach that this government is taking to the health care needs of Nova Scotians is to improve health care, but in a way in which we are able to sustain and live within our means. As we move forward, we will see real changes that will benefit caregivers and others in Nova Scotia. We will do that within a financial reality which does not allow us to provide universal benefits but targeted benefits. These programs are targeted. They're targeted to people who have great need and often limited financial means to acquire the services that they need.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

**HEALTH: ST. ANNE COMMUN. & NURSING CARE CTR.
- FUNDING**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the St. Anne Community and Nursing Care Centre in Arichat is truly a model for rural health care delivery. For over 100 years the residents of Isle Madame and surrounding area have been provided with excellent health care services. St. Anne is a unique facility providing both long-term care and acute care through a 24-hour emergency room. Acute care services include a lab, diagnostic imaging, EKG, trauma and examining rooms, helipad, and ambulatory care, just to name a few. All of this is done through a professional bilingual staff. My question to the Minister of Health is, will

the minister commit to maintaining the funding for St. Anne and thus assuring 24/7 emergency room coverage?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Dr. Ross actually visited St. Anne. He was very favourably impressed, as the honourable member would know, because I believe he said that in his report. If he didn't say it explicitly in his report, I want to assure the honourable member he certainly said that to me when we had an opportunity to talk about his visit there. I want to tell the honourable member that I'm very much looking forward to visiting that facility in the not-too-distant future.

MR. SAMSON: Well, it's exactly the point I want to raise about what Dr. Ross also said about St. Anne. In his report, A Prescription for New Medicine, in October of this year, Dr. Ross made Recommendation 15, which states that "District Health Authorities should consider an evolution of select Emergency/Outpatient Departments to a Collaborative Assessment Room for Emergency (CARE) model."

Although he complimented St. Anne by saying it was a well-run facility that is meeting the needs of the community, he goes on to recommend that it be moved to a CARE model, which would clearly mean a reduction in emergency room hours at that facility. Having a 24/7 emergency room has been essential to the primary care of our residents in Richmond County, as well as an important recruitment tool for physicians. In fact, you will note that the emergency room at St. Anne has been closed for less than 10 days in the last 15 years. Again, a perfect example of effective rural health care delivery in Nova Scotia.

My question to the Minister of Health is, since she knows that St. Anne is the only health facility that operates independently of any district health authority, will the Minister of Health advise what impact the Ross report will have on the operations of this facility?

[4:00 p.m.]

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, again I want to say to the honourable member that part of my visit to that facility will be to learn first-hand, to talk more to the staff and to residents of the community with respect to what their aspirations and needs are for their health centre.

I want to say to the honourable member to reassure you that there is no objective to reduce hours at the St. Anne Community Centre, Mr. Speaker. What we probably will be looking at is a change or some difference in the mix of providers, so that all of the burden isn't placed on one physician to be available all the time. We're looking at collaborative models, we're looking at the right mix of staff and facilities, and we're looking at being absolutely certain that communities have good primary care and good emergency care, particularly during those hours when those things are required.

MR. SAMSON: It is with mixed feelings that I react to the minister's response because while Dr. Ross looked at other facilities where there have been chronic closures, where patients are not able to see their family doctor in a timely fashion because of their need to keep the emergency rooms open, the minister should probably be aware, through Dr. Ross, that that is not the situation at Isle Madame. St. Anne was closed 10 days in 15 years - it's working, it's not broken, and it doesn't need to be fixed.

That is the message that was sent directly to Dr. Ross; it is the same message that will be given directly to the Minister of Health. Why there continues to be the suggestion that something needs to be changed at a facility that is functioning, that the local physician is quite pleased with how it is functioning and has been able to attract other physicians to come to the area, is a confusing message being sent to the residents of Isle Madame.

Again, because of the fact that St. Anne doesn't fall under any district health authority, it will take a decision directly from the Minister of Health as to what its future is going to be. So again, my final supplementary is, will the minister today assure the residents of Isle Madame and surrounding area that there will be no reduction in emergency care services at St. Anne Centre?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to state that the visit I intend to make to this centre and indeed, to other centres, is to be looking at ways that we can enhance and improve health care services, not take away health care services.

The other thing I would say to the honourable member - we remember, I am sure, the Corpus Sanchez report that recommended that that community health facility be brought into a DHA, and I want to say to the honourable member that that is not a direction this minister is going to go in.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

EMO - STORM (11/05/10): DISASTER ASSISTANCE - PLANS

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: My question is for the Minister of Emergency Management.

On Friday, November 5th, as you know, it started to rain and it didn't stop raining for about two days, and an unprecedented 240 millimetres of rain fell in the Yarmouth County area - this put many roads, culverts and bridges under water. By November 8th we had a full-blown disaster on our hands, with a state of emergency called in the county and evacuation of some communities, including Quinan. Thankfully the waters receded and those residents were allowed back in their homes. So, Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of EMO give us a quick update on what the next steps are for disaster assistance?

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Thank you very much for the question. Before I begin to answer the question I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the hard work that was done in that area during this disaster. I was in constant communication with the MLAs for the district who, I have to say, did an absolutely excellent job for their constituents, but I also want to acknowledge Warden d'Entremont and Warden Anthony who were on the ground the whole time, making sure the citizens were safe.

Now what has happened now - thank goodness the waters have receded and we are now assessing damage. The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, the engineers, have been called in from across the province and they're looking at 100 different structures. We are still in the process of assessing the damage. When we get a number figure associated with what we need to ask for, we will be entering into an agreement. As soon as we enter in that agreement, I will be letting members of the House know that.

I just want to explain a little bit about the disaster assistance relief program. When we enter into that, the citizens would be able to be reimbursed for their damages through the province and we will recapture that money later from the federal government. I would say that after we enter in that, it would be approximately six to eight weeks that citizens would be able to be reimbursed for their damages.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her answer on that. The Premier said about the disaster, in his press conference at the Argyle Municipal Office on November 10th, "To say that it's incomprehensible may actually be an understatement."

He also said during the press conference that not opening or rebuilding bridges isn't an option he's pondering. Local residents are counting on him keeping that commitment. My question really is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal on this one. Can he tell the House today what are the timelines for the replacement of the bridges on the Raynardton Rd., the Saunders Rd. and, of course, the one that collapsed in Tusket?

HON. WILLIAM ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member opposite, I also must compliment you personally on the co-operation you've had with me as the minister. The Tusket Bridge tender has been called, it's going to take in the period of two to three months. There will be a new bridge there as soon as possible. It will be a two-lane Delta panel bridge because of the importance that we will no longer have to be dealing with the pier that caused part of the problem. I know there are some other specifics. I'm going to be running out of time, if I may - the other bridges - I can bring you the specific information later on.

I want to assure the people of your community that they are not forgotten. Those bridges are an integral part of the infrastructure of your community and everything will be done as soon as possible. The Tusket Bridge is one, but those other bridges will be addressed in a timely manner.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, as you know, the people are facing thousands of dollars of damage to fix, replace damage caused by the flood. That damage is not covered by insurance so people like Billy, Kevin and Randy Doucette are facing the cost of replacing furnaces and other equipment.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for the Oral Question Period has expired.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I had such a great answer that I was caught off guard there. The Minister of Economic and Rural Development has quoted job numbers, stats and assumptions. Further to the request by the member for Cape Breton West, I would ask that you ensure the information is tabled, preferably by the end of work tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: That is not a point of order but it is a reasonable request.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: As long as we're not compelled, Mr. Speaker. Would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Second Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 99.

Bill No. 99 - Conflict of Interest Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Premier.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I'm rising today to move second reading of an Act to Avoid Conflict of Interest by Members of the House of Assembly, Members of the Executive Council and Public Employees. Going forward, I will refer to it as the Conflict of Interest Act.

We are keeping our promise to make government more open and accountable to all Nova Scotians. We started by introducing new regulations for MLA expenses, we also promised to introduce stand-alone legislation to clearly define the rules around conflict of interest and disclosure for government officials.

As proposed, this Act will replace sections of the Members and Public Employees Disclosure Act of 1991. The Act will strengthen and build on existing legislation, it will provide Nova Scotians with more accountability, a greater transparency in the future for members of the House of Assembly, members of the Executive Council, indeed, all public employees.

We looked at existing legislation in other jurisdictions and then we took the best provisions from each province and created a bill that puts us more in line with the rest of Canada. In fact, this bill takes us from having a relatively weak conflict of interest legislation to having one of the strongest. This bill will make MLAs, Cabinet Ministers and public employees even more accountable to Nova Scotians. It will ensure there are clear rules and guidelines around how to separate private interests from the interests of government.

It will give clearer instructions about what is considered to be a conflict while a member is in office and for up to one year after leaving their position. The highlights of this new bill include that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner will post disclosure statements from every member of the House on a public Web site. We will be the only Atlantic Province to do this. Members will have to disclose assets and debts of over \$10,000. This will be changed from \$25,000 in the previous Act. Members must also disclose the names of those who owe a debt to them in the amount greater than \$10,000. This has also changed from \$25,000 in the previous Act. The same conflict of interest rules for ministers will also apply to ministerial assistants.

With this new legislation, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner will have additional authority to educate members and public employees on their duties and obligations under the Act. He will also provide general advice and recommendations.

With those few words, I will take my place. I also want to say publicly that we have shared the regulations with the Opposition Parties. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I assume you called for second reading? Okay, I just didn't hear it.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Deputy Premier for sharing what he called the regulations, they are the forms that members are to fill out that we already had. There are still some concerns. We share the Deputy Premier's and the government's wish to be more accountable, more open, more transparent, making sure that the conflict of interest legislation is updated, ensuring Nova Scotians have greater trust in the work we are doing here.

There are some issues as he alluded to. There is one jurisdiction actually in our country that posts things on-line. He talked about separating personal and private and public life. As the member knows, the 52 of us have entered into public life. This legislation though

goes beyond us, it takes into account - we want to make sure of that, I see the Deputy Premier shaking his head, we want to make sure of that - that does not include or put our spouses and our children in an compromising situation. As I listened, I wanted to know if I have to declare my two children who I think are indebted to me or Saint Mary's University and some other place, might be indebted to me more than \$10,000.

But there are some concerns around that. I think we can go forward. There are some issues around posting. It's one thing - as you know, our caucus has been very vocal about making sure that how we spend public money should be posted on-line in a timely manner, that Nova Scotians get an opportunity to see how their member is spending public money. We're now talking about posting on-line how individual members spend their own private money.

We need to see those regulations and how it pertains to that to make sure it is appropriate, that the interests of our families are being protected. Quite honestly, the fact that these regulations do not deter people from wanting to seek public life because they're afraid of their personal finances being displayed on the Internet. It's one thing when you disclose something to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, it's quite another when you decide to post it on the Internet for all to see. We're going to continue - and I know that the conversation is going on - we'll continue to ask questions of the Deputy Premier to clarify some of the questions we have about that.

As well, as a caucus, we have talked an awful lot about a code of ethics, one that we believe should be part of this legislation. It's really an opportunity for us as a House, as elected members, to begin to help continue to restore the trust of the people of this province when it comes to how we operate and how we conduct ourselves in our businesses.

[4:15 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, practically every other organization in this province has a code of ethics. The media have one. If you go on the Home Builders' Association's Web site, one of the first things that pops up is a code of ethics. It's an inspirational code that all members of that organization aspire to. That's what I believe should be part of this legislation for us. We've made recommendations to the Deputy Premier on how we believe they could be added to this bill. We will also be making a submission to the Law Amendments Committee about the clauses we'd like to see added in terms of a code of ethics.

I know the Deputy Premier is very receptive of that good idea. I know if he could convince his colleagues to join him - but this is the beginning of the conversation that I believe we'll have over the next few days when we come into the Law Amendments Committee, but we as a caucus certainly will make a recommendation and we'll make amendments around a code of ethics. Then there are some issues around making sure that what is being posted online pertains to members, making sure that we are protecting the

interests of our families, quite frankly, and making sure that this legislation will not deter people from running for public life.

Mr. Speaker, with those few comments, I'll take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

MR. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, this bill is a very important bill because ensuring public confidence in this House, in the officers of the House, in the members and the ministers and ministerial assistants and public officials, is a very important objective that we all have a duty to ensure is achieved. Unfortunately, as all members know, we are often faced with a wave of public cynicism about our chosen profession, those who are the members of this House - a healthy dose of skepticism that it is important that we rise to deal with.

Although this is a step in the right direction, my fear is that it won't satisfy those who want us to achieve the higher standard of public confidence. In fact, I'm not sure who the government consulted with as it prepared this bill and the accompanying regulations. One would wonder if the general public, for example, were involved in some way in the drafting of the bill or some committee of the public. It's odd, because this is a government that loves to consult on many other matters - that spends months and years in developing so-called strategies that it defends its plodding ways by indicating that it is going through a period of public consultation or town halls or province-wide tours - yet there is no evidence that that occurred on a bill as important as this.

I find that odd because it is the public's view of conduct that we should be mindful of as we look at a bill like this one, and it appears that the government has not done that. In fact, as I look through the provisions of the bill, although it is a step in the right direction, one can't help but think that the government has chosen to deal with a tidal wave of a problem with a thimble of a solution, a freight train of a problem with a pea-shooter of a solution.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at some of the specific provisions, such as lowering the threshold for the declaration of assets or debts from \$25,000 to \$10,000, I'm not sure that will provide much greater comfort to the people of our province in their elected officials. Posting of the disclosure statements on a public Web site is a step in the right direction. The fact that it will be the first in Atlantic Canada to do so is not really a high enough standard, as it is accepted practice in many other jurisdictions long before now. Many of the other activities of members and ministers and assistants that the bill lists are obvious restrictions. That is how any Nova Scotian outside of this House would look at the restrictions that are listed.

Mr. Speaker, I fear that when Nova Scotians get their opportunity to pass judgment on this bill, they will find that it falls short of their objectives for conduct of public officers. It's oddly light in many areas on the conduct of ministers and members and so on. But one area where it is bizarrely intrusive is on private citizens who have private interests, who have no connection to this House other than that they're married to a member, or that they're a child of a member. I think that we should think long and hard about that intrusion. They are entitled to certain privacy rights in this country. They have not put their name forward for public office. They are entitled to a career of their own, to investments of their own and so on.

So I hope the government has weighed its decision to delve deeply and publicly into the financial and business affairs of people who are not members of this House, who are only connected by virtue of family to this House, and weighed that decision against the privacy rights and the right to pursue their own independent career that those individuals have, Mr. Speaker. When we get to the next stage in this bill, when we get through second reading and get on to the Law Amendments Committee, we will be certainly looking at ways to improve that provision of the bill to make sure that the objectives of greater public accountability are weighed fairly against the lives that spouses and children deserve to live, by virtue of being a citizen of our country.

Mr. Speaker, not only did the government not appear to take into account the desires of the citizens of the province in designing this bill, it certainly didn't look very far for other models of accountability that it could have followed that have been tried, passed and tested. For example, the Federal Accountability Act, Bill No. 1 of the current federal government, is a model that has become a model for our country and is a model that other Legislatures have designed their own Conflict of Interest Acts around. This government has chosen not to follow that example and, in fact, in many areas of the bill it falls far short of the standards set by the Accountability Act of Canada and one can only wonder why, but that is only one place that we can look to to set a new higher standard.

Mr. Speaker, that is the sphere of government but as many Nova Scotians know from their own jobs, from their own employment from their own employers, there are examples in the private sector of businesses, charities, other organizations that hold public assets in trust or set policy in trust, where they have designed their own version of this bill. They have added to it with important additions to make sure they are always on the high road - additions like a code of ethics which, to be fair, both Parties on this side of the House have been pushing for for some time. Or a code of professional conduct, a very important and standard tool for many businesses and other organizations.

We don't see that coming forward with this bill from this government, Mr. Speaker. Or something that I can speak to with personal experience from the credit union system, a statement of acceptable business practices. Each of these documents, call them what you will, are a step beyond this bill, that are employed every day by every Nova Scotian business, that all Nova Scotians have to ascribe to and sign on to. Often they have to sign

them, affix their signature to these kind of documents annually to make sure that they are aware of the provisions of the documents, of the conduct that is expected of them. They are trained and provided refresher courses on what is expected of them.

Mr. Speaker, they're also subject to severe penalties, including dismissal, when they're found to be in contravention of those types of statements in the private sector. The government has not looked to any of those examples before setting its own low- albeit better- but still low standard for this bill. In fact, the document speaks of penalties for members and others who are found in contravention of the bill, that a fine shall be no more than \$10,000. That is something that should be taken into consideration when we look at this at the Law Amendment Committee. One can only wonder what would happen if the bill had considered remedies to the public for a government that breaks its promises to the people at election time. I understand why that bunch did not want to go there but it is a valid question, it is something that people employed in other places have to consider every day.

The bill is silent on a breach of trust, for example, a very common concept in every other endeavour of employment. Having said that, it is important that we take a step forward even if the government is proposing a baby step in the direction of greater disclosure, greater accountability, a higher standard of conduct for members and ministers and so on, and so we are prepared, at this stage, to support the bill, as minute as it is, on that basis. It certainly needs more work, there are lots of improvements. I've listed a few and I know the other Party has listed a few as well.

Hopefully the government is open to making the bill stronger, because we all have a duty to make sure that we do everything we can to enhance public confidence in our system of government, in this very House of Assembly. There are lots of important challenges that lie ahead for our province. This is the body where those issues are meant to be addressed. But we can only move forward and face those challenges, and the opportunities that lie ahead for our province, if the public has a high degree of confidence in this institution. The bill is a baby step in that direction.

There are much more important steps along the way to get us to where we need to be in term of public confidence, so we can address those issues. I really do wish that the government had brought forward a much more comprehensive package of reform in this area. This is something that any panel of citizens would have told the government it needs to do towards that great objective of public confidence, but they've chosen not to do this, so we'll take the baby step along with them and do everything we can, on subsequent stages of the bill, to make it better for all Nova Scotians. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to make some comments in regard to Bill No. 99, the Conflict of Interest Act. I've had the opportunity, since this legislation was first proposed, to review it and I found it interesting when the Government

House Leader indicated that the regulations had been provided to us as well. I was anticipating the regulations, only to find they are, in essence, the forms that we are expected to complete as part of our disclosure and did not really deal with any of the other sections of the Act.

Allow me to state right off the start, very clearly, the changes being proposed in Bill No. 99, for me personally, have zero impact. I will not have to file an amended statement. There is no information, assets, or debts that I have that weren't previously required to be disclosed that I will now be forced to disclose. It has zero impact on me. I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is going to have zero impact on almost all 52 members of this House. That's the reality. So when the government says that it's strengthening this and this is going to make big changes and everything, it really isn't. Let's be honest.

So at a time when the government - for example, in the Small Claims Court jurisdiction - has now moved it up to over \$20,000, the government turns around and says, well now rather than having to disclose any assets or liabilities of \$25,000, you have to disclose anything at \$10,000. Again, for me, it makes no difference at all. When I was first elected, at the age of 25, I used to take great pride in pointing that my big liability was my student loan, and assets were none. And actually, when I was Minister of Environment, that was again what my disclosure statement said, that my liability was a student loan.

That went on for quite a few years and if I'm not mistaken, there may be a few members in the House right now, that would be their liability as well. Let's be realistic about the members who are here in the Chamber. The changes being proposed - it sounds great when the Deputy Premier says it, but in reality, what real impact is it going to have?

[4:30 p.m.]

Right now, Mr. Speaker, as you're well aware, upon being elected you are required to fill out a disclosure form - not one but two. The first one is called the Member's Disclosure Form, where you are expected to give information such as your home address, your home phone number, and you are expected to list who your spouse is and who are your dependent children. Then you're presented with a second form which is a form you are to fill out on behalf of your spouse, where you are to disclose any assets or liabilities of your spouse and table that, present that to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

My understanding is that right now the practice is that those forms are available at the Legislative Library, which is just outside of this Chamber. But the practice has been that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner only makes available the first form, which is the one the member fills out, not the one the member fills out on behalf of their spouse.

What is being proposed today is to take both of those forms and post them on-line. Mr. Speaker, if we've learned anything in what happened during the expense scandal, it's the baseless, rude, uncomplimentary and damaging comments that people will make

regarding the members of this House of Assembly with hidden names on sites such as The Halifax ChronicleHerald, the CBC and other sites.

The thought that we would take personal information of members, of their spouses, of dependent children and to put that on the Internet to let these same types of individuals do as they wish with that information, such as your home phone number, your home address. Knowing that many of us, like you, Mr. Speaker, who have to leave home and leave our spouses behind and leave our children behind while we're up here doing our work, that information of where they live and what their home phone number is will be available on-line for anyone to use as they wish - more importantly, for anyone to abuse as they wish.

When I first raised that concern the answer that came back to me was that all sorts of Canadian jurisdictions have moved towards this practice. That's what really gets me when you get into discussion on this, how people put the facts aside and let emotions render their comments on these matters. When the research was actually done, there is only one Canadian jurisdiction - one, not a majority, one - that actually posts it on a public Web site, and that is Ontario. How long have they been doing it? The change was made this year, 2010.

Do the regulations show us what specific information will be available on this public Web site? No. Does it tell us which specific form? No, none of that is there. There is only one jurisdiction, so when the Deputy Premier said we'll be the first in Atlantic Canada, he could have said we'll only be the second one in Canada. We don't know what the Ontario experience has been or what concerns have come out of that.

It gets better than that, Mr. Speaker, because one would ask if you had a privacy concern, like any Nova Scotian might have, who do members turn to? Right now under the legislation the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Officer in Nova Scotia is prevented from having any sort of authority over the conflict of interest legislation. So you can't call her, you can't call Dulcie McCallum, she has no jurisdiction. Specifically under the FOIPOP Act she is not permitted to be involved with the Conflict of Interest Bill.

So then who do you call if you can't call her? Almost every other Nova Scotian has protection of their privacy and someone to appeal to but apparently not once you walk into this Chamber, under the changes being proposed by the government.

Again, I think these are changes that the government believes will convince Nova Scotians that there has been a great change and that corruption that was taking place will come to an end. That is unfortunate because that's just feeding into a mentality which I believe a small minority of Nova Scotians still continue to have.

I remember growing up, Mr. Speaker, I talked before of my days at the bait shed and hearing people say that the politicians are only there to fill their pockets. I would challenge them on that statement and say, explain to me how they do that. Oh well, they're in it for themselves. Okay, explain that to me, how do they do that? No one was ever able to give me

an answer to those questions, but it was just something that if you repeat it often enough it almost sounds like it's true, and yet this government seems to have bought right into that mentality that the people you elect can't be trusted. We go and we stand in front of them and ask for their votes, that they can trust us and that we can represent them, but the government turns around and says, don't trust us once we walk into this Chamber. That's basically the message.

We did have conflict of interest legislation. Many of the things the Deputy Premier spoke about are already in practice; it is being done. The press has access to our disclosure statements; they're available at the Legislative Library. Any Nova Scotian who would want it, it is available through the Legislative Library, but is it appropriate to have this type of personal information being posted on a public Web site for anyone to use and manipulate as they wish? I think that's a discussion that we should have. The argument that everyone else is doing it, when we know it's not true, is just not good enough and we shouldn't be submitting ourselves to that type of mentality.

Now, here's the real challenge for us on the Opposition benches - regardless of what legitimate concerns we have with this bill, we're really at the mercy of the government, and of the Deputy Premier to listen to our concerns because he can turn around and not make one change to this bill and he knows we can't vote against it because if we stand in our place and vote against changes to the Conflict of Interest Act, we already know what the Deputy Premier will say the minute he walks out of this Chamber. So we have no choice, we really don't. That's what happens under a majority government and that's what happens with this piece of legislation - no one in this Chamber is going to stand in their place and say no when it comes to voting on this bill.

The member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island knows that - as much as in theory we can stand in our place and vote against it, he knows nobody will because that's exactly the message that will come from the government. So we are really at the mercy of the government to take their time with this bill, to make sure that members are comfortable with the changes being made and that the proper research has been done.

I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that the government is determined to have this bill passed during this sitting. I don't see the sitting lasting that much longer, so the chances that we are going to get some of the changes that we've asked for, I would have to say I'm not very optimistic, and that's unfortunate because once this current administration is replaced, what government is going to want to reopen the whole issue of conflict of interest? Well, my point would be that we should be taking our time with this to make sure we get it right the first time.

We've gone through this before, Mr. Speaker. I recall under the government of Dr. Hamm there were changes brought in to the Members and Public Employees Disclosure Act, where new rules were put in and it was strengthened at the time. There was a debate that

took place and I think everyone agreed there was a need for those changes but again here it's the question of how that information is going to be used.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, as a new parent, I don't feel the name of my daughter should be posted on a public Web site and I don't think anyone else in this Chamber should have any dependent children that they have posted on a public Web site - and that is what's being proposed here. Whether it's for safety, whether it's for privacy, I didn't put my name on the ballot to put them at risk, and that's what I believe this bill does. Again, I can't vote no on this - that's the reality.

So either the government is going to look at the concerns we're raising and try to find a compromise here that addresses Nova Scotians' concerns, because I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and you know yourself and I think the Deputy Premier knows because we were both elected at the same time in 1998, and the voters in our ridings have shown confidence in us on five different occasions - I don't have one person in Richmond County who has told me I believe that the information about your wife and your daughter should be posted on a public Web site. I haven't had one in 13 years and I don't think I ever will. So where is this demand coming from? I don't think the Deputy Premier has had it either. I'm pretty sure the people of Cape Breton Centre have confidence in him and don't think that's the type of information they expect him to be sharing on a public Web site that can be abused by anyone who wishes to do so.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, we learned during the MLA expense scandal that facts were irrelevant and that reputations were irrelevant, because people could hide behind user names and say whatever they wanted and got away with it. They'll do it again and that's what we're doing here is feeding them and giving them that type of personal information which no other profession would expect its employees or its directors to be posting on a public Web site, and I would suggest to you it shouldn't be done for us here either.

When we look at the regulations I would ask is there anything there that will show - the concerns I'm raising - that that information will not be posted? The regulations are silent; they don't even talk about it - so there's no comfort there. Many times when we raise concerns about bills the government will tell us that the regulations will deal with that - not this time, not unless the regulations are going to be changed. Again, let's keep in mind only one jurisdiction is doing this, and it is Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the definition of dependent children, often we think a dependent child may be someone under the age of majority. Not necessarily. If they are still dependent and living at home, for whatever reasons, that is going to be posted on the Web site. No Nova Scotian expects their elected members to have to share that type of information on a public Web site. What purpose would it serve? What conflict would a member be in, having a dependent child who is 32 years old? How is that going to give Nova Scotians a better sense of confidence in the work we do - but that is what is being proposed under this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, there are other provisions as well which, as a lawyer, concern me greatly. It feeds into a pattern we've been seeing from this government when it comes to respect for the legislative Chamber and respect for the elected body. We've seen that through the division or the dismantling of the Speaker's Office, from being an independent body of government to now being put under the control of the Department of Finance.

We've seen the concerns raised by former Clerk Rod MacArthur and former Speaker Art Donahoe, who raised concerns about the fact that the Legislature must remain independent, it must be above the arm of government. They are the duly elected members that Nova Scotians have sent and they must be allowed to do their job but provisions in this bill, and I'm being told it may have been in other bills, regardless, it allows an appointed judge in Nova Scotia to remove a duly elected member of this Chamber from office. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that that completely violates the division of powers between the judicial, the executive, and the legislative branch of government.

I have no issue if the government wishes to make changes to the House of Assembly Act to deal with matters where a member might be found to have violated the Conflict of Interest Act. Here in this Chamber is where we should be dealing with those matters, where there can be an open debate and where the duly elected members of this Legislature can impose the rules on our own members. No appointed judge should be able to remove a member from office when that member was duly elected in a free and democratic vote - but that is what will be permitted under this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, you'd be well aware that changes have been made to the House of Assembly Act over the years to deal with elected members who did get in trouble with the law - we now have under the House of Assembly Act that a member who is found guilty of an indictable offence with a penalty of over five years can be removed from this Chamber by the House of Assembly. But under this Conflict of Interest Act, we are prepared to allow an appointed judge to remove a member and declare a seat vacant. I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that is unconstitutional, it is not how the British parliamentary system was established and, as such, those provisions should be removed from the bill.

One of the other issues which I've raised after looking at the bill is the decisions made by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I believe we should clearly state in Bill No. 99 that any decision of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner should be the same and put forward in the same fashion as a decision by the courts and by judges of this province - that being it should refer to case law, it should refer to Statute, it should refer to precedent, and it should make the logical argument of how all of those put together is how the decision was rendered.

I would submit to you that right now that is not a requirement and decisions that have come down have basically been decisions based on a personal judgment of the commissioner. Now I have no doubt that the commissioner has probably done research and has probably looked at case law, looked at previous decisions and everything else, but

unfortunately in a number of matters where I have read decisions, it is not in there. So it is very difficult, Mr. Speaker, when you have a decision, when you can't actually look at basically how it was determined and a decision on the same matter that might have been made five years ago, what was the decision in that case?

[4:45 p.m.]

I believe that needs to be strengthened, that it needs to be made clear as well. My quick review of the legislation, to me, left doubt as to whether a decision by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner can actually be appealed to the courts. I was told yes it can, but again I think those are matters that require further debate as to whether that is the case or not.

Again, I know our Leader has pointed out what impact this will have on future Nova Scotians seeking public office. Those who seek public office realize that there is a certain amount of private information that they're expected to disclose, but if we're telling Nova Scotians if you run for public office you need to have your spouse's name, your dependent children, your home address, your home phone number all listed and posted on a public Web site, I would be curious how many Nova Scotians would want to stand for office under those conditions. I can tell you, as a young parent I would have thought twice about entering this Chamber had I known those were the types of rules - not that I had anything to hide - as I told you, these changes have zero impact on me, I would suggest probably zero impact on most of the members here, when I look around the Chamber. Yet that whole privacy aspect, I don't believe, has been probably examined.

I think it's a knee-jerk reaction and I think it flies in the face of the confidence Nova Scotians have placed in us, and the respect that I believe that most Nova Scotians still have for the men and women who serve in this Chamber. Those, I would suggest to you, are the majority, and those are the people we should never forget here, and not continue to focus on the small minority that, regardless of what we do, it will never be enough, yet none of them will ever put their name on the ballot to run against us, we all know that - they'll criticize us, they'll say nothing good about our profession, but will never put their name forward, but we continue to put our names forward.

When I think back to the comment when I was at the bait shed, a fellow said they're in it to fill their pockets. I look around this Chamber and there is no one filling their pockets in this Chamber; there is no one getting rich in this Chamber. In fact, I'm sure tonight, as we go to the Speaker's Reception, we'll often laugh and look and say, why are we doing this? That will be more the question, not discussions on our stock portfolios, or on our investments, or what our investment advisor is saying as to what we should do. It will be more - why are we doing this? That will be the question.

I say that in jest, but you know that's the reality. If we continue to play in that mentality, that we're in it for the money - I can stand in my place and I can tell you if you were to look at my colleagues who were called to the Bar at the same time as I was, who are

in private practice, they are earning over double what I am earning in this Chamber. I'm not saying that to ask for sympathy - I made a choice; I enjoy what I do. I don't regret my decision. I've enjoyed serving the people of Richmond County for 13 years, but it wasn't because it was a financially good decision on my part. My colleagues I graduated with are quick to remind me of how it was not a financially wise decision on my part. That's why people enter this Chamber - it's entering because it's a sense of wanting to serve, it's a sense of a sacrifice, of knowing that many aspects of your private life won't remain private any more, but you're prepared to accept that.

I believe this bill, and the posting of that information on a public Web site, cross a line. It crosses a line for the members of the executive, it crosses the line for the government backbench and it crosses the line for members on this side of the House. If the Deputy Premier doesn't change it, and is not prepared to look at an amendment, I have no choice but to still vote for the bill because I would not be able to have the media, or anyone who publishes commentary, understand my concerns and why I would not have voted for this bill.

I'm sure the Deputy Premier will be the first to say how the Liberals and the member for Richmond are against strengthening the Conflict of Interest Act should we vote against it. So we're stuck - we have to vote for it. Yet I believe what I've highlighted here are legitimate concerns. I believe, when I look at the faces of the members of government that even they probably weren't aware of where exactly these changes are taking us. When it comes to their own private information, when it comes to the security of their own families. I'm not sure they even understood where exactly this bill would go.

I have to agree with the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party that if we had put this either to a citizens' panel or to a group of individuals in business and in other organizations that are familiar with a code of ethics and codes of conduct in the business workplace and in the organization workplace, maybe we could have come up with some changes here that would enhance the bill and that would be very reasonable.

As it now stands, I can tell you I'm uncomfortable with the bill for the privacy issues I have raised. Again, I can assure you I will not have to file an amended disclosure statement if this bill is passed. I do not have assets or liabilities that are going to have to be disclosed because the limit has been dropped from \$25,000 to \$10,000. I would submit to you I don't think there are too many people in this Chamber who will have to either, but it sounds good when the Deputy Premier says it.

The media will probably play it up as being this wonderful thing that will give Nova Scotians that much more confidence. In reality it does nothing, but it sounds good when you say it. Having information of a private nature posted is crossing a line. I think it sets up a dangerous situation. The last thing we'd ever want to see is any member of an elected member's family be put in any harm because of the fact that they put their name on a ballot and because of a bill that we passed here in this Chamber.

I do hope the Deputy Premier and the Cabinet will want to look at changes and not want to rush through this bill. While it may not have an impact on us today, it could certainly have a very negative impact and an unfortunate situation on the members that will follow us.

With those remarks, I do look forward to the Committee on Law Amendments and I certainly do hope the government will be willing to continue the dialogue on both the bill and the regulations so we can make sure that when we walk away this is a matter that we will not have to be dealing with for a long time to come. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

HON. CECIL CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise with regard to the debate on the bill before the House at this time. Just to build on the comments rather than reiterate them, I'll try to be as brief as possible.

I do want to also share, Mr. Speaker - I know as you do, having been sitting in the Chair of Speaker, what information becomes privy to the Speaker and what information is really appropriate for disclosure versus public dissemination and disclosure for the purposes of transparency. One of the things that I know, if we look back to a process, and sometimes it happens in haste. When the Auditor General's report came forward with regard to the members' review and when that review came forward, it's now called the MLA expense scandal.

I know that when efforts went forward with regard to what used to be the Internal Economy Board, and now with its new form, when that came forward I remember sitting in as our representative in the Red Chamber. What happened was, for a process that was so severe in terms of public outrage and distrust and a negative perspective of what occurs here - I recall having sat in the Speaker's chair and dealt with the administration. Never once while I was Speaker of this House did I actually assume that someone was doing something untoward or doing nothing less than what the financial provisions were in place for them to do.

We all know that with the regulations, if things were within that, they actually flowed through the Speaker's administration with the very hard-working people there. They were merely following what was in place. People's perspective - I remember where we got this issue of generators - became as a result of hurricanes and people wanting to help at a local level with regard to emergency response - whether it was seniors' complexes, community issues. All of that stuff, I'm just saying, the Minister of Community Services is snickering and shaking her head. I don't consider it a laughing matter. I'm saying there's a root cause, minister, where this came from at the time. What I'm saying is, because they had an allocation, members felt they would do that and most, as the case may be, were done for sincere reasons at a community level.

The minister was not in the House at that time, but I can tell you, many people independently - regardless of Party - did what they felt was respective of the needs of their constituency and that was urban to rural, to semi-urban and rural, that's the dynamic we have.

I find it a bit disturbing that the minister would want to snicker and dismiss this when I actually took it very seriously with regard to how things would come forward. I'm just trying to say about disclosure purposes, it was only when something was contravening that that then it would come forward through the Chief Clerk and then brought to the Speaker to take a look at it. So sometimes people say these things happened under your watch. Well, I would say what is deliberate versus what is an unintended outcome? People acting individually may have not taken in the severity of what the lens was from the public of how they would view those things.

In one setting it may have been seen as a good thing and in another setting it may be seen as something that was inappropriate and not acceptable whatsoever. So we moved to make changes, Mr. Speaker, as part of a process - we came forward and sat in the Red Room willing to deal with what then became known as the members' expense scandal, willing to sit down and be practical. But, instead of wanting to have an all-Party full disclosure process, what ended up happening was there weren't even motions put on paper. There weren't even motions handwritten to disseminate.

There were motions by the government members there and I remember the Minister of Finance was there and as they were doing it, he was saying keep going, keep going, get these things through, we're going to clean this up, so it was. The government as of today still pat themselves on the back as though they were cleaning something up rather than being part of a process that they themselves - as was accounted for by the Auditor General - where if you want to put blame, I guess in the sense of disclosure, there was enough blame to go around. Because the Auditor General's report didn't have a political lens by Party, it merely looked at what they thought should be an appropriate process.

So we went through that and we had very hastily put forward measures by the government which they went out heralded as cleaning it up. I remember while we were there, it came up at the time and the member for Cape Breton South moved the motion with regard to advertising expenses. Because that seemed to be missing during that session when, indeed, that was part of what the media were looking at and the variances. Aside from generators, a lot of extra money was spent on things like advertising. Again in the individual areas and the settings, especially urban ones where there's so much going on, people communicated different ways.

We may be part of three Parties in this House but we are 52 individual MLAs who have to do their own operations because no two constituencies are alike and that was part of what we had. So in response to the knee-jerk reaction that was coming from the government, the member for Cape Breton South then put forward the motion with regard to advertising

which was missed. The Progressive Conservative caucus supported that and the government, because they were before all the cameras of the day, then had to agree with it. Every member knows, did we have the best outcome that day? Have we truly reformed our constituency offices to the best and most transparent manner?

I would say, Mr. Speaker, we've made changes that were necessary and we won't disagree with that. Has it made it easier for people to operate their constituencies and heralding we took away all these expenses? Well, I can tell you when the children and youth from the schools came in about Encounters with Canada, or the minor hockey group, or the young theatre players, they're looking for some base resources from their representatives. I don't think as local representatives we've done them a good service. I don't think when we were providing those services we were doing anything untoward or illegitimate but collectively this House has tried to out-compete themselves as who is going to have, you know, the highest standard and raise the bar.

Again, why I say that is not to belittle anybody, but it just goes to show that the race to who is more right doesn't make a better or more rightful outcome. We have not been transparent amongst ourselves. We have not, to my knowledge, with this bill talked amongst the caucuses. It was not presented in terms of what are the best forms. It was not provided for the full disclosure for debate. If we're truly sincere about it, these are important things. We have people with experience. Again, we have people from varying backgrounds and all of that should be taken into account if we are truly trying to look at it.

[5:00 p.m.]

As someone who may be moving on from this Chamber, I look at it saying about the person who comes next and regardless of who the people pick, is the next MLA potentially for Cape Breton North going to come into an environment that I can say is one where you can hold your head high, you're going to be able to serve your constituents? I truly, in my situation, try to represent and spend my money wisely and I never was without accounting for that to the public.

I admire the members that if there was an error or a mistake, or a lack of judgment, they said it, they admitted it, they owned it, they went to the coffee shops and to their churches and community halls and they dealt with it. For those who could not deal with that, the public will judge, and for those who crossed the line, that is why there are other processes that are in place to deal those things and that's appropriate.

Again, I relate this back to - have we truly helped people? We may have changed things for optics, but outcomes, and more importantly representing your constituents, and if the future MLA for Cape Breton North is coming in, I'm going to say, can you more effectively represent your constituents?

I would say, unfortunately, they're lacking some of the resources that they should have and what I think an elected official should do, and I'd really like, at some point, and hope, that people can come back to some basis of normality and stop counting dollars and start talking about service to constituents and disclose all of that.

I don't care about every cent that I spend in my constituency, if people want to see it, and if the community groups want to know it - but in trying to deal with the problem, we have not really provided a solution, and that's where I'm going with this bill today. Have we really presented a solution by virtue of this bill? Because two of them go hand in hand to say, are we really serving Nova Scotians by trying to out-compete rather than do what this esteemed Chamber should do and that is to rise to the occasion of the challenge of the day, as legislators, all 52 of us, and find the best consensus that is going to provide the confidence to the public that they deserve, with disclosure, and at the same time, provide us with the resources for the needs of meeting constituents' demands in this day and era?

We're in an era, where, when I first started, didn't have a BlackBerry, didn't need laser printers, didn't have to have a computer, but things shifted. In the close to 10 years since I was elected, the reality of what I started with as an office, versus what it is today, is totally different. Yet, we want to take a look and attack some of those things rather than say, are those the needs you have to represent people in a modern context? Because I know, when I met with students, they want to know that I'm getting back to them through my Facebook site, and they're signing up for Twitter. There's a whole new level.

Rather than saying, that's actually allowing you to communicate and work with people, someone's going to analyze and say, how much does it cost you to do it? Society is changing, people are changing, you know, the seniors' clubs are getting in touch with us via their e-mail and the Internet, things that wouldn't have been a factor ten years ago.

So again, what are things relevant to this society? I think we've missed the boat, and I do believe, in haste, we had outcomes in that Red Chamber that we are all trying to find ways, new forms of disclosure, that will affect our advertising, are going to come forward, and we're not actually serving our constituents in the manner we should be, in my humble opinion, that would be more effective for us. I've heard members grumble about what they can or can't do, and what they could do before, for legitimate community purposes, and that communities and constituents were expecting MLAs to be able to do as a parliamentarian, and I've heard it from all members of the House, so there's no sense trying to say it's not the case.

So what we have now, as a result of that process, going back, that's how the advertising thing was. The government rushed in things with no advance discussion so the Opposition puts something in and forces the government to agree and really, has the public been better served? That's a real question.

So now we have this bill, and there are some legitimate things that have been brought forward, I would say, even with regard to disclosure of dependants. I know, from having previously sat in that Chair, of a member, who I will not name, who actually had a dependant - it was actually a child of a dependant, that they were legally responsible for, and it's no one's business if they're doing that, because of family purposes, because it's the right thing to do. People do not need to know, in my opinion, if parents, in this case one being a member of this House, were taking care of grandchildren because of reality that happens in life nowadays. Why would that be something someone would disclose? That's what some of these things would result in, so why would those types of things - and I just sort of build on the member for Richmond, and when you talk about dependants, that's what we're talking about because we do know - and everybody knows someone in every constituency who's a grandparent who's taking care of a grandchild and helping out to take some pressure off, some stress off, because of life's realities. Really, is that the business of the people to know, and how does that relate to an MLA doing their work if that's a potential outcome?

Again, we talk about disclosure, but the forms of disclosure should be something we look at. If people want to know - if the Conflict of Interest Commissioner needs to know, or would like to know, what my personal financial situation is, again to the member for Richmond, I don't have an issue with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner being provided that and holding that in trust as an officer of this House. If it's provided for the need, if issues of conflict come up, it can go to the Commissioner and that is fully disclosed to the Commissioner so that person can make a proper assessment of any situations that come forward or questions that may arise.

I think when we talk about what goes on-line, well, if someone wants to know if I've got a mortgage, well, yes. The other question is, is it anyone's business what the number is? If the Commissioner wants to know it just by virtue of if you're in Cabinet, someone's doing contracting work - I mean, it has happened elsewhere in the country, so people can verify it, they'll have it. That's for the Commissioner to verify.

I would say one of the things we have to look at is, what would Nova Scotians want to know of their politicians and know about them in relation to their ability or if they're fit enough to do their job and if they are truly in conflict or not - and we've talked the forms of disclosure.

I would just echo the comments that have been raised and say that I think the government's desire for making sure there's better disclosure is something we all support. The form of that disclosure may not be the outcome we have because we still are in a process we have patch-worked together. We've had knee-jerk reactions to so many things in the race to see who is more right than doing what is right for us as legislators in this House and making sure the public has full confidence that 52 members can stand up and say, I believe in the processes of this House, I agree with them, I accept them, I'm happy with the disclosure that's there. What we have is something that is unfortunately coming across as, this is the government as they've been doing, patting themselves on the back that they're

more right than the Opposition, but they may find themselves another day with another government determining how right they were. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: If I recognize the minister it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Deputy Premier.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, may I say that I truly thank all the interveners here today. I've heard what they said. In all sincerity, if we can improve this bill with those interventions, we will. With that, I close debate on Bill No. 99.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 99. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 100.

Bill No. 100 - Labour Board Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Labour and Workforce Development.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I am rising to move second reading of Bill No. 100, the Labour Board Act. Our government introduced the Labour Board Act on November 19th because we believe it will improve the labour relations climate in this province. We know that the men and women of Nova Scotia want to be actively engaged in the work they do and we understand that employers and employees want to share a professional and productive working relationship with one another.

Currently, labour relations in Nova Scotia is governed by several pieces of legislation. In the past, legislative changes were made in a piecemeal fashion, addressing issues as they arose, and some labour relations legislation has not had a complete review in some time. For example, it has been 25 years since the last comprehensive review of the Trade Union Act.

Mr. Speaker, we are taking a strategic approach to correct the shortcomings of earlier administration. Our first measure is the formation of a Labour-Management Review Committee. The committee's scope includes all labour relations issues and relevant legislation, including the Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act, the Highway Workers Collective Bargaining Act, and the Corrections Act. The committee would review labour

relations legislation and recommend possible future amendments. It would also advise government on labour relations issues.

Mr. Speaker, we would establish this committee in the coming months to ensure a timely review of the Trade Union Act. It would have up to 10 members, with labour and management equally represented. Key business and organized labour leaders will be asked to nominate representatives to the committee.

We believe the Labour Management Review Committee will provide an informed approach to keeping our legislation current and responsive to the needs of the labour relations community. In addition to the input that the Labour-Management Review Committee would provide, we are also streamlining the dispute resolution mechanisms currently in place.

Mr. Speaker, for many years . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The chatter is getting quite high and it is hard to hear the minister.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Workforce Development has the floor.

MS. MORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For many years we have maintained four boards to address labour relations issues in this province. The majority of disputes are currently heard by the Labour Relations Board. In an average year the Labour Relations Board holds about 150 hearings and there are three other boards established under separate legislation and each dealing with specific groups of employers, employees and issues.

Mr. Speaker, I am referring to the Civil Service Employee Relations Board, under the Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act, which hears disputes through the province and the union that represents civil servants. Similarly, we have the Highway Workers Employee Relations Board, under the Highway Workers Collective Bargaining Act, for disputes between the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and the union that represents highway workers. Last but not least, we have the Correctional Facilities Employee Relations Board under the Corrections Act, which addresses disputes between the Department of Justice and the union that represents the men and women who work in our jails and prisons.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier that the Labour Relations Board hears about 150 cases per year. The other three boards are used less frequently. For example, the Highway Workers Employee Relations Board has held three hearings in 13 years and arbitrated 10 disputes.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would merge the Labour Relations Board, the Civil Service Employee Relations Board, the Highway Workers Employee Relations Board, and the

Correctional Facilities Employee Relations Board into one new board - the Labour Board - in early 2011.

Across the four existing boards one constant remains, each board deals with contract disputes between employers and unionized workers. We believe it would be more efficient to have one board hear all these disputes. The Labour Board Act would streamline our processes, allow the Labour Board to operate more efficiently, and ensure that its resources are used to full capacity. That is the process in most other Canadian provinces.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation will establish a regime where disputes will be resolved with more consistency and greater clarity for our clients. The new Labour Board would have a full-time chair appointed for a five-year term through an Order in Council. The chair's compensation would be comparable to a deputy minister's, currently in the range of \$137,600 to \$189,200.

[5:15 p.m.]

We will build on the shared expertise of these boards and make better use of their resources. This will avoid duplication of effort and deliver improved supports to the labour relations community. We have a transition plan to minimize inconvenience or confusion for clients during the merger. Existing board members would move to the Labour Board until their current term ends. At that point, they could apply for reappointment to the Labour Board. The new full-time board chair will take the lead in developing processes and approaches to decisions leading to greater consistency for clients.

At the bill briefing on Friday, I received a few questions around cost savings, the number of board members and similar topics. For the benefit of those here this evening and those listening, I would like to explore these areas in a little more depth. The six existing boards have about 55 arbitrators. These people are not on staff, they are on call, if you will. They are appointed to arbitration boards as caseloads require. The new board would maintain a similar number of arbitrators, again, they would only be paid when they are arbitrating a dispute. For clarification, it is the employer and the union that share these costs, not the taxpayer.

There are no plans at this time to reduce administrative support for the boards, only to use those resources more efficiently. The Labour Board will be more efficient in terms of how fast hearings are scheduled and in the consistency of decisions. The overall operational costs will remain approximately the same. We may see lower operating costs over the long term, but that is not one of the key drivers to the approach that we are taking.

As I have explained, the current labour relations system is confusing for stakeholders. With four boards in place, some people do not know which board would hear their dispute. The situation is further complicated by the existence of two more boards: the Labour Standard Tribunal and the Occupational Health and Safety Appeals Board. These boards do

not address labour relations disputes. The Occupational Health and Safety Appeal Panel deals with workplace safety issues, including administrative penalty appeals. The Labour Standards Tribunal handles disputes about workplace standards, minimum wage, hours of work, terminations and the like.

I mentioned earlier that we intend to merge the four labour relations boards in early 2011. A few months after that the Labour Standards Tribunal and the Occupational Health and Safety Appeal Panel would join the Labour Board. This bill also introduces a number of operational changes that streamline our various processes and make them consistent across the board, if you will. Under the Labour Standards Code there is currently no requirement for an employer to post a security deposit if they appeal a decision of the Labour Standards Tribunal. This legislation would require employers to post a deposit to secure funds for payment and to reduce frivolous appeals.

Similar practices are in use in other jurisdictions. The amount of the deposit would be set by regulation but would not exceed the amount of the order that was being appealed. This legislation also proposes that the director be given authority by regulation to recover the cost of services provided under the code. This would occur in very limited circumstances.

A specific example would be clearance certificates. When someone is buying a business they often ask the department if there are outstanding charges or penalties that the business could be liable for. We do a search of our records and provide a list. We don't feel that taxpayers should be subsidizing business owners who are making a business decision. That is the cost of doing business. This type of cost recovery would not limit employees and employers fair and reasonable access to justice.

Overall, the Labour Board will strive to be more innovative and to make greater use of technology such as video conferencing to reduce travel costs and time both for panel members and parties appearing before it. The bill would also allow the board to issue some decisions based on written submissions. We know that on the whole our stakeholders like tripartite boards where labour, management, and a neutral chair together create a balanced decision, but in some situations workplace parties will have the option of using written submissions alone without hearings if they choose to do so.

Simply put, the new Labour Board will be more efficient, more transparent, and more consistent. We have proposed some other changes that will make our labour relations processes more efficient. Hearings about labour standards issues will no longer be recorded. The process is expensive and time consuming and we have not had many requests for transcripts.

In the past, Justice lawyers have had to attend all labour standards hearings. Now, with a full-time chair in place, the Labour Board will have consistent processes, eliminating the need for a Justice lawyer to attend to ensure that proper procedures were followed.

Lastly, at the request of the Nova Scotia Construction Labour Relations Association, this bill includes a provision for the association to collect fees from its employer members and a framework to make dues payable and to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place.

Consequential amendments will be made to the Trade Union Act; the Civil Service Collective Bargaining Act; the Highway Workers Collective Bargaining Act; the Corrections Act, Schedule A; the Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act; the Education Act; the Labour Standards Code; the Occupational Health and Safety Act; and to related regulations under these Acts.

The labour relations climate in Nova Scotia has been relatively stable with very few strikes or lockouts. Still, there are workplaces where unionized workers cannot strike or be locked out by their employer - for example, the Public Service, police, and fire service. In those instances if the collective bargaining process fails, the parties make their case before an arbitrator and the arbitrator decides what will be or not be in their new collective agreement.

In some collective agreements, there are lists of employment terms and conditions that can be resolved by an arbitrator. These lists tend to focus on monetary issues such as wages and salaries, overtime pay, et cetera, or other issues such as vacations and holidays, grievance procedures, and layoff policies. While the process seems straightforward at first glance, there have been disputes over whether a specific condition of employment could be arbitrated or not. There have been cases where a dispute had to go before the courts to confirm whether an issue could be arbitrated. Under these proposed amendments for workplaces where strikes and lockouts are not allowed, the list of terms and conditions that limits what can be considered under binding arbitration would be eliminated. This would prevent disputes about what terms and conditions can be arbitrated, and this should speed up the resolution process.

I've outlined several ways in which this bill would improve labour relations in this province, but like the infomercials say, wait, there's more. There is a longstanding process in the way government addresses changes in the ownership of its services. In labour relations speech, these are called successor rights. Under successor rights, if a business changes ownership, the union that represented the workers before the transfer would continue to do so afterward and the collective agreement that was in place would still apply. For example, when the Property Evaluation Services Corporation left Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations to become a not-for-profit entity, the NSGEU continued to be their bargaining agent. The Property Evaluation Services Corporation continued to be bound by the collective agreement that was in place.

The process changes a bit when there are multiple unions and more than one collective agreement, but the concept of the continuation of bargaining rights is the heart and soul of successor rights. While successor rights have existed in practice, they have not been included in legislation as it pertains to the broader public service and we are correcting that

with this bill. Successor rights are common in the private and near public sector. The Premier committed to make them a standard government policy and procedure.

Merging six boards into one will mean greater efficiency, greater clarity and better transparency for employers, employees and their unions. Eliminating arbitral lists will make it easier to resolve disputes for workplaces that cannot strike. Adding successor rights to our legislation will enshrine a long-standing practice that protects government workers. The other changes we are making through this bill will, we believe, make for a fairer and more equal labour relations environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the comments from the honourable members on both sides of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, my remarks today will be brief. In her remarks at the bill briefing the other day, the minister said that merging six boards into one will mean greater efficiency. We do accept that it may make the process more streamlined, but we have no evidence that it will mean any efficiency in terms of savings. For a government that keeps reiterating that cuts are necessary - and we are talking major cuts coming up to some key government departments - we are surprised that we are talking about hiring a new person at a deputy minister's salary, so we have concerns about that. Is this actually the right time to be adding a position with a salary equivalent to a deputy minister?

This new labour board could, in fact, have up to 54 members and anyone who has been on any kind of a decision making body that has 50 members - or even more than 30 - knows that making decisions that way is often very difficult. (Interruption) As the member for Dartmouth East just suggested, it's sort of like Council on steroids, and so it may be difficult to come to any conclusions there.

Allowing government workers to continue to be represented by a union if their work moves to a private company, we're just wondering, is it anticipated, at this time, that we're going to see the government moving more in this direction? Is that why this has been included?

This bill may have the affect of simplifying processes for workers and making things a little clearer about where you're supposed to go when you have a certain problem. They'll now go to one board rather than trying to negotiate through different boards, but we need to make sure that we are responsive to the needs of workers on an ongoing basis. I do have to say that, in terms of representations on this particular bill, I had not actually received any correspondence from any union or any party who would have been involved in that until this week. I'm not sure that for most organizations it was a burning issue.

Here is another case where we are dealing with a bill that might be termed some housekeeping when, in fact, we have not had formal responses from the government on some of the key issues of the day. We've had no formal response on the O'Neill Report, we've had

no formal response on the Ross Report. People are starting to term this session, the Seinfeld Session, because it's a session about nothing, and we're wondering when we're actually going to get responses from the government on the big questions facing this government of the day. Thank you.

[5:30 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in my place to speak to Bill No. 100. Although Bill No. 100 will streamline some things and cut out some red tape, there are still many unanswered questions that must be addressed. Bill No. 100 consolidates six boards in the labour field, including the Labour Relations Board which deals with labour relations in connection with unionized employers and the Labour Standards Tribunal which deals with non-union situations.

It should be noted that a majority of the provinces have already brought in and passed similar legislation - only Nova Scotia, P.E.I., and British Columbia have so far not done so.

Mr. Speaker, the new board will have a large number of members who will be retained until their terms end and will then be eligible to reapply, about 54 members. One of the real concerns might revolve around who becomes full-time chairman of the new labour board. Normally, in the past, a panel hearing the case will consist of a labour representative, an employer's representative, and a neutral chairman. There are reasons for this, including it is useful to have panel members who understand the specific matter at hand. If it is a highway matter there will be reps who understand how highway construction works - similar if there was another construction problem and so on. The neutral chairman would likely also be a person with some familiarity with the subject matter.

Mr. Speaker, there is concern in the legal and employers' community about who will be the chairman and they are concerned that it might be someone biased towards one side of an issue. Historically, professors or retired professors from Dalhousie Law School, or a retired deputy minister with a legal background, have headed boards in this area of activity. To take a job full-time, as Bill No. 100 proposes, such an individual would have to give up his or her law school job and thus lose seniority and possibly long-range employment - although the salary of \$187,000 ought to somewhat alleviate that burden.

Mr. Speaker, in New Brunswick a similar consolidation into a single labour board occurred under the former Graham Government and a very union-friendly lawyer was appointed full-time chairman, something which greatly annoyed employers. Some of the questions that must be asked: How is this new arrangement going to benefit Nova Scotia businesses and workers? Why is it necessary to have a board of 50-plus people? Is the board going to continue to be made up of more than 50 people? Isn't this somewhat unmanageable? What about staff? Is there not a danger of the development of a whole new

bureaucracy here? Could the minister assure us that the chairman and vice-chairman will be individuals who are both known for their integrity and impartiality in terms of labour relations - that is, they are not directly affiliated with or known supporters or advocates of either labour or management, that they are wise but neutral and fair individuals?

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the unanswered questions that are out there, and we look forward to hearing remarks as this bill moves forward to Law Amendments Committee. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: If I call the honourable minister, it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Workforce Development.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable members for their comments and, rather than repeat some of the content of my speech, I suggest that you read it in Hansard and there will be some of the answers to your questions there.

This is a significant piece of legislation, and I am very pleased that a number of the labour leaders and business leaders in Nova Scotia were present at the bill briefing and certainly support the kind of consultation and development of this legislation that took place.

So I rise now to close second reading on Bill No. 100, the Labour Board Act, and look forward to it proceeding to the Committee on Law Amendments. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 100. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for the day, so I now hand it over to the House Leader for the Progressive Conservative Party.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable House Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House will sit from 2:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m., and after the daily routine and Question Period we will be calling Bill Nos. 80 and 44.

So I move the House do now rise.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

[The House rose at 5:36 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 2309**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Nova Scotia's civil servants are committed to working to provide the best quality of service to families, to businesses, and to communities across the province; and

Whereas each year the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission says thank you to its long-serving members through the Long Service Award Program; and

Whereas Gerald Wright from Valley, Colchester North, was recognized for his 30 years of service with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Gerald Wright for his service to the Government of Nova Scotia over the last three decades.

RESOLUTION NO. 2310

By: Mr. Harold Theriault (Digby-Annapolis)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas in October a reception was held at the Digby Area Arena to honour the 2009 and 2010 Keith Trimper Memorial Trophy; and

Whereas the winner of last year's trophy was Nick Wagner and the winner of this year's trophy is Haylee Lombard; and

Whereas Lisa Trimper, whose son excelled in soccer, presented the trophies to the winners;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Nick Wagner and Haylee Lombard for winning the Keith Trimper Memorial Trophy for their hard work and dedication to the sport of soccer and wish them well in their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 2311

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding three members of the department with a Service Medal bar recognizing 15 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Trevor Banfield has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 15 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Trevor Banfield for his 15 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2312

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding two members of the department with a Service Medal bar recognizing 10 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Tony Hunt has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 10 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Tony Hunt for his 10 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2313

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding three members of the department with a Federal Service bar recognizing 30 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Tony Feener has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 30 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Tony Feener for his 30 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2314

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Federal Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding one member of the department with a Federal Service Medal recognizing 20 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Richard Demone has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 20 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Richard Demone for his 20 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2315

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding three members of the department with a Service Medal bar recognizing 15 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Randy Weagle has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 15 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Randy Weagle for his 15 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2316

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding three members of the department with a Federal Service bar recognizing 30 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Kendall Black has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 30 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Kendall Black for his 30 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2317

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding three members of the department with a Service Medal bar recognizing 15 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas John Lohnes has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 15 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize John Lohnes for his 15 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2318

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding two members of the department with a Service Medal bar recognizing 10 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Gary Mossman has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 10 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Gary Mossman for his 10 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2319

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding one member of the department with a Service Medal bar recognizing 35 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Donald Parks has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 35 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and

fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Donald Parks for his 35 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2320

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding three members of the department with a Federal Service bar recognizing 30 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Donald Heckman has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 30 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Donald Heckman for his 30 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2321

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the exemplary Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding five members of the department with Provincial Medals recognizing 25 years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Derrick Church has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for 25 years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Derrick Church for his 25 years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2322

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Service Medal is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high-risk professions that enhance Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service; and

Whereas the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department is awarding one member of the department with a Service Medal bar recognizing five years of continuous service to the community; and

Whereas Corey Hodder has been a member of the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department for five years, responding to emergency calls and undertaking emergency training, providing fire prevention education to schools and nursery schools in the area, and fundraising for the department to purchase necessary equipment - all in support of his community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Corey Hodder for his five years of service to the Town of Lunenburg and surrounding communities through his commitment to the Lunenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 2323

By: Mr. Jim Morton (Kings North)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the NSSAF Western Region Cross Country Championships took place at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010; and

Whereas the Kings County Academy (KCA) Junior Girls team consisted of Meaghan Vaughan, Rachel Mader, Gillian Cumby, Chloe Corkum, Katie Russell and Breanna Davenport; and

Whereas the KCA entry won the junior girls regional banner;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Rachel Mader and the Kings County Academy Junior Girls Cross Country Team on winning the NSSAF Western Regional Championships at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2324

By: Mr. Jim Morton (Kings North)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the NSSAF Western Region Cross Country Championships took place at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010; and

Whereas the Kings County Academy (KCA) Junior Girls team consisted of Meaghan Vaughan, Rachel Mader, Gillian Cumby, Chloe Corkum, Katie Russell and Breanna Davenport; and

Whereas the KCA entry won the junior girls regional banner;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Meaghan Vaughan and the Kings County Academy Junior Girls Cross Country Team on winning the NSSAF Western Regional Championships at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2325

By: Mr. Jim Morton (Kings North)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the NSSAF Western Region Cross Country Championships took place at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010; and

Whereas the Kings County Academy (KCA) Junior Girls team consisted of Meaghan Vaughan, Rachel Mader, Gillian Cumby, Chloe Corkum, Katie Russell and Breanna Davenport; and

Whereas the KCA entry won the junior girls regional banner;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Katie Russell and the Kings County Academy Junior Girls Cross Country Team on winning the NSSAF Western Regional Championships at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2326

By: Mr. Jim Morton (Kings North)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the NSSAF Western Region Cross Country Championships took place at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010; and

Whereas the Kings County Academy (KCA) Junior Girls team consisted of Meaghan Vaughan, Rachel Mader, Gillian Cumby, Chloe Corkum, Katie Russell and Breanna Davenport; and

Whereas the KCA entry won the junior girls regional banner;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Gillian Cumby and the Kings County Academy Junior Girls Cross Country Team on winning the NSSAF Western Regional Championships at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2327

By: Mr. Jim Morton (Kings North)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the NSSAF Western Region Cross Country Championships took place at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010; and

Whereas the Kings County Academy (KCA) Junior Girls team consisted of Meaghan Vaughan, Rachel Mader, Gillian Cumby, Chloe Corkum, Katie Russell and Breanna Davenport; and

Whereas the KCA entry won the junior girls regional banner;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Chloe Corkum and the Kings County Academy Junior Girls Cross Country Team on winning the NSSAF Western Regional Championships at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2328

By: Mr. Jim Morton (Kings North)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the NSSAF Western Region Cross Country Championships took place at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010; and

Whereas the Kings County Academy (KCA) Junior Girls team consisted of Meaghan Vaughan, Rachel Mader, Gillian Cumby, Chloe Corkum, Katie Russell and Breanna Davenport; and

Whereas the KCA entry won the junior girls regional banner;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly congratulate Breanna Davenport and the Kings County Academy Junior Girls Cross Country Team on winning the NSSAF Western Regional Championships at Northeast Kings Education Centre on October 18, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2329

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Shelburne Sobeys store was presented with the Green Award at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010; and

Whereas the Shelburne Sobeys store and its employees are actively and aggressively working to develop a sustainable waste management system and are dedicated to protecting the environment through programs and initiatives that follow the three Rs; and

Whereas the Shelburne Sobeys staff are also innovative when it comes to waste reduction by decorating their Exhibition and Christmas floats with reusable, recyclable, and natural products in an effort to reduce their carbon footprint;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate the Shelburne Sobeys store for being presented with the Green Award at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2330

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Churchover entrepreneur Shannon Crowell was named Tourism Operator of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010; and

Whereas Shannon Crowell has been operating Boulder Cove Cottages since 2004, taking pride in the services and amenities she offers to her guests and adapting to the changing tourism seasons to develop ways to promote Shelburne County's tourism; and

Whereas Shannon Crowell has served on the board of directors for both the Discover Shelburne County and Destination South West Nova tourism associations and is often a supporter of community fundraising events by donating room nights as prizes;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Shannon Crowell for being named Tourism Operator of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2331

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Shelburne resident Laura Lucille (Lucy) Stuart was named Employee of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010; and

Whereas Lucy Stuart, who is employed by Shelburne Woodworkers Home Hardware Ltd., is described as “the ultimate professional” whose “knowledge of the business, bubbly personality, and pleasing attitude are welcomed and appreciated by all”; and

Whereas Lucy Stuart brings with her to the job site a multitude of skills, including leadership, customer service, and a commitment to the company’s goals for success;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Laura Lucille (Lucy) Stuart for being named Employee of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2332

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Shelburne resident Guy Tipton’s dedication and passion for sailing earned him the Community Service Award at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010; and

Whereas Guy Tipton has worked tirelessly over the past three years as director of the Shelburne Sailing Association, substantially increasing community interest and accessibility to the sport while raising the profile of Shelburne Harbour to the world stage in the sailing world; and

Whereas Guy Tipton excels as an international competitor and instructor in the sport of sailing, donating his expertise and time to improving the standard of sailing throughout Nova Scotia for both students and instructors;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Guy Tipton for his Community Service Award, presented at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2333

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Goulden's Shell was named Business of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010; and

Whereas entrepreneur Paul Goulden has built his family-run business over the past 23 years, growing from one employee to 18 staff, expanding services along the way, and investing back in the community by hiring high school students and taking pride in his commercial property; and

Whereas Goulden's Shell is also very involved in the community, donating their time and financial assistance to numerous community events and organizations throughout the year;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Goulden's Shell for being named Business of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2334

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Shelburne businessman Bill Chidiac was named Entrepreneur of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010; and

Whereas Bill Chidiac has successfully owned and operated A1 Perio's Pizza in Shelburne for the past 15 years, expanding his business to a seasonal shop in neighbouring Lockeport this past summer; and

Whereas Bill Chidiac gives back to the community by supporting local fundraisers with donations and volunteering his time to coach junior high school soccer;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Bill Chidiac for being selected Entrepreneur of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2335

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cooke Aquaculture Inc., was named Exporter of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010; and

Whereas Cooke Aquaculture Inc., which has operations throughout Atlantic Canada, has been repeatedly named one of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies; and

Whereas Cooke Aquaculture Inc., is considered an innovator and leader in the global aquaculture industry, is committed to sustainable aquaculture practices and is recognized for producing high quality farmed seafood products;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cooke Aquaculture Inc., for being named Exporter of the Year at the Shelburne County Business Development Corporation and Shelburne and Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business Excellence Awards on October 21, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2336

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Barrington Municipal High School student Robin d'Eon was presented with a Fishermen and Scientists Research Society Outstanding Achievement Award on Oceans Day, June 8, 2010; and

Whereas this annual award recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in the Oceans 11 class by their level of participation, interest, contributions to the classroom and scholastic achievement; and

Whereas the Oceans 11 program is helping to educate the future stakeholders of Nova Scotia's marine industry by offering Grade 11 students the opportunity to learn about a wide range of marine science topics;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Barrington Municipal High School student Robin d'Eon who was presented with a Fishermen and Scientists Research Society Outstanding Achievement Award on Oceans Day, June 8, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2337

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Barrington Municipal High School student Delana Burke was presented with a Fishermen and Scientists Research Society Outstanding Achievement Award on Oceans Day, June 8, 2010; and

Whereas this annual award recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in the Oceans 11 class by their level of participation, interest, contributions to the classroom and scholastic achievement; and

Whereas the Oceans 11 program is helping to educate the future stakeholders of Nova Scotia's marine industry by offering Grade 11 students the opportunity to learn about a wide range of marine science topics;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Barrington Municipal High School student Delana Burke, who was presented with a Fishermen and Scientists Research Society Outstanding Achievement Award on Oceans Day, June 8, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2338

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Lockeport Regional High School student Charlotte Scott was presented with a Fishermen and Scientists Research Society Outstanding Achievement Award on Oceans Day, June 8, 2010; and

Whereas this annual award recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in the Oceans 11 class by their level of participation, interest, contributions to the classroom and scholastic achievement; and

Whereas the Oceans 11 program is helping to educate the future stakeholders of Nova Scotia's marine industry by offering Grade 11 students the opportunity to learn about a wide range of marine science topics;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport Regional High School student Charlotte Scott, who was presented with a Fishermen and Scientists Research Society Outstanding Achievement Award on Oceans Day, June 8, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2339

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Lunenburg Queens Business Excellence Awards are presented annually to recognize, celebrate and inspire business excellence throughout the region with participation from seven different chambers of commerce and boards of trade throughout Lunenburg and Queens Counties; and

Whereas the New Business Award, sponsored by the Acadia Centre for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, recognizes a business that has been in operation for less than 24 months using a unique business approach; and

Whereas School House Gluten-Free Gourmet in Martin's Point creates tasty products in small batches, by hand, in a dedicated gluten-free kitchen in a converted school house, providing their products to farmers markets and specialty food stores for people with food allergies;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate School House Gluten-Free Gourmet for their recognition by the Lunenburg Queens Business Excellence Awards in October of this year.

RESOLUTION NO. 2340

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Lunenburg Queens Business Excellence Awards are presented annually to recognize, celebrate and inspire business excellence throughout the region with participation from seven different chambers of commerce and boards of trade throughout Lunenburg and Queens Counties; and

Whereas the New Business Award, sponsored by BDC, recognizes a small business in operation for at least two years with staff of 16 people or less, with an established reputation for providing a superior level of customer service; and

Whereas Meisner and Zwicker Construction Ltd., in West Northfield, providing new home construction since 1985 with over 400 homes constructed in Lunenburg and Queens Counties, received the Small Business Award on October 4, 2010;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Meisner and Zwicker Construction Ltd. for their recognition by the Lunenburg Queens Business Excellence Awards in October of this year.

RESOLUTION NO. 2341

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Lunenburg Queens Business Excellence Awards are presented annually to recognize, celebrate and inspire business excellence throughout the region with participation from seven different chambers of commerce and boards of trade throughout Lunenburg and Queens Counties; and

Whereas the Export Achievement Award, sponsored by Nova Scotia Business Inc., recognizes a business that has demonstrated an increase in exports within the last year and can demonstrate a positive impact on the local economy; and

Whereas HEKA Electronics Inc., in Mahone Bay, has designed and manufactured sophisticated instrumentation and software for biomedical and industrial research applications with a commitment to bring innovative technology to their customers;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate HEKA Electronics Inc. for their recognition by the Lunenburg Queens Business Excellence Awards in October of this year.

RESOLUTION NO. 2342

By: Ms. Pam Birdsall (Lunenburg)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Lunenburg Queens Business Excellence Awards are presented annually to recognize, celebrate and inspire business excellence throughout the region with participation from seven different chambers of commerce and boards of trade throughout Lunenburg and Queens Counties; and

Whereas the Hospitality Award, sponsored by CIBC, recognizes a business with excellent customer service that has received awards or commendations for their products or services and has demonstrated a positive impact on the local economy; and

Whereas Fleur de Sel Restaurant, in Lunenburg, focuses on traditional French cuisine, highlighting local ingredients, and has been recognized by numerous organizations, awards and publications for their exceptional fare;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Fleur de Sel Restaurant for their recognition by the Lunenburg Queens Business Excellence Awards in October of this year.

RESOLUTION NO. 2343

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Tanner O'Connell was a member of the winning team, Exploding with Science, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Tanner O'Connell helped his team to a gold medal finish in Grade 4 competition; and

Whereas Exploding with Science were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Tanner O'Connell who was a member of the winning team, Exploding with Science, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2344

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Forest Ridge Academy student Mattie Smith was a member of the winning team, Freaky Minds, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Mattie Smith helped her team to a gold medal finish in Grade 5 competition; and

Whereas the Freaky Minds were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Forest Ridge Academy student Mattie Smith who was a member of the winning team, Freaky Minds, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2345

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Kalista Krafve was a member of the winning team, Exploding with Science, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Kalista Krafve helped her team to a gold medal finish in Grade 4 competition; and

Whereas Exploding with Science were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Kalista Krafve who was a member of the winning team, Exploding with Science, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2346

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Justin Goreham was a member of the winning team, Sizzling Scientists, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Justin Goreham helped his team to a gold medal finish in Grade 6 competition; and

Whereas Sizzling Scientists were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Justin Goreham who was a member of the winning team, Sizzling Scientists, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2347

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Jessica Bateman was a member of the winning team, Exploding with Science, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Jessica Bateman helped her team to a gold medal finish in Grade 4 competition; and

Whereas Exploding with Science were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Jessica Bateman who was a member of the winning team, Exploding with Science, at the Tri-County regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2348

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Jacob Perry was a member of the winning team, Exploding with Science, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Jacob Perry helped his team to a gold medal finish in Grade 4 competition; and

Whereas Exploding with Science were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Jacob Perry who was a member of the winning team, Exploding with Science, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2349

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Forest Ridge Academy student Jackie Nickerson was a member of the winning team, Freaky Minds, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Jackie Nickerson helped her team to a gold medal finish in Grade 5 competition; and

Whereas the Freaky Minds were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Forest Ridge Academy student Jackie Nickerson who was a member of the winning team, Freaky Minds, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2350

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Hannah Cunningham was a member of the winning team, Sizzling Scientists, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Hannah Cunningham helped her team to a silver medal finish in Grade 6 competition; and

Whereas the Sizzling Scientists were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Hannah Cunningham, who was a member of the winning team, Sizzling Scientists, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2351

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Lockeport Elementary School student Hailey Stuart was a member of the winning team, Circuit Breakers, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Hailey Stuart helped her team to a bronze medal finish in Grade 6 competition; and

Whereas the Circuit Breakers were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport Elementary School student Hailey Stuart, who was a member of the winning team, Circuit Breakers, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2352

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Forest Ridge Academy student Emma Perry was a member of the winning team, Freaky Minds, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Emma Perry helped her team to a bronze medal performance in Grade 5 competition; and

Whereas the Freaky Minds were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Forest Ridge Academy student Emma Perry, who was a member of the winning team, Freaky Minds, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2353

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Lockeport Elementary School student Emily Stewart was a member of the winning team, Circuit Breakers, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Emily Stewart helped her team to a bronze medal finish in Grade 6 competition; and

Whereas the Circuit Breakers were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport Elementary School student Emily Stewart, who was a member of the winning team, Circuit Breakers, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2354

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Lockeport Elementary School student Dylan Foote was a member of the winning team, Circuit Breakers, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Dylan Foote helped his team to a bronze medal finish in Grade 6 competition; and

Whereas the Circuit Breakers were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport Elementary School student Dylan Foote, who was a member of the winning team, Circuit Breakers, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2355

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Forest Ridge Academy student Cohen Perry was a member of the winning team, Freaky Minds, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Cohen Perry helped her team to a bronze medal performance in Grade 5 competition; and

Whereas the Freaky Minds were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Forest Ridge Academy student Cohen Perry, who was a member of the winning team, Freaky Minds, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2356

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Autumn Cunningham was a member of the winning team, Sizzling Scientists, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Autumn Cunningham helped her team to a silver medal finish in Grade 6 competition; and

Whereas the Sizzling Scientists were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Autumn Cunningham, who was a member of the winning team, Sizzling Scientists, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2357

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Andrew Ross was a member of the winning team, Sizzling Scientists, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Andrew Ross helped his team to a silver medal finish in Grade 6 competition; and

Whereas the Sizzling Scientists were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Cape Sable Island Elementary School student Andrew Ross, who was a member of the winning team, Sizzling Scientists, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 2358

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Lockeport Elementary School student Carter Cotter was a member of the winning team, Circuit Breakers, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010; and

Whereas Carter Cotter helped his team to a bronze medal finish in Grade 6 competition; and

Whereas the Circuit Breakers were among the 27 teams from Grades 4 through 6 students who advanced to the regional Science Olympics by topping district competitions;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport Elementary School student Carter Cotter, who was a member of the winning team, Circuit Breakers, at the Tri-County Regional School Board's regional Science Olympics on June 3, 2010.