



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Charlie Parker

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Second Session

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2010

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2010

Sixty-first General Assembly

Second Session

12:00 NOON

SPEAKER

Hon. Charlie Parker

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We'll begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 89 - Personal Health Information Act.

and the committee recommends this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, with certain amendments.

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bills:

Bill No. 102 - Tanning Beds Act.

Bill No. 108 - Nova Scotia Museum Act.

Bill No. 111 - Motor Vehicle Act.

Bill No. 112 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

and the committee recommends these bills to the favourable consideration of the House, without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that these bills be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, in response to a question during Question Period yesterday, I would like to table the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, their numbers from the years 2003 to 2010.

MR. SPEAKER: The document is tabled.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table amendments to Nova Scotia's Civil Procedure Rules.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

I also have a report I wish to table and, before I do, I'd like to introduce in the Speaker's Gallery, our Ombudsman, Dwight Bishop, and his assistant, Janet McKinnon. (Applause)

I have the pleasure this afternoon of tabling the Office of the Ombudsman 2009-2010 Annual Report. It's entitled *Finding ways to help government work better*, and I wish to table that.

The report is tabled.

[12:15 p.m.]

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 2656

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the needs of the people served by the Department of Community Services are our top priority; and

Whereas the department staff are committed to helping the people of our province with their skills and expertise, and are focused on continuously improving the way our programs and services are delivered to Nova Scotians who need them; and

Whereas Randy Acker holds the department's new secondment position as client service liaison and is working with clients, colleagues and MLAs to improve our client service delivery;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House commend the hard work that Randy Acker and the Department of Community Services staff do every day to help Nova Scotians in need to achieve their full potential.

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 Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION NO. 2657

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

Whereas David Steeves, a land surveyor and resident of Dartmouth, was recently awarded a lifetime membership by the Association of Nova Scotia Land Surveyors; and

Whereas Mr. Steeves, as a member and past president of the association, has spent countless volunteer hours working on various projects for the association; and

Whereas his most recent task was to act as chairman of the governance committee for the land surveyors, which was responsible for the development of a new Act, regulations, bylaws, practice standards and code of ethics to guide the future management of this self-regulating profession;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Mr. David Steeves on receiving the lifetime membership award and commend him for his outstanding contribution to the Association of Nova Scotia Land Surveyors.

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 Agriculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 2658

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

Whereas Dean and Catherine Manning of Falmouth were honoured by the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture with the Environmental Stewardship Award on November 25th; and

Whereas the Mannings' commitment to being good farmers and good neighbours led them to be successful finalists for this prestigious award; and

Whereas the Mannings are only the second farm family to receive this award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Dean and Catherine Manning on receiving the Environmental Stewardship Award, recognizing their dedication and commitment to protecting the environment.

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.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 126 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning and Other Designated Components of Adult Learning in Nova Scotia. (Hon. Marilyn More)

Bill No. 127 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 7 of the Acts of 1996. The Occupational Health and Safety Act. (Hon. Marilyn More)

Bill No. 128 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 475 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Trade Union Act, Respecting Powers and Duties of Arbitrators and Arbitration Boards. (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 Minister of Health.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering, would I be permitted to do an introduction before I do my resolution, please?

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly.

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the Speaker's Gallery, where we're joined today by a number of Team Nova Scotia athletes and representatives, as well as representatives from the 2011 Canada Winter Games Host Society.

As I make my introductions, I would ask each individual to identify themselves by standing: Jamey Jewells, wheelchair basketball; Emily Dwyer, curling; Julian Erskine, judo; Kita McRory, snowboarding; Niamh Campbell, squash; Stephen Clouter, gymnastics; Taylor Gordon, boxing; Frank Garner, chef de mission for Team Nova Scotia; Aaron Nutting, assistant chef de mission for Team Nova Scotia; Jean-Paul Deveau, chairman of the Board of Directors for the Canada Winter Games Host Society; and Chuck Bridges, vice-chairman of the Board of Directors for the Canada Winter Games Host Society.

I would ask members to give them all a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health.

RESOLUTION NO. 2659

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

Whereas Nova Scotia has had the honour of hosting the 1969 Canada Summer Games in Halifax and Dartmouth, and in 1987 the Canada Winter Games in Cape Breton, each time leaving behind a legacy that has benefited our citizens tremendously; and

Whereas once again our province is honoured to host the Canada Winter Games in February, welcoming thousands of athletes, coaches, organizers, and visitors from across our great nation; and

Whereas we acknowledge the hard work and dedication of these talented athletes, coaches, officials and organizers, as well as the thousands of volunteers who are working hard to ensure the Nova Scotia Games are a success;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House encourage Nova Scotians to get actively involved in the Games by cheering on and supporting Team Nova Scotia who, through their commitment to sport and recreation, inspire Nova Scotians of all ages.

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. 2660

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

Whereas the Canada Games are key to the development of Nova Scotia's young athletes and provide an opportunity to showcase our best athletic talent to our residents, our country and eventually the world; and

Whereas the Canada Games is a celebration of youth, community, sport and culture and require extraordinary efforts and collaboration between all levels of government, the private sector, the Canada Games Host Society and countless volunteers; and

Whereas earlier today we had the opportunity to welcome some of Nova Scotia's athletes and members of the Canada Games Host Society to our Legislature;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly extend our best wishes to Team Nova Scotia and our appreciation to the volunteers of the Host Society as they prepare to shine, both in athletics and volunteerism, at the upcoming Canada Winter Games to be held in Halifax in February 2011.

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. 2661

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

Whereas Lynette Sampson of Sydney River has been awarded Canada's Special Olympics top female athlete of the year award for the entire country; and

Whereas Lynette is a dedicated athlete and a true Olympian who has risen to the pinnacle of Canada's Special Olympics; and

Whereas Lynette earned Cape Breton's top female Special Olympian award in May and she has been informed that she will receive later this year Nova Scotia's top female Special Olympian award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lynette Sampson on her dedication to her sport of swimming, her commitment to a healthy lifestyle and being a model Nova Scotia citizen as she received this prestigious award in Toronto on November 29th.

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. 2662

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

Whereas Sidney Crosby, the pride of Cole Harbour, made history earlier this year when his famous golden goal earned Canada its record-setting 14th gold medal at the Vancouver Olympic Games; and

Whereas Sidney Crosby's young hockey career is already filled with major achievements, including a Stanley Cup; and

Whereas on Wednesday, December 1st, Maclean's Magazine chose Sidney Crosby as its Newsmaker of the Year for his Olympic triumph;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Sidney Crosby for having been named Maclean's 2010 Newsmaker of the Year and wish him continued success in his hockey career.

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 Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 2663

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

Whereas the 2010 Nova Scotia Golf Association Women's Amateur Championships took place in July at the Clare Golf and Country Club; and

Whereas in front of a hometown crowd, Mireille LeBlanc of Meteghan won her second consecutive Women's Amateur Championship; and

Whereas Mireille finished the tournament with a nine-over 225 for her 54 holes played;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mireille LeBlanc on another successful golf season and wish her continued success 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 Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 2664

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

Whereas Waycobah will now have a Council of Elders, the keepers of Mi'kmaq values and traditions, to guide the elected band council; and

Whereas the councillors will take a new oath of office, not to the Queen but to the people of their community; and

Whereas these new changes to the Waycobah governance model respect community values and approaches;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly wish the people of Waycobah well with their new governance model and congratulate them for their vision and the confidence to look within themselves for leadership.

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

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

[12:30 p.m.]

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 Queens.

RESOLUTION NO. 2665

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

Whereas the third session of COOK (Community Operated Open Kitchen), held at the Trinity Anglican Church in Liverpool, Queens County, and conducted by volunteers, will provide a collegial cooking session which will be used as a learning tool; and

Whereas the COOK program targets young families and those on low incomes, but everyone is welcome who would like to gather some ideas about nutritious but affordable meal planning; and

Whereas the third COOK program will focus on what to do with Christmas leftovers and the featured dish will be a turkey casserole;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and thank the many volunteers and the Trinity Anglican Church for conducting the third session of the COOK (Community Operated Open Kitchen) session for young families and those on low incomes and wish them all good luck in the future.

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 Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 2666

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

Whereas Middleton legend Al Peppard was inducted into the Colchester County Sports Hall of Fame in Truro on November 5, 2010; and

Whereas Al's name has always been associated with sports, having played and coached for over 60 years, and education, having taught and served as principal for 36 years; and

Whereas Al has been instrumental in the realization of the soon-to-be opened Middleton Nursing Home, along with the building and operation of sports facilities in the Town of Middleton, such as the arena, swimming pool, Rotary Park, Riverside Park, and the new MRHS gymnasium;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Al Peppard on his recent induction into the Colchester Sports Hall of Fame and thank him for his valuable contribution to the Town of Middleton.

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 Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 2667

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas birthdays are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of an individual; and

Whereas on November 27, 2010, Madeleine d'Entremont celebrated her 100th birthday; and

Whereas to have reached 100 years of age and to continue to be active and to share all the memories gathered over your lifetime with your loved ones is a wonderful reason to celebrate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Madeleine d'Entremont on reaching this milestone in her life and wishing her many more happy birthdays and continued good health.

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 Nova.

RESOLUTION NO. 2668

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

Whereas the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation is awarded annually to individuals who have contributed in an exemplary manner to the care and well-being of veterans or to the remembrance of the contributions, sacrifices, and achievements of veterans; and

Whereas Second World War veteran Charles (Abby) Neville, a long-standing and active member of Branch 128 Royal Canadian Legion, was awarded posthumously this prestigious award; and

Whereas he was awarded life membership in the Royal Canadian Legion, the Meritorious Service Medal, Palm Leaf, and was named Veteran of the Year in 2005;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Charles (Abby) Neville on receiving the Veterans Affairs Commendation Award, and for his dedication and commitment beyond the call of duty.

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. 2669

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 Nations' Cup equestrian competition in show jumping took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Friday, November 12th; and

Whereas for the first time, Angela Covert-Lawrence of Dartmouth represented Canada at the Nations' Cup as part of a four-rider team; and

Whereas Angela and Utan, a nine-year-old Dutch warmblood gelding, scored the top preference of the event and led the Canadian equestrian show jumping team to a second-place finish;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Angela on her top performance and contributing to Canada's second-place finish at the Nation's Cup competition and wish her success in her future events.

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. 2670

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

Whereas paramedics serve a vital role in our health care system; and

Whereas victims of illness or injury who need emergency pre-hospital assessment and medical care often owe their lives to these trained professionals; and

Whereas 87 paramedics were presented with long service awards by the Minister of Health at a ceremony in Halifax earlier this year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Robert Langille of Tatamagouche, Colchester North, for receiving a Paramedic Long Service Award.

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. 2671

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

Whereas the month of November would be the end of the MV Caribou as she made her final voyage between Port aux Basques and North Sydney - the MV Caribou made its inaugural voyage on May 12, 1986 displacing over 16,000 tons and measuring 179 metres in length, the Caribou was the largest ferry ever built in Canada when it entered service; and

Whereas during her 24 years of service, it is estimated the Caribou made more than 16,000 trips, carried approximately three million passengers and over two million vehicles; and

Whereas the retirement of the Caribou leaves behind many fond memories of the service she provided, she was named in memory of the SS Caribou that was sunk by German U-boats in the Second World War, killing 137 passengers and crew;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in remembering the MV Caribou, the flagship of Marine Atlantic fleet and thank the many dedicated staff who served her so well over the years.

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 Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

RESOLUTION NO. 2672

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

Whereas the fishing industry has been an integral part of the culture and heritage of the Eastern Passage-Cow Bay area for generations; and

Whereas the fishing industry is one with risks to the lives of the fishers and all too often results in lost lives associated with this work; and

Whereas Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage constituents Christa Webber, Scott Wheeler, Thomas Hounsel, Wayne Eddy, Cindy Morash, Jason Purdy and Larry Varin dedicated their time and energies to create a Fisherman's Memorial in Eastern Passage through a partnership with the Eastern Passage Firefighters Association to honour lives lost and those who continue to respond to the call of the sea in the fishing industry;

Therefore be it resolved that this Nova Scotia House of Assembly commend the Fisherman's Memorial Committee of Eastern Passage and all of the local and government partners for their support to see the community goal of a monument to honour the lost and current fishers of this proud Nova Scotian 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 Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 2673

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

Whereas Bedford resident Jill MacLean recently published her third novel for youth and young adults entitled *Home Truths*; and

Whereas Jill's first two fictional works, *The Nine Lives of Travis Keating* and *The Present Tense of Prinny Murphy*, deal with harsh realities that many children face at school and at home including bullying, alcoholism and death; and

Whereas *Home Truths* tells the story of an adolescent boy who is living a dual life as a bully in the school yard while trying to protect himself and his sister from their abusive father;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly commend Jill MacLean for using her literary abilities to highlight issues that are important but difficult to confront and congratulate her on the publication of her third novel, *Home Truths*.

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. 2674

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

Whereas Marilyn Zisseron has served more than eight years on the Board of Directors of Two Rivers Development Association; and

Whereas Marilyn's good nature and her significant skill set have made significant contributions the successful administration of Two Rivers Wildlife Park; and

Whereas Two Rivers Wildlife Park is an important recreational and educational facility and is very important to the Cape Breton community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize this exemplary service to her community by thanking Marilyn Zisseron and wishing her well 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 Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

RESOLUTION NO. 2675

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

Whereas the Collaborative Partnership Network is the only organization of its kind in Canada which serves disadvantaged people using a cross-disability perspective; and

Whereas Nova Scotia is closing the participation gap with the help of CPN which through their efforts assisted approximately 1,200 people with disabilities to find employment last year; and

Whereas CPN, which operates under a mutually supportive model, has been recognized as an example of best practices for the way they deliver employment services;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the executive directors of each of the 10 CPN partner agencies, their staff and their community partners for making such a difference in the lives of so many Nova Scotian families and wish them continued success as they go forward today at their conference aptly entitled Transitions Through Learning and Work: A Journey with Purpose.

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. 2676

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 Weymouth Mercantile hosted Human Doings' - a grocery and "to do" list art show last month; and

Whereas Adriane Herman, an artist and art teacher at the Maine College of Art in Portland, was a successful applicant to the Jenny Family residency this Fall and her installation at the Mercantile was a finale to her time here in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Adriane's art work revolves around the collection and representation of other people's grocery and to-do lists, collecting 1,200 to 1,400 lists from as far back as five years ago and would like more;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate the Weymouth Mercantile and Adriane Herman for collaborating on this interesting art show and wish them well in their 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 Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 2677

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

Whereas Saint Mary MacKillop, founder of the Order of St. Joseph, who educated the children of the poor, helped neglected children and the aged poor, was canonized as Australia's first saint on October 17, 2010; and

Whereas Saint Mary was known to say, “Never see a need without doing something about it,” and liked to share the proverb, “Be nice to the old when you are young; Be kind to the weak when you are strong; Tell the truth when you are wrong; When you get angry, hold your tongue; and

Whereas this Gaelic-speaking Scottish Highlander holds significance for all who trace their bloodlines to the clans of Scotland, from Lochaber in the old country, to Australia, to here in New Scotland with the MacKillops, the MacDonalds, the Campbells, and the Beatons; indeed, Blessed Mary was a second cousin to my own great-great-grandmother and she is also related to the spouse of our Deputy Premier;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize Saint Mary MacKillop as a woman of compassion and conviction whose spirit continues to aid people in this world and share our applause with her people here in Nova Scotia on her canonization.

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.

[12:45 p.m.]

RESOLUTION NO. 2678

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

Whereas Mark Rodd is the owner and operator of Rodd Grand Yarmouth and Rodd Colony Harbour Inn, Yarmouth’s two largest hotels that provide employment for a total of 160 staff members; and

Whereas Mr. Rodd’s two hotels have seen a combined drop in revenue of \$745,000, up to their third quarter, since the loss of the Yarmouth ferry; and

Whereas Mr. Rodd continues, for the time being, the operation of these hotels in order to keep those 160 staff members employed, despite the dramatic loss in revenue;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize Mr. Rodd and his company's perseverance and commitment to his many employees in the Town and area of Yarmouth and urge the NDP Government to recognize the Yarmouth ferry as the economic investment it is and act swiftly to support those businesses that are struggling to stay open because of the ferry loss.

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 Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 2679

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Don Pothier published his book *The History of Tusket* in 2005, showcasing Tusket as one of the most productive shipbuilding centres in the province and a significant player in the development of Yarmouth County; and

Whereas Don, a founding director and the first president of the Argyle Municipality Historical and Genealogical Society, turned over the publication rights to the society, giving them permission to reprint future editions; and

Whereas the Argyle Municipality Historical and Genealogical Society recently requested a second printing of the book and will be holding a book launch on December 4th at the archives building in Tusket, with a short PowerPoint presentation and book signing by the author;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the society for reprinting *The History of Tusket* and thank them for all the work they do to ensure the promotion and preservation of our past.

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. 2680

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's ambulance service, Emergency Health Services, has been accredited for the third time and this year reached the highest standard with absolutely no deficiencies; and

Whereas to be accredited, ambulance operators must meet 100 standards in mutual aid and disaster coordination, training, community education, clinical standards and quality improvement; and

Whereas Emergency Health Services is one of only two operations that are accredited in Canada, and Nova Scotia was the first jurisdiction to successfully complete accreditation by an independent agency in 2004;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate the paramedics, nurses and others working as part of the Emergency Medical Services team on their accreditation by providing excellent care to Nova Scotians in times of medical emergencies and wish them well in the future.

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. 2681

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

Whereas Valley resident Sarah Fougere was one of 17 members of Team Nova Scotia who competed at the ScotDance Canada Championship Series held in Saskatoon earlier this year; and

Whereas this competition brought together more than 600 dancers from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom; and

Whereas Sarah received eight medal placings and a high aggregate award within her age group, where she placed first out of 25 dancers;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Sarah as this talented Scottish dancer.

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 Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 2682

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

Whereas in July of this year the 10th Annual Clare Bluegrass Festival took place in Saulnierville; and

Whereas since its inception, the festival has continued to grow in popularity each year and the 2010 festival was no exception, as the event was a huge success enjoyed by all; and

Whereas the Clare Bluegrass Festival would not be possible without the generosity of the Melanson family, who allow festival goers to access their property by hosting the event;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate the volunteers and coordinators of the Clare Bluegrass Festival, recognize the contributions made by the Melanson family to the success of the festival, and wish them continued success.

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. 2683

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

Whereas Northside author Sherry Mulley-MacDonald has written two books about her beloved Cape Breton, entitled *Cape Breton - the Pride of an Island* and *Cape Breton Island Treasures Revealed*, that highlight the tourist attractions and hidden treasures Cape Breton has to offer; and

Whereas Sherry has just finished writing her third book, *One Small Lump: A Survivor's Story*, which is a personal account of her experience with breast cancer; and

Whereas Sherry plans to publish this book and sell it at the Cape Breton Cancer Centre, with all the profits going back to the Cancer Centre to improve its treatment and facilities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Sherry for sharing her story with us and wish her much success in her efforts to support the Cape Breton Cancer Centre and thank the staff for the wonderful treatment and care she received.

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 Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

RESOLUTION NO. 2684

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

Whereas in mid-September of this year I suffered a serious injury while enjoying a friend's cottage in the Mooseland area; and

Whereas my fiancé, Gerry, and my family, friends, and supporters worked tirelessly to ensure that I had every opportunity to rest, recover, and return to my role of MLA as quickly as possible; and

Whereas my constituency assistant, Margaret Keats-Logan - and I am proud to say, my friend - worked long hours and showed the utmost commitment, professionalism, and dedication to her role and my role as MLA in the riding during my recovery;

Therefore be it resolved that this Nova Scotia House of Assembly thank my family, friends, and all of those who helped me recover and get back in action as the MLA for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage after my accident in September.

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. 2685

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

Whereas many citizens of Nova Scotia are concerned about the delivery of health care in Nova Scotia and especially the possibility of closing emergency rooms and increased wait times at the QEII and Dartmouth General hospitals; and

Whereas the NDP promised during the election that they would put the Legislature back to work, implying their government would welcome the opportunity to be accountable in the Legislature for as long as required; and

Whereas the Minister of Health stated in this House on December 1st, “. . . they think we should stay here having debates about emergency departments rather than having the minister in her office . . .”;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly apologize to the Minister of Health for expecting her to be in the Legislature and be accountable for the decisions of government when she would rather hide in her office.

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. 2686

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

Whereas the MacKinnon Cann Inn, a beautifully restored bed and breakfast located in the historic district of Yarmouth, has offered locals and visitors a wonderful experience in fine dining and local hospitality since 2004; and

Whereas the MacKinnon Cann Inn has been a tourist destination for over six years and was named recipient of the 2007 Business of the Year in Tourism; and

Whereas since the loss of the Yarmouth ferry service to New England, the MacKinnon Cann Inn saw a decrease of 80 per cent in tourism in 2010;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly urge the government to recognize the Yarmouth to New England ferry as an economic driver for the province and act swiftly to support those businesses that have been adversely affected by the loss of the ferry.

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 Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 2687

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

Whereas the Royal Six-Horse Hitch Championships were held at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto on November 13, 2010; and

Whereas Ross and Doug Creelman of Bedford entered their team, the Cape Cod Percherons, in the championship against eight other heavy-horse teams and came out victorious in front of 5,700 spectators, including Governor-General David Johnston; and

Whereas this builds on The Cape Cod Percherons' achievement in October at the 2010 World Percheron Congress in Des Moines, Iowa where they won the Supreme Gelding Six;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Ross and Doug Creelman and their team, the Cape Cod Percherons, on their impressive results in both the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and the World Percheron Congress.

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. 2688

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

Whereas Linda Gregory was elected warden of the Municipality of Digby by fellow councillors during a special council meeting on November 8th; and

Whereas Linda, the councillor for District 3, succeeds Jim Thurber, who retired in August; and

Whereas Linda is feeling excited, optimistic and just a bit nervous about filling Jim's big shoes;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Linda Gregory on her new appointment and wish her well in her tenure as warden of the Municipality of Digby.

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. 2689

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

Whereas Diana Brothers was elected warden by her council colleagues on November 2, 2010, as the first female warden of Kings County and only female warden serving in the province; and

Whereas Diana was first elected to the Kings County Council in 1994 and has been re-elected successfully in every election since, also having served as deputy warden on two occasions in 1997 and in 2008; and

Whereas Diana has had a strong commitment to education, local policing, race relations and has been a progressive voice for Kings County;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Diana Brothers and wish her every success in her challenging role.

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.

There is a request to revert to the order of business, Tabling Reports, Regulations and Other Papers.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health.

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I would like thank the members of the Opposition as well for agreeing to alter the agenda.

I beg leave to table the Emergency Care Standards released today by Dr. Ross.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

[12:59 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Gordon Gosse in the Chair.]

[2:02 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Charlie Parker, resumed the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills reports:

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and made considerable progress and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton West on an introduction.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the members of the House to put their attention to the west gallery. Today in the west gallery we have members from Prince Andrew High School in Dartmouth who are in my colleague's, the member for Dartmouth East, constituency. We have 28 members of Grades 11 and 12 from the political science class. Last week I had the opportunity to be invited to that class and say a few words, thanks to my cousin, Courtney MacKenzie, who will now be very upset with me. With them

today are their teachers, Tim Halman and Maria Kerameris. I apologize if I've said that wrong. If you would join together and give them a warm welcome here in the House. (Applause)

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The time now is 2:05 p.m. and we will go until 3:05 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: UNION CERTIFICATION - SECRET BALLOT

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the government is sending a signal to business in this province and business beyond our borders. We have an uncompetitive, punitive tax regime for business. Now this NDP Government is sending a dangerous signal to businesses in Nova Scotia that are not unionized or any business which may be considering coming here.

Yesterday the Premier confirmed in this House it is his government's intent to open up labour laws and refused to rule out eliminating the provision for secret ballots in union certification. My question to the Premier is, have union leaders told you that eliminating secret ballot for certification is a way around the Michelin Bill?

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): First of all, Mr. Speaker, I said no such thing. Secondly and specifically, I want to make it absolutely clear that so far as I'm concerned, there is absolutely nothing that this government would do that would in any way impinge upon the industrial relation stability in this province. I've said, point blank, that the reason why you have a labour relations committee, which these guys are apparently opposed to, is so that you don't have the kind of things that happen when the Labour Standards Code came forward.

MR. MCNEIL: The labour relations committee that leaves out non-unionized employers across this province for one reason, and that's to make union leaders happy. Neither the Premier nor this government will state their true intentions. They could do so, put the minds of business owners and workers at ease, but they are silent. Their past history tells a different story. Twice in Opposition, the member for Cape Breton Centre introduced legislation calling for the elimination of secret ballots when it comes to building unions. My question to the Premier is, do you think making union certification easier is going to help grow the economy of Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'll be crystal clear about this. We have absolutely no intention of bringing forward any legislation that will interfere with the secret ballot process.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, to that point, the Premier has already done that. As a matter of fact, yesterday he confirmed that in this House. He should read what he said. Economic growth is essential to the prosperity of this province. Our businesses need to compete on a level playing field with our nearest neighbours. Inflicting changes to labour laws without the input from a majority of businesses and workers in this province is unfair and, frankly, undemocratic. The Premier and his Minister of Labour and Workforce Development have confirmed the government's intent to open up the Trade Union Act. My question to the Premier is, what is your true intention in opening up the Trade Union Act?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, this is the problem of asking a question after you've already gotten the answer and not having anything else to ask. We've said repeatedly that the purpose of having good labour relations in this province and having the kind of consultation mechanism that doesn't now exist is exactly what is necessary for good labour relations in this province.

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

**PREM.: TRADE UNION PROCEDURES REGS .
- CONSULTATION**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. I appreciate that a moment ago he indicated there would be no legislation coming forward regarding union drives and membership cards and so on. The fact of the matter is that in September of this year, his Cabinet approved some far-reaching pro-union regulations on this very topic, known as the Trade Union Procedure Regulations, that deal with things like the definition of union membership, among other things. These regulations were passed without any public consultation - another change that was slipped through in the hopes that no one would notice. My question to the Premier is, to be fair, who did the Premier's office, the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, or the Premier himself consult with prior to approving those regulations?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, all I can say about that is that there are housekeeping regulations that come forward all the time.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier clearly has a very broad definition of "housekeeping," that is for sure. It should be a fundamental principle of government that no new regulations of this nature be passed in such a manner without a thorough understanding of their impact on our economy and the ability of our province to attract new investment and new jobs. My question to the Premier is, did he ask experts at his disposal - whether at the Department of Economic and Rural Development, Nova Scotia Business Incorporated, or

other economists - for their opinion on the impact on our economy of these new labour regulations and our ability to attract new business and new jobs to the province, yes or no?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, all the regulations that come through government have the benefit of the advice of the departments, of the various experts who are within government, of course that happens.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, this is exactly the point, that without the benefit of public consultation, without even an examination of the economic impact of the decisions of this government, regulatory or otherwise, it gets to be pretty scary to wonder who they are consulting with.

So my question to the Premier is this, how many meetings with organized labour leaders were held by the Premier or by members of the Premier's office staff or the relevant department prior to enacting those regulations in September? And before he answers, I would just like to table a recent press release from the NSGEU which clearly states that their president met with the Department of Labour and Workforce Development on June 30th, prior to the release of the July discussion paper on this topic. So I table that as the Premier answers the question, who was consulted with prior to those regulations?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we meet with business and union leaders across the province all the time, because that's what a responsible government does. (Applause)

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

PREM. - EDUC. CUTS: EXERCISE - DETAILS

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is the deadline for school boards in the province to come up with 22 per cent cuts to their organizations - it's all part of this government's plan to balance the budget by making others do their dirty work. One of those is Vic Fleury, the president of the Nova Scotia School Boards Association and member of the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board. He said that going to a 20 per cent cut is going to tear the guts out of public education. Meanwhile, the Minister of Education is just calling it an exercise, so my question to the Premier, is this just an exercise or are you really going to cut 22 per cent of the public education system?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it was the case in years gone by, under both of the other Parties in government, where they made decisions, whether it was to roll back wages or to take away collective bargaining rights and they did it by legislation. They never asked anybody, they never (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Premier has the floor.

THE PREMIER: What we do, Mr. Speaker, by contrast is actually go out to the organizations that make up 60 per cent of the budget of this province and ask them for their advice and their leadership in making sure we get back to balance. (Applause)

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, let me translate that for you, he goes to those organizations to make the decisions that he doesn't have the backbone to make. The Premier knows the fear and the concerns and the uncertainty that he is instilling in parents and students with this little exercise. The chairman of the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board, Lorne Green, put it this way and I'll quote: "If they follow through with these cuts, I think we pretty much turn the keys over to the province and let them run it."

Mr. Speaker, that was after meeting with the school board on Monday night; tomorrow is Black Friday for school boards. My question to the Premier is, is it your government's plan to take over the administration of schools in this province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it is astounding that the Leader of the Opposition would complain so vociferously and bitterly about the lack of consultation in one sector, that he alleges, and yet when the government is going out of its way to ensure full and proper consultation with the very people who are going to be affected, he complains about that, too.

[2:15 p.m.]

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, yesterday in a response to my question about education in this House, the Premier said it is his intention to balance the budget. Let's review - so far he has put \$1.7 billion on the provincial debt in less than 18 months; he increased program spending 9 per cent in year one, 7 per cent in the second year; he has spent more than \$80 million buying land from Irving, he increased the Industrial Expansion Fund by more than \$200 million which, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, is a slush fund for Cabinet Ministers, and now he wants the school board to do what he can't or won't do. My question to the Premier, is it your intention to balance the budget on the backs of our children? Explain to this House how that is helping us prepare for the future?

THE PREMIER: First of all, Mr. Speaker, every single thing that he has said there is false and he knows it, but he continues to say it. The reality is we were left with almost a \$1.4 billion hill to climb, created by the former government, and I can tell you they made a mess, we're going to fix it.

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

PREM.: EDUC. CUTS - PLANS

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, yesterday when asked what his plan for education was in this province, the Premier said, our real plan is to make sure that we get the books of this province back to balance. It was rather a flip response. I would like to give the

Premier another opportunity to answer the question. Mr. Premier, what is your plan for education in light of your minister's request to school boards for a 22 per cent education cut?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the population in public schools in this province has fallen by some 30,000 students in the last 10 years, and yet funding has continued to increase at a far, far greater rate. What we have asked the school boards to do is to look, not only at the program delivery but, more importantly, to also look at the extraordinary cost increases in administration. We expect them to have a look at it and to make sure we get this province back to balance.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, a number of members from this House attended an event at the Provincial Autism Centre last night. There we heard about the importance of funding for autism. My question for the Premier is, will he assure the parents of children with autism spectrum disorder that they will not see any decrease in funding from the province for autism programs in schools?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we are going to keep the commitments we have made with respect to autism funding.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, we are now hearing that targeted funding, the money that goes to boards for specific programs like math mentors, Options and Opportunities, autism programs for example, may in fact be cut in this budgeting exercise. So what we would like is for the Premier to please tell these young people up in the gallery, from Prince Andrew High School, what programs he's going to cut to balance the budget?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we are handing over to the school boards the responsibility to look at the management of the budgets they are given, but I can tell you this (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: We are going to make sure that the administrative costs are kept under control and we're going to make sure that money is taken out of the boardroom and put in the classroom.

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

PREM: UNION AGENDA - CONCERNS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. I was dismayed this morning to see the Premier quoted in The Halifax ChronicleHerald as saying that people who oppose the pro-union direction of his government are being armed with wrong

information, and I'll table that relevant article from this morning's paper, sir. When you consider that the people he is referring to include some of the leading employers of this province, including the 70 per cent of private employers that are non-unionized, and virtually every small business in the province, it is an appalling statement. In fact, I was shocked and appalled by what the Premier said in the paper today. (Interruptions)

I would like to table a recent client update written by Stewart McKelvey, a very prominent and well-respected law firm in Nova Scotia. In fact, I believe it's the firm that previously employed the member to the Premier's right. This is a client update that they sent to their hundreds of clients around the province alerting them to the dangers of this government's pro-union agenda. My question to the Premier is, will he now admit that Nova Scotians are right to be concerned about his government's recently uncovered union agenda or is Stewart McKelvey wrong?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, he may have only been here a little while but he sure has got the rhetoric down. The reality is that I stand by exactly what I said yesterday. I believe that people were given wrong information about the intent and the result of this legislation. This is good legislation, it is good for labour relations in this province.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, all of this begs the question, who is the Premier really listening to on these matters? I would like to table one more document, which is a recent news release from the National Union of Public and General Employees. I'll quote from it as follows, it says: "Following through on commitments made during the recent civil service negotiations, the government . . ." of Nova Scotia is moving to do the following, and then it lists a variety of commitments made by that government over there to this group here. My question to the Premier is, what other commitments have you made to union leaders that Nova Scotians will end up paying the price for?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, speaking of commitments to union leaders, I'd like to read this one: In the event that specific privatization is recommended and found to be in the best interests of Nova Scotians, employees will have the ability to move to the new employer with all existing rights, benefits and entitlements. Mr. Speaker, that's signed by John Hamm. I'd like to table that. (Interruptions)

MR. BAILLIE: Oh, we wish that was true. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier for tabling that document. I do happen to have the same document with me, which I don't see a need to table a second time, and I see point number five. However, I wasn't going to do this but I have a press release from the NSGEU, dated April 5, 2000, in which they discuss the five points and Premier Hamm's commitment to it. They say in this press release that after meeting with Premier Hamm's chief of staff that the best way to accomplish that is through collective bargaining, not through legislation, which is our point over here all along, so thank you for that and I will document and table this one, to go with it.

Enough is enough. Clearly, we are on the wrong track because they are only listening to their union buddies when it comes to this kind of legislation, not business, not small business, not the major employers of the province and Nova Scotians will pay the price for that in the end. My question to the Premier is, when will you stop listening only to these special interests and stand up for the public interests as you were elected to do?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm very glad to hear about the former government's pro-union approach to government. Apparently they were holding secret meetings with members of the various unions. What I can tell the member opposite is that we believe that collective bargaining, of course, and good collective bargaining regimes, are good. We think that stable relations are very good. I want him to know that the Premier's Economic Council is made up of some of the leading business people in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

**PREM - YAR.-NEW ENGLAND FERRY:
SUBSIDY CUT RATIONALE**

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, because of the NDP's reckless decision to cut the subsidy to the Yarmouth ferry, Yarmouth and southwestern Nova Scotia have suffered through economic hardship, job losses and a massive blow to our tourism industry. From the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage's own figures, Yarmouth and Acadian Shores have been hit hardest by the NDP's decision. In fact, accommodation sales in this area dropped by 11 per cent - that's Yarmouth and the Acadian Shores, not just Yarmouth. This number is much higher, of course, in Yarmouth than in other parts of southwest Nova Scotia. My question to the Premier is, does he still think it was a good decision for the tourism industry and for the economy of southwest Nova Scotia to cut the Yarmouth-New England ferry?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as you know, I didn't cut the ferry. What we did is we said we weren't going to continue with the subsidy. The decision to discontinue the service is the decision of the operator. I've said to the member opposite and I've said to everyone there that we would be happy to have a sustainable ferry service between southwestern Nova Scotia and New England.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, this Premier and this government know that by cutting the subsidy of that ferry they were cutting the service itself. That has hurt the economy. Monday, the minister released the NDP's plan for tourism. In its own report, it says, "Yarmouth and Acadian Shores saw a decrease of 11% in year-over-year room nights. This is related to the loss of The CAT Ferry, a significant transportation link to the province." I'll table that document.

The number is obviously worse in other parts of southwest Nova Scotia. My question to the Premier is, if your own department recognizes that the loss of the ferry has been devastating to the economy of Yarmouth and western Nova Scotia, why can't you?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to table this quote from the Leader of the Opposition back in May, it says, ". . . it is too little too late. My question to the Premier is, you have killed off the 2010 tourism season, so what will you do to help this region through this tough economic time?" In fact, tourism numbers in the province were up.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, this Premier continues to stand up and mislead this House. And he hasn't tabled any information to support what he's saying. In fact, I have a lot of information I want to table right now. Between January 2009 and last month, the population in southwest Nova Scotia has decreased by 500 per cent - I'll table that. Over the past year, there were on average 330 more people looking for work - I'll table that. However, they were having to settle for part-time work, which was up 11 per cent - I'll table that. While full-time work was flat - I'll table that as well. Or they didn't have any work at all since unemployment was up 23 per cent over the past year - I'll table that.

The unemployment rate in southwestern Nova Scotia has gone up an average of 2.4 per cent and that's higher than last year. The Premier missed the point last week when he talked about jobs being up in southwestern Nova Scotia. The Premier only included one measure and used one snapshot in time and to be frank, he misinterpreted it. Culture and Recreation lost 400 workers in October - I'll table that.

MR. SPEAKER: Your question, please.

MR. CHURCHILL: And an average of 380 over the past year - I'll table that. Combine this with the losses in accommodations and jobs in tourism, dropped 14 per cent over the past year - I'll table that. That's 660 jobs - I'll table that too. There was a combined total of 7,000 fewer room nights - I'll table that. The occupancy rate was down 50 per cent - I'll table that as well.

MR. SPEAKER: I need your question. I need your question, please.

MR. CHURCHILL: Visitation to southwestern Nova Scotia was down because - I'll ask my question, Mr. Speaker. The Premier's Department of Finance says the cutting of the ferry has damaged southwestern Nova Scotia. His Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage says it has injured the industry. StatsCan says it devastated the economy. Will this Premier finally recognize in this House that cutting the Yarmouth to New England ferry - sorry, the funding for the Yarmouth to New England ferry is an investment in the tourism industry and the economy of southwestern Nova Scotia? (Applause)

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I tabled last week a number of statistics with respect to tourism in this province. Reality is that tourism is up. Reality is that jobs are up in the southern region. And the reality is that more people are coming (Interruptions)

[2:30 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Premier has the floor.

THE PREMIER: As I said, Mr. Speaker, tourism numbers in the province are up, the number of jobs associated in southern Nova Scotia is up. On top of all of that, the number of people coming into the employment picture, those who are now going out and looking for work has increased because people are more hopeful.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

PREM.: EDUC. - SCH. BD. BUDGET REDUCTIONS

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. In response to a question earlier, the Premier indicated that passing the decision on to school boards is what he was prepared to do, yet he is giving them an impossible task, cutting from a budget of which they control less than 15 per cent and they are asked to cut 22 per cent. That is \$196 million. A change to any of the implementation on targeted projects would have a significant impact on students in our schools. Those programs are designed for learning needs, to meet the learning needs of all students all across this province.

My question to the Premier is, if it's true that the current school board budget reduction exercise does not require the boards to respect the funding for targeted programs; in other words, is that true? If it's true, does that mean that this government is laying the groundwork for different boards to provide different supports for students with the same needs?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the people expect the government to go out to the school boards, to tell me that we have to be able to get the books of the province back to balance and that they need to take a leadership role in doing this. That is what we have asked them to do.

Mr. Speaker, we go out, we ask the experts to make sure that we live in this province within our means and we provide the services that students need.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, well you know the Premier may be saying that boards have been asked to do this, boards are coming back and saying they cannot do it without cutting programs. My question, targeted funding is geared to learning styles of our students which differ from student to student. In order to meet those needs, many different programs

were put into place and those were in consultation with parents and students and teachers, the ones most affected by that.

One of those programs was autism and support for autism. I had an opportunity, as well, last night to attend an event at the Autism Centre in Halifax. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, there was not a dry eye in that room. Programs, targeted programs which include support for autism, are on the chopping block. My question to the Premier is, what will happen to the equity of programming for our students if targeted funding is taken away?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I repeat again that we intend to keep our commitments with respect to autism funding, the ones that we made in the last election. Furthermore, over the last 10 years 30,000 young people came out of the school system yet the funding for education increased by 51 per cent.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Premier has the floor and I'd ask you to respect him when he is up speaking, as when you are up speaking. Thank you. (Applause)

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we have asked the school boards to take on the responsibility - which is their responsibility - to take it on and to look at how it is that we can reduce the cost to government, so that we are able to ensure that the programming that students need is there but also assists us in bringing the books of the province back to balance.

Everyone, whether they are in district health authorities, whether they are in municipalities, no matter where they are, are going to have to be part of the solution to the problem that was created by the former government.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, if we weren't confused before we started, we sure are now because these are very conflicting messages. On the one hand the Premier is saying those are the decisions for the school board, on the other hand he is saying but you don't have to respect funding for autism. So my question to the Premier is, what message do you have for the parents of autistic children when they find out that the funding for their child's support is gone?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, that's another example of asking a question when you've already received the answer, but not having anything else to say. The reality is, as I've said before, we made commitments with respect to autism funding. We intend to keep it.

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

HEALTH: EMERG. DEPTS. - TRAINING/EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Health was provided with the emergency room standards which were released publicly this morning. Included in the standards are required levels of emergency room training for both RNs and physicians for all emergency rooms, including community emergency departments, as well as equipment standards. While we do not dispute the necessity of these standards, many Nova Scotians would have thought that many of them would already have been in place - after all, they are emergency departments.

Given that the minister was briefed by Dr. Ross extensively yesterday, could the minister please indicate how many of our community emergency departments are not currently meeting the training and equipment standards that were outlined by Dr. Ross?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to receive the set of standards that Dr. Ross has been working so diligently on. This is the last piece that we required prior to releasing our response to Dr. Ross' earlier report with 26 recommendations. As I've indicated in this House, that response will be released before the House recesses for our Christmas break.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister indicated these standards were going to make us leaders, and I hope that is the case. However, they will only make us leaders when we are certain that all the emergency room departments are able to meet the targets for treatment, necessary equipment, and training that have been established. My question to the minister is, will her department be providing the necessary resources for community emergency departments to meet the training, the treatment, and equipment standards as presented or will they simply no longer be allowed to function as community emergency departments?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the Opposition is so negative, it's really pretty discouraging. These standards that have been released today are going to raise the bar on the quality of emergency room care right across this province.

We already have a fair amount to be really pleased about here in this province. We have the EHS service in this province - one of two accredited EHS systems in North America - just having received their re-accreditation with a commendation. (Applause)

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I posed a question around the fact that our largest tertiary hospital is not meeting the CTAS level 2 target of seeing patients within 15 minutes. In fact, as you'll remember, they're missing it by many hundreds of per cent. Today's CTAS level 2 emergency room standards enshrine the same standard, or today's standards are in the same document, and they provide for a reassessment every 15 minutes as well. While the public is able to get information about the Capital Health District in terms of how long it takes to see a patient, and that's through their quarterly indicators that they

provide, we don't have that same information for other districts. My question to the minister is, what process will she establish to ensure that all emergency departments are meeting the standard set out by Dr. Ross?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, that's the point of having the emergency room standards developed by Dr. Ross, so that we can have some equitable measurements right across the province. We can assure our citizens that they're getting comparable care no matter where they are getting care in an emergency room. As I said, our plan for the implementation of these standards and for the recommendations in the Ross report will be coming before the House recesses for the Christmas period.

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

EDUC. - HOLY ANGELS HS: SOLUTIONS - DETAILS

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Education. As we approach tomorrow night's candlelight vigil to be held by staff, students, and supporters of Holy Angels High School, there's little indication of what, if any, progress is being made by the department and the committee in regard to keeping this historic institution open. In Tuesday's Cape Breton Post, school board chairman Lorne Green said, "They're looking at possible solutions to keeping the program the way it exists now, in that existing building."

My question to the minister is - and I will table that quote from Mr. Green - will the minister share with the House what possible solutions her department is looking at to keep Holy Angels open in the existing facility?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I know that the committee has been meeting, that their mandate is to develop detailed options for the board by the end of December. I am sure the board will be considering those shortly afterwards. I don't micromanage these committees, I have been somewhat distracted with other business of the House lately, so I have full confidence in the members of the committee to do their task, as assigned. I look forward, as I am sure the school board does, to the options that will be presented by the end of December.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I know that the minister is a busy person, but so is everybody else on this side of the House who looks after their constituents' business as well.

Mr. Speaker, an institution with the rich history, character and pride of Holy Angels cannot be replicated by simply packing up and moving elsewhere. This means that a school as unique and as significant as Holy Angels is deserving of all efforts this government can make to preserve this institution as is. There should be no stone left unturned. This could include looking at extending the lease, further negotiations with the sisters for a suitable price for the building, or even a lease-to-purchase agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I know those are options, but I'll present them to the Premier. I'll ask the Premier, which of these options would you consider to save Holy Angels High School and preserve that historic institution?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as you may know, there is a committee that is in place. They are looking at all the available options, and I think our point is to allow that committee to actually do its work.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame have been stewards of the quality education provided at Holy Angels for 125 years. Their contribution to the education system of Nova Scotia is worthy of great praise, as they have been tremendous partners in educating the young women of Cape Breton.

Again, Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the Premier is, what efforts are being made to talk to the sisters and once again work with them for the betterment of our education system here in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Again, Mr. Speaker, this matter is within the jurisdiction of the board to deal with. We have agreed to be part of the committee (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The honourable Premier has the floor.

THE PREMIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, this is a matter that is within the purview of the school board. There is a committee that is looking at the whole matter, and we certainly hope there is a resolution that will allow Holy Angels to continue to provide the quality education that they have.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

ENVIRON. - CONTAMINATED SITES: TOOLS - USAGE

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, in the June report of the Auditor General, Chapter 3 pointed out some significant issues with how contaminated sites are handled and administered in Nova Scotia. To quote from the Auditor General's Report, it says, "The risks associated with contaminated sites in Nova Scotia are not being adequately managed to protect the public interest." I'll table that report. The department responded by saying that there will be new tools in place to address the issue by 2010.

Well, 2010 is now winding down and in fact, the way it looks, we may be in the House until the end of 2010. Would the Minister of Environment please tell this House what his department is doing to address the very serious issue of contaminated sites and what tools his department has implemented?

[2:45 p.m.]

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, I can tell you that we are taking this issue from the Auditor General very seriously. I can also tell you that both Parties opposite had numbers of years - decades - to deal with this issue. We take this issue very seriously and we are moving forward with it.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the question was what tools are going to be put in place that the department under his leadership has committed to have in place by the end of this year - committed to the Auditor General, I might add. The health of Nova Scotians and the well-being of our environment may be jeopardized, and yet the department's response was that there are no unacceptable health concerns. I wonder what is unacceptable, and I will table documents about a situation his department is aware of in New Glasgow, which does involve reported health concerns.

From the Auditor General's Report, we know there is no process in place for inspectors to identify, or even verify, the accuracy of key information reported on sites. Will the minister tell this House what he is doing to make sure these weaknesses are addressed, and when will the changes come in his department to address contaminated sites?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, again, we point out that this issue has been addressed by the Auditor General and we are looking into that and we're going to be moving forward. Again, I want to repeat that this issue has been ongoing for decades. Both Parties had an opportunity to deal with it. I can assure you, I take this job very seriously and will be addressing this issue in the best interests of all Nova Scotians.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the minister seems to be neglecting the fact that the department under his leadership - not the leadership of either of these Parties - committed to fix the problem and have the tools in place by the end of 2010, and nothing has been done yet. He has misled the Auditor General, in that case. The Auditor General's Report states, "The existence of contaminated sites which are not cleaned up may also negatively impact the competitiveness of our economy." That's from the Auditor General.

I have no doubt that since this is an impediment to economic development that the minister has made this a priority, yet we've seen nothing. I would ask that minister once again, when will we see the tools in place that his department promised under his ministership to the Auditor General?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, again I want to just echo that our staff - I want to have the opportunity to acknowledge all the work that they've done on this. I can tell you that we'll be moving forward very soon and this is something that we take very seriously. Again, I just want to reflect that each Party over there had the opportunity. They missed. This government is going to do the job.

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

**HEALTH: MIDWIFERY PILOT PROJECTS
- EVALUATION**

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. On November 24th this year, in response to a question on midwifery, the minister indicated that there is an evaluation underway of the three midwifery pilot projects in the province. Of course, an evaluation is important to determine the next step, but there is a catch. This pilot project has been barely operational. Its staff have been diverted in year one to writing procedures and setting up the program, and in every site it is offered, it falls short of the appropriate standards of care that were adopted by midwives across the country. These shortcomings clearly will cloud the results of an evaluation that we're waiting for.

My question to the minister is, if you have already received this evaluation, will you table it now in the House and if you have not, will you promise to bring it to the House as soon as you receive it?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, yes, I did indicate that an evaluation is going on. I have not received the evaluation and until I have an opportunity to see the evaluation when it's completed, obviously, I have nothing to table here in the House.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, in HRM where half of the births in the province occur, the demand for midwifery services far exceeds the supply. That means many more people are denied the service than are able to get it. We have a total of seven practising midwives in three locations in the entire province.

Mr. Speaker, midwifery practice needs more than four midwives in one group practice to ensure that there's a continuity of care for the families who want this service. We saw many families last year being denied a midwife because there was no backup for the few who were in the location, even here in HRM. The midwives in the springtime were busy taking allocated overtime and holidays that they couldn't carry into the new year. People were being denied simply because their due date fell in March or at the end of the year. So this is because we do not have the minimum four midwives in any one location.

My question to the minister is, when will she allocate the necessary resources to allow DHAs to hire a sufficient number of midwives so as to ensure sustainable community-based collaborative practices and not the current hospital-based services that we have that are inadequate?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, midwifery is a very important service for many expectant mothers. I've been in this House for very many years. I've seen the advocacy around midwifery and a midwifery program during a Liberal Government that

was reluctant to take any action whatsoever on midwifery. I saw the changes that were introduced, albeit at a snail's pace, with the former government.

It has only been a year and a half or so since we've seen the introduction of the pilot projects, Mr. Speaker, in the three DHAs and those are now being evaluated. As I've indicated, I have yet to see the evaluation and I want an opportunity to review the details before we release any final report on that.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, midwifery is very important to families as the minister knows and as she has seen over the years. What's unfortunate today is that women have less, at least in parts of the province, access to midwifery than they did in the past. I'll table the Midwifery Coalition of Nova Scotia policy statement from November 2010.

Mr. Speaker, we know the benefits of midwifery. It provides more personal care. It is less intrusive and less costly. It results in healthier babies and healthier mothers. The pilot projects so far have not been set up to be community-based and they're not adequately staffed to meet the core principles of Canadian midwifery. So we are failing midwives and women and the evaluation that we're waiting for will be inadequate because the programs haven't been properly set up and resourced as yet anywhere in Nova Scotia.

My question for the minister is, given the obvious shortcomings of the current pilot projects, will the minister commit to bringing forward a plan that not only provides access to midwifery across Nova Scotia in all DHAs but also respects the core principles of the profession?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the Midwifery Coalition, a group that I have a lot of respect for, has been involved in the development of the program in Nova Scotia and they continue to have representation. I've met with them. My door is open, always, to hear from them. The three pilots have all been developed in the DHAs. They are quite different from each other. They have not used the same model in every district and this is why I think we need to look at the evaluation. I'm reserving my judgment on the outcomes of those pilots until I have an evaluative report. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

TIR: 5-YR. HWY. IMPROVEMENT PLAN - COSTS

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise in my place today and address this question to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. On Monday the minister released a five-year paving plan for the province. I would like to commend him for identifying infrastructure (Applause)

I would like to commend him for identifying infrastructure priorities and for releasing the plan to the public. This is something the public will use as a measure to which

the government will be held accountable. The plan does raise some questions, however. There were no budget dollars attached to this plan. I understand that inflation and oil costs are unpredictable, but my question to the minister is, why were there no estimated dollar figures attached to this plan to help taxpayers and others understand both the magnitude of the plan and the cost of implementation?

HON. WILLIAM ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. That is one of the suggestions that I've heard from various Nova Scotians and it is something that can be addressed the next time this - not perfect plan, but first public plan for road priorities is listed. I'll take that one as a good suggestion and it's also a further suggestion that there should be an asterisk beside every one of those plans that are co-shared between the federal government and the provincial government and there should be another asterisk, if it's appropriate, so that the municipal projects also could be noted in that way.

A good piece of advice, and I thank the member for going through it. It's a piece of advice that I will certainly look upon when we publish the plan again. Thank you.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I did go through the plan as well and I found Colchester County in some of those, but I also noted that those projects had already been completed.

However, my question. This is a very ambitious plan, and knowing how much the plan will cost is important to members of this House and also to taxpayers. We recognize that the implementation of any plan is dependent on the dollars to support it. My question to the minister is, as a good minister, will you assure the House that a minimum amount of capital dollars will be assigned each year for the next five years to support the implementation of your plan?

MR. ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member opposite. It is a good question, but I'm not going to give you much of an answer. I know that will disappoint you because of the need for specifics, but it is one of those types of issues that is of some real consequence because I'm hearing from Nova Scotians - lots of e-mails, concerns about where is this particular road. I want to thank the members opposite and the members of this side of the House for bringing forward their concerns.

The key thing is the accountability. I know next year at this time, basically it will be one year where I'll be held accountable about what was done and what wasn't done and why these particular goals were not achieved. If they were, I will tell you, as you probably well know - I'll be patting myself on the back because the job did get done. I thank you for your particular point of view and I understand exactly where you're coming from. I appreciate it. Thank you.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the minister for his honest comments and for his understanding that there are some flaws in the plan.

During the press conference, the chief engineer reported that all major projects such as highway twinning and bridges do depend on some form of federal investment. Since the federal Economic Action Plan is set to expire at the end of this fiscal year, Nova Scotians are wondering about this government's ability to deliver on the plan. With the current agreement set to expire, with no new federal agreements in place, and with every department being asked to cut, the question that Nova Scotians have, and I will ask it on their behalf, what confidence can Nova Scotians have that you and your government - even with your best intentions - Mr. Minister, can actually implement the plan?

[3:00 p.m.]

MR. ESTABROOKS: Thank you to the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, a question that is well-intended for sure. The concern, of course, comes down to, as we look at the balanced budget that is part of the goal of this government, when it is going to be attained. I can assure you opposite and I want to assure all members of this House, that Nova Scotians are looking for hope when it comes to good roads. They have been neglected for far too long. They wanted a plan, they wanted a public plan, they want to be reassured that over the next five years, or the next four years as the case will be, will that particular road get the attention that it so richly deserves?

I will assure you, and I heard the member for Argyle, of course, mentioned bridges, I will assure you that when we go over this plan it will be a plan that will be fair to Nova Scotians and we will do everything possible, myself, as a minister, and I know the members opposite and Nova Scotians specifically, they'll make sure that their roads and their bridges are not neglected. I thank you for the points and they are good ones.

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

LWD: FOIPOP REQUESTS - STATUS

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, on September 24th two freedom of information requests were filed with the Department of Labour and Workforce Development. Information was requested on the Skills Development Program. Now some information was given on one of the requests but we have not had a formal response on either one. My question is to the Minister of Labour and Workforce Development is, will the minister please tell us the status of these freedom of information requests?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to meet with the honourable member and give her an update on the status of that other request. I don't have those details personally, but I will make sure that I have the information and I'd be pleased to pass it along to her. Thank you.

MS. REGAN: I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker, but these freedom of information requests are more than a month overdue. I want to know, will the minister commit to providing this information before the end of the House session?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the honourable member realizes that the FOIPOP officer for the department received that request. The process and the timeline and the amount of information are entirely up to that official, so I would hesitate to make any commitments on her behalf because we do give the FOIPOP officers considerable independence in order to fulfil their mandate. I can make the inquiry and check into it but that's all that I can commit to at this time. Thank you.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that these requests are supposed to be replied to within one month. The Department of Labour and Workforce Development does not have a great track record of responding to requests. One letter I sent, dated July 30, 2010, was not responded to until October 6, 2010. There have been changes with the Labour Market Agreement and it has taken far too long for the department to account for them. Will the minister ensure that future communication will be responded to in a more timely fashion?

MS. MORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have any personal knowledge of the extent of requests that come in to the FOIPOP officers so I'm not sure of the workload. I've offered to make inquiries and, certainly, I appreciate when people apply for that information that they'd like to have the information sooner rather than later. I will make inquiries and make sure that information is passed along to the honourable member. Thank you very much.

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

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: My question is to the Acting Minister of Tourism, Heritage and Culture. Yesterday I brought up a subject about bringing the Boston Red Sox here to work with the community and I'm just wondering what his response to that would be today.

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

HON. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Earlier in Question Period today, in questioning the Minister of Education and the Premier regarding the situation at Holy Angels High School, it was very unclear as to where the government stands on this particular issue that's so very important to the people of my area and the people of all Cape Breton.

The Premier said today that it was not the responsibility of the provincial government in this matter to purchase the school. I'll remind them that it is the provincial government's responsibility to purchase capital assets in the school board - not the school board's, not the community, as he suggested in Hansard on November 9th. In answering the question on

November 9th from our Leader, the Opposition Leader, the Premier was asked: “will you buy the school?” The Premier said: “Well, the answer to that is no.” Then he goes on to say that we might want to see it purchased through the community group, and we made reference to that at the time.

I would ask that the Premier either tell this House whether or not this government is going to buy this school or stop misleading the Minister of Education, who is also misleading this side of the House as to keeping that option open.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you for the information, but I don’t believe that is a point of order.

The honourable member for Kings West.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I’d like to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly.

MR. GLAVINE: I’d like to draw the attention of the House to the west gallery where today we have the Warden of Kings County, the newly-minted first female Warden of Kings County, Diana Brothers, and her husband Jim, here to take in some of the proceedings of the House - an historic election in Kings County, and so I’d like the House to give her and her husband a warm welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

[3:07 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Mr. Alfie MacLeod in the Chair.]

[5:58 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Charlie Parker, resumed the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills reports:

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and made progress and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, that concludes government business for today. I move that the House do rise, to meet again from the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. After the daily routine we will do Public Bills in Committee of the Whole House on Bills, Bill Nos. 103, 105, 106, 109, 110 and Bill Nos. 89, 102, 108, 111, 112 and Public Bills for Second Reading, Bill Nos. 88, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127 and 128.

Mr. Speaker, I move that we rise, to meet again at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House rise to meet again tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We are adjourned until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.

[The House rose at 6:00 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 2690**

By: Ms. Kelly Regan (Bedford-Birch Cove)

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

Whereas the Grade 5 classes of Mr. Andrew Stickings at École Grosvenor Wentworth Park School in Halifax have created many award winning videos; and

Whereas the 2009-10 class earned a number of awards for their videos; and

Whereas student director Alison Horton and student producer Amanda Wentzell joined Mr. Stickings in Japan to receive the Panasonic Kid Witness News Program Hometown Documentary Award and the Global Web Award for their documentary “Pier 21”;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Andrew, Amanda and Alison and all the students who worked on this video and wish them well in their future cinematographic endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 2691

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas the region of Queens Municipality enriches the community life by strengthening the tradition of arts and culture on the South Shore; and

Whereas the region of Queens Municipality was recently selected as one of four communities vying for the Community Arts and Culture Recognition Award presented by the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council; and

Whereas the region of Queens Municipality is very active in presenting arts and culture activities including concerts at the Astor Theatre and Lane’s Privateer Inn, plays by the Winds of Change, book readings every summer in Port Medway along with house concerts, local art galleries and dance lessons;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the region of Queens Municipality on having been selected as one of four communities vying for the Community Arts and Culture Recognition Award and wishes them continued arts and culture success on the South Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 2692

By: Ms. Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas if you offer exercise classes in a comfortable environment, make them easily accessible and allow teens to participate with their friends, the program will be more successful; and

Whereas Liverpool Regional High School teacher, Ceri Stewart, had an idea to bring teen fitness classes to the school making exercise more accessible to students and staff; and

Whereas teachers and students are exercising once a week and are encouraging everyone to think about physical activity in a fun and enjoyable way;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Ceri Stewart of Liverpool Regional High School for bringing exercise classes for students and teachers in a comfortable environment and for making them easily accessible for everyone.

RESOLUTION NO. 2693

By: Mr. Mat Whynott (Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville)

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

Whereas on November 7, 2010, Lower Sackville resident Chelsea Nisbett was awarded two Nova Scotia Music Week awards for her outstanding work in the local music industry; and

Whereas Chelsea Nisbett was awarded trophies for Inspirational Artist of the Year and Urban Artist of the Year while also being nominated for Female Artist Recording of the Year;

Whereas this young musician has been a staple in the Canadian inspirational music scene since graduating from Sackville High School and has since been awarded Gospel

Recording of the Year at the 2008 East Coast Music Awards and the Up & Coming Youth Award at the 2007 African Nova Scotia Music Association Awards;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Lower Sackville's Chelsea Nisbett on all of her musical accomplishments, including her recent two awards and additional nomination at the 2010 Nova Scotia Music Awards in Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 2694

By: Vicki Conrad (Queens)

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

Whereas something wicked and dark has descended on a small town through the wonderful words of Liverpool author and South Shore newspaper editor Vernon Oickle; and

Whereas in late October of this year the second novel of Vernon Oickle was launched in Liverpool and this is his 13th book; and

Whereas *One Crow Sorrow* centres on a stranger arriving in town and the arrival of thousands of crows who have visited the town before;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes and congratulates author and newspaper editor Vernon Oickle of Liverpool on the recent publication of his 13th book and second novel *One Crow Sorrow*.

RESOLUTION NO. 2695

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 Brooke Densmore, a 14-year-old from Belmont, who attends Central Colchester Junior High School in Onslow, North Colchester, is an honour student and an exceptional athlete; and

Whereas Brooke was named the Most Valuable Player for Girls Basketball at Central Colchester Junior high this past year and was awarded the Coaches Award for Track and Field, having finished in the top 10 in all of her events at Provincials; and

Whereas Brooke was chosen to play an Elite level of basketball with the High Performance Team called Thunder Selects Under-14, and to be one of the two Team Captains;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the talents of this dedicated young athlete and congratulate Brooke and the Thunder Selects Under-14 team for winning the championship title at the International Basketball Festival held in Montreal in July.

RESOLUTION NO. 2696

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 Kathleen Glasgow, a Grade 9 student at North Colchester High School, has a wide range of abilities and interests; and

Whereas Kathleen is a strong student, a science fair award recipient, and an avid reader; and

Whereas Kathleen is also a canteen manager, a cafeteria worker, a helper with the summer soccer program, a skater and a skier;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this bright, articulate, hardworking student for being chosen the June student of the month at North Colchester High School.

RESOLUTION NO. 2697

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 Jillian Nicholson is a mature, dependable, well-rounded Grade 12 student from North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, Colchester North; and

Whereas Jillian is known for helping others, whether mowing lawns for neighbours, driving to medical appointments, or peer tutoring; and

Whereas this centre on the school's volleyball team also enjoys fishing, driving her ATV, golfing and painting;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jillian Nicholson for being chosen as student of the month for June at North Colchester High School.

RESOLUTION NO. 2698

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 Andrew Rafters is an Honours with Distinction student at North Colchester High School; and

Whereas Andrew is a conscientious volunteer not only at North Colchester High School, but also at the elementary school, the Fraser Cultural Centre, and the Tatamagouche Library; and

Whereas Andrew is a peer tutor, a member of the school's math league, an avid fiddle player and last year's winner of the Lieutenant Governor's Medal;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Andrew Rafters for being chosen the May student of the month at North Colchester High School, and commend him for his academic achievement and community involvement.

RESOLUTION NO. 2699

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 Hailey Roberts has completed the Canskate program; and

Whereas Hailey shows passion, dedication, and good sportsmanship in skating; and

Whereas Hailey Roberts was chosen Debert Skating Club's Canskater of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Hailey for being chosen as the recipient of this special award.

RESOLUTION NO. 2700

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 the Ada Mingo Memorial Teen Writing Competition is sponsored by the Colchester-East Hants Public Library; and

Whereas the competition is held each year to encourage creative writing by teenagers; and

Whereas the competition is open to any teens from ages 13 to 19 who possess a library card;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Austin Miller of Tatamagouche, Colchester North, for winning the Ada Mingo Memorial Teen Writing Participation Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 2701

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 paramedics serve a vital role in our health care system; and

Whereas victims of illness or injury who need emergency, pre-hospital assessment and medical care often owe their lives to these trained professionals; and

Whereas 87 paramedics were presented with long service awards by the Minister of Health at a ceremony in Halifax on May 20, 2010;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Victor Murphy of North River, Colchester North, for receiving a Paramedic Long Service Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 2702

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 paramedics serve a vital role in our health care system; and

Whereas victims of illness or injury who need emergency, pre-hospital assessment and medical care often owe their lives to these trained professionals; and

Whereas 87 paramedics were presented with long service awards by the Minister of Health at a ceremony in Halifax on May 20, 2010;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dwayne Semple of Tatamagouche, Colchester North, for receiving a Paramedic Long Service Award.