



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Charlie Parker

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Second Session

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS:	
Com. Serv.: Poverty Reduction - Action, Mr. T. Zinck	4719
PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:	
Private and Local Bills Committee, Ms. M. Raymond	4720
NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 2817, Gingergrass Thai & Vietnamese Rest. - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Hon. Manning MacDonald ..	4720
Res. 2818, NDP Gov.'t: Policies - Effects, Hon. J. Baillie	4721
Res. 2819, Prov. House Christmas Tree: Lunenburg Christmas Tree Growers Assoc./Pages - Thank, Mr. A. Younger	4722
Res. 2820, Dexter, Janet Eleanor - PSC Long-Serv. Award (25 Yrs.), Mr. C. Porter	4722
Res. 2821, Penn, Norman./Trefry, Russell - Firefighter Awards, Mr. H. Theriault	4723
Res. 2822, Rouleau, Nadine/Saulnier, Jean Claude: Daughter - Birth Congrats., Hon. C. d'Entremont	4724
Res. 2823, Handyman Connection - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Hon. Manning MacDonald	4724
Res. 2824, Hfx. Citadel-Sable Island MLA: Food Connections - Funding Congrats., Hon. C. Clarke	4725
Res. 2825, Meadowfields Commun. Sch.: Guinness World Record - Congrats., Mr. Z. Churchill	4726

Res. 2826, C.B. Cancer Ctr. Appreciation Dinner: Organizers - Congrats., Mr. K. Bain	4726
Res. 2827, Mattatall Signs - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Mr. G. MacLellan	4727
Res. 2828, Truro-Bible Hill MLA: First Nations Communities - Consultation, Hon. K. Casey	4728
Res. 2829, d'Entremont, Dr. Lionel - N.S. Rural Physician of Yr., Hon. W. Gaudet	4729
Res. 2830, Health - MS Treatment: Aftercare - Min. Assurance, Mr. K. Bain	4729
Res. 2831, Dart. Whalers AA Team - Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4730
Res. 2832, Hfx. Fairview MLA: Commun. Safety - Efforts Support, Mr. C. Porter	4731
Res. 2833, Palmater, Candy: East Coast Talent - Promotion, Ms. K. Regan	4732
Res. 2834, Hennigar, Cst. Dwight: Sports Pals Prog. - Success Wish, Mr. T. Zinck	4732
Res. 2835, Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville: Self-Promotion - Congrats., Hon. C. d'Entremont	4733
Res. 2836, Bridgetown Reg. HS Boys Soccer Team - Prov. Banner, Hon. S. McNeil	4734
Res. 2837, Higgins, Terry Lynn - PSC Long-Serv. Award (30 Yrs.), Hon. K. Casey	4735
Res. 2838, Ryan Duffy's Steak & Seafood - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Mr. H. Theriault	4735
Res. 2839, N.S. Health Research Fdn. - Anniv. (10 th), Hon. S. McNeil	4736
Res. 2840, Sydney Presbytery (United Church): God/Commun. - Commitment, Hon. C. Clarke	4737
Res. 2841, Hill, Kyle: Achievements - Congrats., Mr. Z. Churchill	4737
Res. 2842, Reashore, Katie - CTV Maritimer of the Week, Mr. K. Bain	4738
Res. 2843, Hamachi Steakhouse Bar & Grill - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Mr. G. MacLellan	4739
Res. 2844, Order of N.S. Recipients (2010) - Congrats., Mr. A. MacLeod (by Hon. J. Baillie)	4740
Res. 2845, Bath Fitter - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Mr. L. Glavine (by Hon. W. Gaudet)	4741

Res. 2846, Robinson, Ashley - Decade Award, Hon. K. Colwell (by Mr. A. Younger)	4741
Res. 2847, Walk Against Violence: Participants - Congrats., Mr. T. Zinck	4742
Res. 2848, Michael, Margaret - Decade Award, Ms. D. Whalen (by Mr. H. Theriault)	4743
Res. 2849, Vanderhof, Mike & Debby/Holland Home Leisure - Anniv. (30 th), Mr. L. Glavine (by Hon. W. Gaudet)	4744
Res. 2850, Briggs, Relda: Doncaster Mem. Award, Hon. J. Baillie	4744
Res. 2851, Turnbull, Kurtis - Decade Award, Mr. D. Whalen (by Ms. K. Regan)	4745
Res. 2852, MapleLeaf Seamless Eavestroughing - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Hon. M. Samson	4746
Res. 2853, Benoit Electric - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Hon. W. Gaudet	4747
Res. 2854, Bed.-Sack. Physio Clinic - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Ms. K. Regan	4748
Res. 2855, Hamachi House Fine Japanese Cuisine - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Hon. M. Samson	4748
Res. 2856, McBurney Pools & Spas - Consumers' Choice Award (2010), Hon. K. Colwell (by Mr. A. Younger)	4749
Res. 2857, Archibald, Shelley - PSC Long-Serv. Award (25 Yrs.), Mr. A. MacMaster (by Hon. K. Casey)	4750
Res. 2858, Burgess, Stephen - PSC Long-Serv. Award (25 Yrs.), Mr. A. MacMaster (by Hon. K. Casey)	4751
ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS:	
No. 533, Prem.: Educ. Cuts - Sch. Closures, Hon. S. McNeil	4752
No. 534, Prem.: Educ. Cuts - Prog. Delivery, Hon. K. Casey	4753
No. 535, Prem.: Educ. Cuts (22 per cent) - Source, Ms. K. Regan	4754
No. 536, Prem. - Bus. Organizations: Consultation Requests - Response, Hon. S. McNeil	4755
No. 537, Prem. - Policies: Economy - Results, Hon. J. Baillie	4756
No. 538, Health - Ross Rept.: ER - Funding Details, Ms. D. Whalen	4758

No. 539, Prem. - Educ. Cuts: Additional Cuts - Rationale, Hon. K. Casey	4759
No. 540, Justice: Violence (N.S.) - Min. Plans, Hon. M. Samson	4760
No. 541, Prem. - Lbr. Mgt. Laws: Employers/Workers - Consult, Hon. J. Baillie	4762
No. 542, Environ.: Sediment/Storm Water Controls - Change, Mr. A. Younger	4763
No. 543, Com. Serv. - Positions: Elimination - Details, Mr. G. MacLellan	4765
No. 544, TIR: Frenchvale Rd. (C.B.) - Upgrade, Mr. K. Bain	4767
No. 545, ERD: Mfg. & Processing Tax Credit - Job Creation, Mr. Z. Churchill	4768
No. 546, Prem. - Kendall Lane Housing Soc.: LPNs - Wages, Mr. C. Porter	4770
HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CWH ON BILLS AT 2:02 P.M.	4771
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 5:59 P.M.	4771
ADJOURNMENT:	
MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5):	
C.B. Reg. Library: Turning Leaves Fest. - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey	4771
Hon. Manning MacDonald	4773
Hon. M. More	4776
HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CWH ON BILLS AT 6:30 P.M.	4779
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 11:01 P.M.	4779
CWH REPORTS	4779
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Wed., Dec. 8 th at 9 a.m.	4781
NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):	
Res. 2859, Armstrong, Bernadette - Birthday (90 th), Hon. C. d'Entremont	4782
Res. 2860, Debruyn, Jaiden: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team - Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4782
Res. 2861, Benigno, Julien: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team - Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4783
Res. 2862, Canning, Alex: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team - Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4783
Res. 2863, Fisher, Bruen: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team - Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4784
Res. 2864, Davidson, Daniel: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team - Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4784

Res. 2865, Doggett, Jacob: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4785
Res. 2866, Gamble, Scott: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4785
Res. 2867, Fahie, Scott: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4786
Res. 2868, Hayward, Jackson: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4786
Res. 2869, Torrey, Matthew: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4787
Res. 2870, Young, Logan: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4787
Res. 2871, Gillis, Logan: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4788
Res. 2872, Connors, Matthew: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4788
Res. 2873, Clark, Morgan: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4789
Res. 2874, Murphy, Ryan: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4789
Res. 2875, Warwick, Stephen: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4790
Res. 2876, Naugle, Michael: Dart. Whalers Atom AA Team	
- Hockey Gold Medal, Mr. A. Younger	4790



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 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 shall now commence with the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MR. TREVOR ZINCK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition entitled “Things which need to be done ASAP in the direction of poverty reduction in Nova Scotia, which we think the Nova Scotia Government is ignoring.” The operative clause reads as follows: Something we think the Nova Scotia Government needs to understand is that if the shelter allowance for people who are on assistance is not increased soon, those individuals will become homeless.

Mr. Speaker, it’s signed by 106 people and I have also affixed my name.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MS. MICHELE RAYMOND: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Private and Local Bills, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 91 - Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron Amalgamation Act.

and the committee recommends this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, without amendment.

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

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2817

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumers' Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumers' Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers' Choice Institute (Canada) by surveying consumers and are unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumers' Choice Awards can be extremely proud of their accomplishments, as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Gingergrass Thai and Vietnamese Restaurant for receiving the 2010 Consumers' Choice Award for the category of South East Asian Restaurant, and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 2818

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

Whereas recently Statistics Canada numbers show that, under this NDP Government, 2,300 jobs have been lost in Nova Scotia since June 2009; and

Whereas these statistics show that Nova Scotia lost 4,600 jobs and a total of 8,600 full-time jobs over the last 12 months; and

Whereas 47,600 Nova Scotians are unemployed, bringing the province's unemployment rate up to 9.6 per cent;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House acknowledge that NDP high-tax, high-debt, high-spending policies are driving jobs away from Nova Scotia and are discouraging investment and growth.

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 Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 2819

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 Lunenburg County Christmas tree growers have supplied a tree to help celebrate the holidays in the Legislature's Red Room; and

Whereas the Assembly Pages and staff decorated the tree; and

Whereas with debate in this House still many, many hours away from completion;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly thank our Pages and the Lunenburg County Christmas Tree Producers' Association for decorating and providing a tree, by which members may celebrate Christmas Eve when they are still here debating.

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 Hants West.

RESOLUTION NO. 2820

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

Whereas Janet Eleanor Dexter, of Hantsport, was recently honoured for her 25 years of service with the Province of Nova Scotia in the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations; and

Whereas Janet's exemplary work habits as a customer service leader in Service Nova Scotia's Kentville office is just another example of how Nova Scotia's Public Service contributes to the prosperity of our province; and

Whereas Janet was recognized for her quarter-century of service in late September, leading up to Nova Scotia's Public Service Week October 4th to October 11th;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly applaud the significant contributions of Janet Eleanor Dexter, and recognize that Nova Scotia's civil service is making a difference in the lives of Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 2821

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

Whereas two Weymouth volunteer firefighters received special recognition during the fire department's annual Christmas banquet at Weymouth fire hall recently; and

Whereas Norman Penny was named First Responder of the Year and Russell Trefry received the Firefighter of the Year Award; and

Whereas both of these men are dedicated firefighters and often the first to arrive at the fire hall when paged;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House congratulate Norman Penny and Russell Trefry on receiving these awards, and thank them for their dedication and commitment to a job well done.

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. 2822

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 the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas author Edna J. Le Shan said, "A new baby is like the beginning of all things - Wonder, Hope, a dream of possibilities"; and

Whereas on May 30, 2010, a very special occasion took place when Nadine Rouleau and Jean-Claude Saulnier welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Nadine and Jean-Claude on this momentous event in their lives, and in wishing them many more happy years as parents.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

[12:15 p.m.]

The honourable member for Cape Breton South.

RESOLUTION NO. 2823

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumers' Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumers' Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers' Choice Institute (Canada) by surveying consumers and is unique to North America because it is a consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumers' Choice Awards can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout the industry;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Handyman Connection for receiving the 2010 Consumers' Choice Award for the category of Renovation Contractors and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2824

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 member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island continues to work with the Ecology Action Centre; and

Whereas in October the member celebrated funding for the Food Connections Project in the amount of \$20,000; and

Whereas the funding will be used to fund cooking, preserving and root cellar workshops, as well as develop supports for buying clubs and community-supported agriculture programs;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island on helping to secure the funding for such an important project which obviously means a great deal to his community.

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. 2825

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 5th Annual World Sport Stacking Association Stack Up! event took place on November 18th, which is Guinness World Records Day, during which stackers representing 1,627 schools and organizations from 25 countries ranging from Germany to Singapore to countries in South America took part; and

Whereas Meadowfields Community School, an elementary school in Yarmouth County, was one of the schools represented in this event; and

Whereas the grand total of sport stackers was 316,757, beating the previous year's record of 276,053, making Meadowfields Community School one of the new Guinness World Record holders;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate Meadowfields Community School on becoming Guinness World Record holders and recognize their students for their incredible school spirit, skill, and perseverance, they have made their community proud.

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 Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 2826

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

Whereas the 6th Annual Central Cape Breton Appreciation Dinner for the Cape Breton Cancer Centre was recently held at the St. Columba Parish Hall in Iona; and

Whereas the dinner is a tribute to all in the community who are living with or who have died from cancer, and in particular Dan E. MacNeil who inspired the community to take on this annual event; and

Whereas a total of \$4,017 was raised this year for the Cape Breton Cancer Centre, bringing the total raised since 2005 to over \$20,000;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly extend their thanks and appreciation to Donna and Jimmy MacNeil for organizing the meal, Councillor Paul MacNeil for sponsoring the event, and the many volunteers who made it all possible.

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 Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 2827

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumers' Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumers' Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers' Choice Institute (Canada) by surveying consumers and it is unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumers' Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Mattatall Signs Ltd. for receiving the 2010 Consumers' Choice Award for the category of Signs and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2828

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

Whereas the member for Truro-Bible Hill is holding open meetings to engage First Nations communities; and

Whereas the member for Truro-Bible Hill is consulting this important community about their employment and community development needs; and

Whereas in a 2001 newspaper article, the Premier said, the key to good government is to listen to people's needs and involve them in government;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commend the member for Truro-Bible Hill on her efforts to include an important Nova Scotia community in their government and to follow the words of her Party's Leader.

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 Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 2829

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

Whereas during their annual conference, Doctors Nova Scotia honoured physicians from across Nova Scotia for exemplary contributions to their communities and the medical field; and

Whereas Saulnierville's Dr. Lionel d'Entremont was named Rural Physician of the Year in recognition of his many contributions to the community and his commitment to his patients; and

Whereas since starting his practice in 1970, Dr. d'Entremont has continued to make house calls, see patients in nursing homes and serve as the Medical Director for the Clare Health Centre;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Lionel d'Entremont for being named Nova Scotia Rural Physician of the Year by Doctors Nova Scotia and wish him continued success as he serves the community of Clare as the quintessential country doctor.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 2830

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

Whereas universal health care is a cornerstone of Canadian society and a great comfort to many who are facing health challenges; and

Whereas some Nova Scotians who have undergone liberation or CCSVI therapy in other countries have worried that they would not receive the care they needed if complications arose once they returned to Canada; and

Whereas the Minister of Health alleviated these concerns when she said in the House, "I can assure members of this Legislature and the public that our specialists community, our MS practitioners and our other practitioners are there to provide services to anybody in this

situation who develops complications as a result of any of the procedures that they may have outside of this province. That is not in question.”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commend the Minister of Health on easing the burden on multiple sclerosis sufferers in Nova Scotia by assuring them that they will receive any aftercare they need following liberation therapy, right here at home.

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 Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 2831

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 Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup Hockey Tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Dartmouth defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup and wish them success in the remainder of their 2010-11 hockey season.

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 Hants West.

RESOLUTION NO. 2832

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

Whereas Jake brakes are engine-retardant brakes that are a safety tool for drivers and heavy trucks and, because of their noise, an aggravation for people living near truck routes; and

Whereas the member for Halifax Fairview has opposed Jake brakes in the past, noting that he has heard complaints from people in his constituency living on School Avenue, Melrose Avenue, Sunnybrae Avenue, Central Avenue in Fairview, on Abbot Drive, and as far away as the Fairmount subdivision; and

Whereas the member has toured the area with safety representatives of the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association, raised the issue with officials of the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, and introduced a bill in the Legislature that would give the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal the authority to ban Jake brakes in any place the department thought appropriate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly continue to support the member for Halifax Fairview on his efforts to improve the safety and integrity of his community.

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. 2833

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

Whereas Nova Scotian Candy Palmeter debuted her own nationally-televised weekly talk show on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network on September 7th; and

Whereas this renowned comedienne and recovering lawyer is the host and star of the Candy Show, a mix of her special brand of humour and East Coast music; and

Whereas this show gives local musicians the opportunity to showcase their talents to all of Canada from the stage of Halifax's Olympic Centre;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House acknowledge Candy Palmeter for her contribution to the promotion of East Coast talent and wish 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2834

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

Whereas Constable Dwight Hennigar's dream is to see police officers and community volunteers becoming Sports Pals with kids across HRM; and

Whereas the very first Sports Pals skills camp took place on a foggy soccer field at Harbourview Elementary School in Dartmouth North; and

Whereas this initiative is part of HRM's public safety strategy, which aims to address the root causes of crime and enhanced community safety;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize Constable Hennigar on his efforts and wish him well on his endeavour to offer HRP Sports Pals programs to other communities in HRM next year.

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. 2835

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 the member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville was chosen as one of The ChronicleHerald's Top 20 Nova Scotians in their 20s from on-line submissions from people across the province; and

Whereas before becoming an MLA he was an outreach assistant at the NDP caucus office, a guest speaker at an international conference in Trinidad and Tobago, and has represented Canada at the United Nations, speaking at the UN's World Program of Action for Youth; and

Whereas from 2004 to 2008 he was appointed by the Government of Nova Scotia to be co-chair of the Nova Scotia Youth Advisory Council and has also served on federal and provincial government committees for tobacco control;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville on being one of the NDP's most self-promoted individuals.

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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 2836

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

Whereas a historic moment was realized on the soccer field at St. F.X. on the afternoon of November 13th when the Bridgetown Regional High School senior boys soccer team captured the District 3 provincial soccer banner for the 5th year in a row; and

Whereas through determination, co-operation and skill, the BRHS Trojans were able to defeat the École du Carrefour 3-1, coming back from a 1 to nothing deficit at half time; and

Whereas through hours of coaching focused on building skills and adopting a winning attitude, this team has achieved a remarkable and premiere achievement in bringing home five consecutive provincial titles;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate the BRHS Trojans on this outstanding accomplishment.

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 Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2837

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

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

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

Whereas Terry Lynn Higgins from Valley, Colchester North, was recognized for her 30 years of service with the Department of Natural Resources;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Terry Lynn Higgins for her service to the Government of Nova Scotia over the past three decades.

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 Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 2838

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumer Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumer Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumer Choice Institute Canada by surveying consumers and are unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumer Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ryan Duffy's Steak and Seafood for receiving the 2010 Consumer Choice Award for the category of fine dining restaurant and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 2839

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

Whereas last evening the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation hosted a reception to honour the winners of the Decade Awards, to honour the winning pieces of the art competition with NSCAD University and last, but certainly not least, to celebrate their 10th Anniversary; and

Whereas health research is necessary in order to solve the challenges currently being experienced within our health care system; and

Whereas an investment in health care research is an investment in healthier Nova Scotians, a more effective and cost-efficient system, a strong economy, and serves as a magnet to attract world-class health care talent;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature congratulate the staff of the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation for 10 years of excellence in health research and wish them many more years of success in 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Cape Breton North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2840

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

Whereas this year, the United Church of Canada marked its 85th Anniversary; and

Whereas members and adherents have joined together with other United Church congregations and friends in the ecumenical community to recognize this significant milestone at a time of much transition within the church; and

Whereas Sydney Presbytery presented *Love Divine and Love Less Perfect*, a theatrical presentation, on November 12th and 13th as well as a special 85th worship celebration involving local clergy and special guest speaker, the Rev. Dr. Rob Fennell;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Sydney Presbytery of the United Church of Canada for their continued commitment to serving God and community.

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.

Order, please. Order. If the members have conversations they want to carry on, I would ask them to take it outside the House.

RESOLUTION NO. 2841

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

Whereas Yarmouth native Kyle Hill holds a Masters of Science in diagnostic imaging from Oxford and a Bachelor of Science in physics from Mount Allison University and is a Rhodes Scholar in the final stages of writing his dissertation for his Ph.D. in the University of Oxford's Department of Surgery; and

Whereas in the summer of 2006, Kyle Hill was the only Canadian selected for the prestigious NASA Academy; in the summer of 2007, Google noticed keen interest in Internet technology and hired him to do market research in London, England; in the summer of 2008, he taught high school science to economically-disadvantaged students in rural Jamaica; and in the summer of 2009, he volunteered with the United Nations Development Program in Chernobyl, Ukraine, where he completed a health education project and promoted a healthy and active lifestyle to local youth; and

Whereas Kyle Hill has recently been selected as a Sauv  Scholar, which brings together 14 young leaders from around the globe who want to change the world, according to the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauv , by allowing themselves to look through the diversity and multiplicity of cultures, religious beliefs, ideologies and systems that exist around them and discover workplace principles and elements that are common and sacred to all mankind;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate my friend and former classmate Kyle Hill for his incredible academic achievements, remarkable volunteer work and recognize him for being a true role model and inspiration to all those around him, by working to make our country and world a better place.

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.

I would remind all members of the House that resolutions are supposed to be precise in their length and time.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 2842

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

Whereas Wanda MacLeod, a CCA who works at Alderwood Nursing Home in Baddeck, wrote to CTV on behalf of the 70 residents in Alderwood to nominate Katie Reashore for Maritimer of the Week; and

Whereas Katie has been coming to Alderwood the last two years on a regular basis after she started coming with her mom at Christmastime to give each resident with Alzheimer's Disease a teddy bear that she bought with her own money; and

Whereas along with being chosen Maritimer of the Week, Katie was awarded Classmate of the Year last year at her school;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Katie Reashore on receiving CTV's Maritimer of the Week and thank her for everything she does to brighten the lives of the residents of Alderwood.

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 Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 2843

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumer Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumer Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers Choice Institute of Canada by surveying consumers and is unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumer Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Hamachi Steakhouse Bar & Grill for receiving the 2010 Consumer Choice Award for the category of Steakhouse Restaurant Local and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 2844

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the member for Cape Breton West, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Eva Landry of Sampsonville, Richmond County is a teacher, a principal, a reading specialist and became the first female Superintendent of Schools in Nova Scotia and was also the province's first female Inspector of Schools; and

Whereas for 54 years, Mrs. Landry has been a leader in the 4-H movement, which is an organization that actively promotes youth development in Canada and abroad; and

Whereas Mrs. Landry has been a volunteer for 25 years with Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres where she has worked to maximize access to hearing and speech services for children and adults throughout the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Eva Landry and her fellow recipients, J. Chalmers Doane, the late James Herbert Leonard Hill, Bernley Allan Jones and the late Rev. William Robert Pope on being named to the Order of Nova Scotia and thank them for their many years of service and commitment to our province.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 2845

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumer Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumer Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers Choice Institute of Canada by surveying consumers and is unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumer Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bath Fitter for receiving the 2010 Consumer Choice Award for the category of Bathroom Remodelling and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 2846

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation celebrated its 10th Anniversary by honouring the next generation of health researchers when they awarded ten \$10,000 scholarships to Grade 12 students across the province this past June; and

Whereas the Decade Award is the only scholarship in Canada which enabled young Nova Scotians the opportunity to better understand the positive impacts of health research to our province; and

Whereas Ashley Robinson of École du Carrefour in Dartmouth was the winner, for her essay titled *La recherché en santé effectue en Nouvelle-Écosse* ;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ashley Robinson on her receipt of the Decade Award and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

[12:45 p.m.]

The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2847

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

Whereas the 11th Annual Walk Against Violence was held on October 20, 2010, and drew a large, diverse group of citizens and community leaders, showing once again we will stand together to make our community a safer place for all; and

Whereas the walk was started to commemorate and celebrate the life of Jason MacCullough, whose murder in August 1999 still remains unsolved; and

Whereas the walk symbolizes much more, it stands for the resiliency and determination of the community of Dartmouth North and is a testament to those whose unflinching efforts have made this a much better place to live, work, and grow;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly congratulate the continued efforts of the Boys and Girls Club, the police, the firefighters, local community leaders, residents, and Carolyn and Al MacCullough on their continued efforts to send a strong message to our youth that there are adults who care about their future and their community.

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 Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 2848

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation celebrated its 10th Anniversary by honouring the next generation of health researchers, when they awarded ten \$10,000 scholarships to Grade 12 students across the province this past June; and

Whereas the Decade Award is the only scholarship program in Canada which enables young Nova Scotians the opportunity to better understand the positive impacts of health research to our province; and

Whereas Margaret Michael of Citadel High School in Halifax was a winner, with her essay entitled *Mental Illness*;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Margaret Michael on her receipt of this Decade Award and wish her the best in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 2849

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

Whereas in 1980 Holland Home Leisure began a small pool sales and installation business out of Aylesford and their home in Kingston; and

Whereas Mike and Debby vandenHof have grown their business to include a store in New Minas, a staff of 30, and a reputation of first-class customer service in the Annapolis Valley and throughout the province; and

Whereas Holland Home Leisure recently celebrated their 30th year in operation, where they have served their customers and many community organizations, including Big Brothers Big Sisters and Cancer Care Relay for Life;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate the vandenHofs and the staff of Holland Home Leisure for 30 years of business and wish them success in future endeavours as they continue to serve the community and support worthy causes.

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 Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 2850

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

Whereas Relda Briggs was honoured for her dedicated service to the Oxford Firefighters Auxiliary; and

Whereas Relda Briggs is this year's recipient of the Marion Doncaster Memorial Award, which is given to a member of the auxiliary for exemplary service and dedication; and

Whereas family, friends, and dignitaries were on hand on November 20th to enjoy an evening to show their appreciation for those who give so unselfishly to make their community a better, safer place;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Relda Briggson on receiving this outstanding award and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 2851

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation celebrated its 10th Anniversary by honouring the next generation of health researchers when they awarded ten \$10,000 scholarships to Grade 12 students across this province this past June; and

Whereas the Decade Award is the only scholarship program in Canada which enables young Nova Scotians the opportunity to better understand the positive impacts of health research to our province; and

Whereas Kurtis Turnbull of Pictou Academy was the provincial winner for his essay entitled *Early Psychosis Research in Nova Scotia*;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kurtis Turnbull on his receipt of the Decade Award and wish him all the best in his 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 2852

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumers' Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumers' Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers' Choice Institute (Canada) by surveying consumers and is unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumers' Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Maple Leaf Seamless Eavestroughing Limited for receiving the 2010 Consumers' Choice Award for the category of Eavestroughing and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Clare.

RESOLUTION NO. 2853

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumers' Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumers' Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers' Choice Institute (Canada) by surveying consumers and are unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumers' Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Benoit Electric Limited for receiving the 2010 Consumers' Choice Award for the category of Electric Contractors and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Minister of Education on an introduction.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce two guests in the east gallery today. We're joined by Elliott Payzant who is the chairman of the South Shore Regional School Board and the superintendent of that board, Nancy Pynch-Worthylake. I ask my colleagues to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

The honourable member for Dartmouth East on an introduction.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery I'd like to draw members' attention to Mr. Walter Regan who, as most members would know, is the driving force behind the Sackville Rivers Association. I'd like the members to give him a warm welcome.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2854

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumers' Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumers' Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers' Choice Institute (Canada) by surveying consumers and are unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumers' Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout the industry;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bedford-Sackville Physiotherapy Clinic Inc. for receiving the 2010 Consumers' Choice Award for the category of Physical Therapy and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 2855

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumers' Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumers' Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers' Choice Institute (Canada) by surveying consumers and is unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumers' Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Hamachi House Fine Japanese Cuisine for receiving the 2010 Consumers' Choice Award for the category of Japanese Restaurant and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

[1:00 p.m.]

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 2856

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

Whereas on December 1, 2010, the Consumers' Choice Awards were presented at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax; and

Whereas the Consumers' Choice Awards are determined by an independent research firm for Consumers' Choice Institute (Canada) by surveying consumers and is unique to North America because it is the consumer who determines the winners, not a panel of judges; and

Whereas the winners of the Consumers' Choice Award can be extremely proud of their accomplishments as the award is considered to be a seal of excellence throughout industry;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate McBurney Pools and Spas for receiving the 2010 Consumers' Choice Award for the category of Swimming Pool Contractor and wish them continued success in all 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2857

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

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

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

Whereas Shelley Archibald was recognized for her 25 years of work with the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Shelley Archibald for her service to the Government of Nova Scotia for the last quarter-century.

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 Colchester North.

RESOLUTION NO. 2858

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

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

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

Whereas Steve Burgess was recognized for his 25 years of service with Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Steve for his service to the Government of Nova Scotia over the last quarter-century.

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.

Before we move on to the daily routine, and Question Period I neglected to announce the late debate:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Cape Breton Regional Library for this two-week celebration of literature and wish them many more years of service to the region.

That was submitted by the honourable member for Colchester North.

The time now is 1:02 p.m. and we go until 2:02 p.m. Before we start, I would just remind all the members there will be no use of electronic devices to receive or to send messages, or transmit, and at the same time I would ask all members who are giving questions or giving answers to treat the other members with respect as they are doing it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY**ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS**

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

PREM.: EDUC. CUTS - SCH. CLOSURES

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, this morning the school board members from across the province met with the Deputy Premier and other members of the NDP Government, and had a strong message for government. The NDP plan to cut 22 per cent from school boards will leave us with the worst education system in the country. My question to the Premier is, how many schools did they tell you they would need to close as a result of your 22 per cent cut?

HON. DARRELL DEXTER (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have much more respect for the members of the education profession than that. We believe that we have a very good school system. They will continue to provide a very high-quality product and will continue to deliver the services that the young people of this province need.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier won't answer that question. It will be devastating for students as well as communities across our province. The fact is school boards have said a minimum of 70 schools will need to be closed. School boards have also said they'll be forced to cut targeting funding for programs, but last week the Premier promised that target funding for autism will be maintained.

So which is it, Mr. Speaker? My question for the Premier is, will he give school boards a direct answer and tell them which target funds will remain in place, so which students will be the winners and which ones will be the losers?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, that would be the worst possible kind of approach to take and we're not going to engage in what I consider to be useless rhetoric. The school boards, the Education Department, everyone knows that there is a significant challenge before them. We have asked them to be partners with us to ensure that we meet the targets that we have to meet.

Mr. Speaker, this is not an easy undertaking, it is difficult. It's difficult for the department, it's difficult for the administrators. We understand and appreciate that. The simple fact of the matter is that there is a fiscal problem that was created by the former government and we intend to fix it.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has asked school boards across this Province of Nova Scotia to go through an exercise. They are doing the due diligence and they're sending a very strong message to your government that a 22 per cent cut in education

will devastate the public education system in our province. School boards have also told us that 3,400 positions will need to be cut: bus drivers, custodians, library technicians, student support workers, and educational assistants.

Students need to be able to get to school safely, students need a safe and clean learning environment, and students with special needs require the help of an educational assistant. My question to the Premier is, will the Premier please explain to this House how those 3,400 Nova Scotians - hard-working Nova Scotians - being laid off will improve the education of our students?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear about that, the very first place that the boards need to look for their savings is in administration. We want money out of administration and into the classroom.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

PREM.: EDUC. CUTS - PROG. DELIVERY

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is through you to the Premier. School board superintendents, chairs, and other members met today with the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Education, and the Deputy Minister of Education to share the results of their expenditure management exercise. They articulated clearly the impact a 22 per cent reduction would mean on our public school system. The presenters took a balanced approach during the exercise. They looked into all options before they resorted to the numbers for classroom teachers. However, the extent of this government's intended reduction forced them into the classroom and they have identified that approximately 2,000 classroom teachers will need to be taken out of the system in the next three years. So my question to the Premier is, how are boards expected to deliver programs to students with larger classes and no support for the students who have those special needs in their classrooms?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I have said before and I'll say again, that while the student enrolment in this province was dropping by some 30,000 students, the amount of money was continuing to grow. We have gotten to a point now where we are simply not able to sustain the same level of funding for the reducing demand. We have asked the school boards to partner with us to look at where they can find the savings in order to be able to deliver the service that young people in this province need.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I think we all know that the declining enrolment is accommodated through the Hogg formula and the increased money went to support students. The increased funding went to support those very students who are now going to be without service. The improvements made in our education system over the last year will be destroyed by these pending funding reductions. We will lose any competitive edge associated with quality education that we can deliver to our students in our province. Over the last number of years we've offered programs to keep less-motivated students engaged in attending

school. And through this we have created a class of highly-educated individuals who will go on to post-secondary or the workforce. So my question to the Premier is, what do you have for an expected outcome when we dismantle a very good and improving public school system?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I expect a system that will deliver a good quality education to the children of this province.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, the government has stated its three pillars to better Nova Scotia: a balanced budget, growing economy, and improvements to health care. So my question to the Premier is, where is education, the very foundation on which all of those three are based?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, you're quite correct, and they are, of course, integral to all of them.

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

PREM.: EDUC. CUTS (22 PER CENT) - SOURCE

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, last week the Premier said he was going to make funding cuts to public education by making sure that money was taken out of the boardroom and put in the classroom. A laudable effort, except today we find out that in fact the money spent by school boards on administration is only between 4.1 per cent and 5.6 per cent of their budgets. So even if you eliminated those boards - which we're not recommending - their work, which includes student services, special education coordination, and student assessment, would still have to be done somehow by people who would have to be paid. Can the Premier please tell us today, how is he going to make that add up to 22 per cent?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I said, we want to ensure that we look at controlling all of the costs in the system, of which administration is one.

MS. REGAN: So apparently the story has now changed. Today we found out that student test scores in many areas have increased - it would appear that our current system is working. Now, meanwhile, NSSBA just told us this morning that to cut 22 per cent from school budgets they will have to, among other people, lay off 500 school-based non-classroom teachers. Now these are the speech language pathologists, immersion specialists, adult education teachers, psychologists, severe learning disability specialists, guidance counsellors, resource teachers and autism facilitators - can the Premier please tell this House how laying off these educators will help students learn more?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, of course I'm well familiar with the rhetoric that is attended around these things. The simple reality of the matter is that we're working with the boards, we've told them where we have to get to - if we're going to have a sustainable

system over the future then we have to get this under control now and, if we don't, it would only mean deeper cuts later.

MS. REGAN: How interesting that the Premier was going to partner with NSSBA, but now what they're telling them is mere rhetoric.

NSSBA told us this morning that to cut 22 per cent from school budgets, they will have to lay off almost 600 educational assistants, student support workers, and library technicians. Can the Premier please tell this House how laying off the people who help students with emotional, physical, and cognitive disabilities will help create the workers of tomorrow?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't talking about the rhetoric associated with the school board, I was talking about the rhetoric from the member. (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: The Education budget is designed to deliver a good quality program to students in this province, that will continue.

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

**PREM. - BUS. ORGANIZATIONS: CONSULTATION REQUESTS
- RESPONSE**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier was asked respectfully by more than a dozen groups representing business in this province to consult with them. They represent many thousands of employees across this province and hundreds of businesses. The Premier dismissed their concerns outright - he said they didn't understand the issue. My question for the Premier is, why did you show such disrespect for those organizations?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I don't have any disrespect for them at all. I was talking about a particular issue, a bill before the House, as you know, with regard to that. That's what that was about, I stated my opinion on it. I have worked with many of the leaders of those organizations on other matters.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, last week representatives from the NSGEU, the largest public sector union in the province, said the union knew what government was going to do and they expressed delight, but business said they were not even consulted. They are concerned and they have asked to be consulted. My question for the Premier is, why does this NDP Government believe in consultation with unions, but not non-unionized business and workers, which make up the majority of the workplaces in this province?

THE PREMIER: I said before, talking about a bill that's before the House, I'm not sure that's appropriate, but in any event the reality is that with respect to the Labour-Management Review Committee, as I said, this was a matter that was before the public on three occasions in three elections - the widest consultation that I know of.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, we're not talking about a bill before the House, we're talking about the way this Premier has shown contempt for many of the employers across this province, as a matter of fact he called their concerns disingenuous. That's what the Premier called 18 organizations across this province who were expressing some concerns. They just wanted to be consulted; these groups were respectful and they believe that the basis for effective labour relations is an open, two-way dialogue.

[1:15 p.m.]

My question for the Premier is, why is he willing to listen to the union friends but not the businesses which employ 70 per cent of the workers in this province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, none of that is true, but that doesn't stop the Leader of the Opposition from saying it. Often he finds his questions on things that are totally untrue. It's simply this - the fact is that we work with businesses right across this province to build the economy and we intend to continue to do that.

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

PREM. - POLICIES: ECONOMY - RESULTS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, and I'll tell him, through you sir, that I'll tell you something that is true and that is that, sadly, on Friday it was reported by Statistics Canada that Nova Scotia has lost 8,600 jobs in the last 12 months.

So we have further evidence that the Premier and his policies are taking Nova Scotia in the wrong direction, and we're seeing the chilling effects that their policies are having on our economy and an attempt to create a positive investment climate. So I would like to ask the Premier whether he feels these 8,600 Nova Scotians are misinformed, or will he now admit that his policies are taking us down the wrong road?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure he'll be able to table that. The reality is that the unemployment rate went down, employment has been steady in the province.

We realize, as we have seen around the world, that the rebound in the economy has been uneven and there are areas in our province, particularly, for example, in pulp and paper, in wood products, where they've been affected by what has happened in the U.S. market. Of

course, we are not an island in that regard, we are subject to the same kinds of international economic forces as every other country.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we see what a priority the economy and the unemployed are for the Premier, because I would be happy to table the Stats Canada report which is available to the whole world on the World Wide Web, and what it shows is unemployment actually went up, not down in the last year, and it's actually higher, not lower, than when this bunch took office. (Interruptions) We'll just get the report and we'll find out who's right. They report there are 8,600 more unemployed (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order, please.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my point is that we don't have an investment climate in this province that is creating jobs. My question to the Premier is, will he stop insulting the Nova Scotia business community, reverse course and actually listen to them and help build a stronger economy?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Premier's Council on the Economy is made up of some of the finest business leaders in our province, and I'm very happy to have their advice. In fact, the jobsHere strategy was endorsed by that group, and they were very happy about the direction we're going in. Only yesterday, when we introduced the changes to the tax credit for DHX Media, they talked about the number of new jobs, new positions that will be created as a result of the efforts of this government. (Applause)

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, perhaps it's time for the government to move beyond its special committees and consult with all Nova Scotians - unionized and non-unionized - about what they think should be done to make for a stronger economy, because at the moment all that's being accomplished is that jobs are being driven away. In fact, just last week the Fraser Institute reported (Interruptions) - which I know is a particular favourite of the member for Cape Breton Centre - that Nova Scotia now has one of the worst investment climates in Canada.

My final question to the Premier is, will he stop arguing with the business community and admit that we have a problem with job creation and get on with the job of fixing it?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, in fact, investment in this province is continuing to increase. It's one of the reasons why, at the last Premiers' conference, I proposed an Atlantic Venture Capital Fund, a fund that is now being examined by the other Premiers. We hope to be able to put that in place. In fact, there is more investment capital to put into start-up businesses in this province.

These are initiatives that we have undertaken, Mr. Speaker, because we believe in working with the private sector to strengthen the economy.

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

HEALTH - ROSS REPT.: ER - FUNDING DETAILS

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. This morning's response to the Ross report leaves communities with many more questions than they have answers. While the report was wide-ranging, certain details are lacking. The report speaks about funding from several different angles. One recommendation spoke about performance-based funding for emergency departments, which means that those that meet the standards will be rewarded and those that don't will not. My question to the minister is, if emergency rooms are unable to meet emergency room standards, will they be closed?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for giving me an opportunity to tell members of the House how pleased I am that today we announced the adoption of the recommendations of the Ross report to give Nova Scotians better care sooner.

Mr. Speaker, one of the first things I've done is, I have asked the district health authorities to begin immediately to develop a plan to make our emergency rooms more comfortable and to provide better communication and care, particularly for seniors who are waiting in our emergency departments.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable member makes reference to one of the pieces of our plan that we intend to have in place in 2012. As the details with respect to funding of both our system and funding for fee-for-service physicians is developed with our partners, Doctors Nova Scotia, the district health authorities, and emergency room physicians, we'll certainly be sharing those details with Nova Scotians.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, the report also spoke about the need for some potential changes to physical layouts of emergency departments, to make patients' stays there as short as possible. According to the plan, government will continue to partner with communities that raise funds for capital improvements to enhance the services that their hospital provides.

Mr. Speaker, there are multiple funding needs at hospitals, beyond the funding for physical layout changes. There are equipment needs and existing priority lists which are already not being met. My question to the minister is, will capital investments to implement this report come at the expense of other priorities determined by DHAs, or will you be making the foundations raise more money?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member will know that we've already invested additional resources in the Capital District Health Authority. For example, we recently opened a Rapid Assessment Unit which I'm very pleased to tell members of the House has diverted close to 300 patients from our emergency department.

Dr. Ross recommended that we hire an engineering-type expert to look at our emergency departments around the province, particularly emergency rooms that are experiencing problems of flow. Mr. Speaker, we have already initiated that process.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, according to the report, elements of the plan will cost money but it's not necessarily about spending more, it is about spending strategically. One suggestion in terms of spending strategically is for DHAs to redirect funds from their acute care budgets. As we all know, these budgets are stretched already and now that government is asking DHAs to reallocate budgets that are reserved to fund in-patient beds - beds that are often occupied with patients requiring or recuperating from surgery - my question to the minister is, is she willing to allow wait times for surgeries, which are already unacceptably long, to grow even longer, in order to fund the ER plans?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, all members of this House will understand how complicated our health care system is and that doing one thing in one part of the system often has an impact elsewhere. We also know that many of our beds are occupied by seniors who are waiting for long-term care.

Mr. Senior - uh, Mr. Speaker, in the coming months (Laughter) Well, not there yet, Mr. Speaker, I apologize and withdraw that. In the coming months, there will be new additional long-term care bed capacity added into the system and we will continue to look at ways to better utilize our long-term care beds, including addressing some of the times that beds are needlessly being vacant so we can free up those acute-care resources to redirect into primary care.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**PREM. - EDUC. CUTS: ADDITIONAL CUTS
- RATIONALE**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. We've all heard the proposed reductions to funding to school boards - 22 per cent or \$196 million over three years. These figures have two elements. The first, the proposed reduction of 5 per cent over three years, and these figures are consistent with cuts that have been asked of Community Services and Health, but the second element concerns us. It's an additional reduction of \$96 million over three years specific to education. So my question to the Premier is, what rationale was used to impose this additional \$95 million cut to education alone?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we're in the middle of determining how we go about bringing this province back into balance. The last government, of course, created an enormous gap between the expenses and the revenue and, of course, our challenge is to bring those back together. So we're asking people in all departments (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Premier has the floor.

THE PREMIER: We're asking those in all areas to be part of the solution to the problem that government created.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, those cuts are real and they translate into real people and they translate into services for kids. A reduction of 22 per cent in one particular board translates into 55 fewer custodial and maintenance positions, 325 fewer teachers, 74 fewer student support workers, eight fewer library specialists, 18 fewer administrative assistants, five fewer technology information technicians, and 50 fewer bus drivers. So my question through you to the Premier is, how do you expect schools to continue to offer the quality education program of which we have become so proud when this one particular board has 500 fewer employees?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of the board to deliver those services and I have confidence that they will.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, when you take these reductions to the provincial level, we were told this morning this will mean approximately 3,458 positions eliminated, teacher positions eliminated over three years, and add to that, each year our universities graduate 600 new teachers. Over the course of three years, that's 1,800 new teachers graduating in this province. If you look at this, over 3,000 jobs eliminated through this exercise, 1,800 graduates who can't get jobs - that's over 5,000 young teachers who will not be able to find work in this province. So my question to the Premier is, what do you say to 5,000 young people who have to leave this province because of you and your government?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it's not going to happen and the reason is that we have a lot of teachers who are going out of the system now. They're going out because they are retiring, more positions than we anticipate would be retired, and I have no doubt that many of those teachers coming out who decide to stay in Nova Scotia will find work.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

JUSTICE: VIOLENCE (N.S.) MIN. PLANS

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians have been suffering through a rash of violent crime across the province in recent days. Friday, a 17-year-old Glace Bay girl was stabbed to death. Saturday evening a cab driver was beaten and had to be taken to hospital and Brandon Hatcher was killed in Spryfield with an AK-47 rifle on Friday night. These are only a few of the violent incidents, which have been becoming more common across our province. My question to the Minister of Justice is, what plan do you have to deal with the violence that is occurring across Nova Scotia?

[1:30 p.m.]

HON. ROSS LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, thank you for that question and it's a good timely question, given the present circumstances that were outlined by the honourable member. I have every confidence in our police leadership and their ability to address these issues. We understand that violence happens in society. This government does not accept it in any form and we stand behind the police that they're doing a good job and they'll conduct their investigations appropriately and bring those people to justice.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, this increase in violent incidences of crime is alarming to Nova Scotians and that is why they're looking to their government and to the Minister of Justice to provide a plan on how to deal with this sudden burst of violent crime. While we all have tremendous confidence in our police forces, it is becoming quite clear that violent crime is still occurring. The previous government had put a Boots on the Street program to try to increase funding for police forces to be able to designate it toward specific anti-crime provisions. Unfortunately, the current minister has frozen that program and has not allowed for the extra officers to be employed. My question is, since you have cut more resources to police forces, what other plan do you have to deal with violent crime in this province?

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Speaker, the member across is giving information I wasn't aware of. I didn't know we cut positions. However, what we have been doing is asking the police management to look at crime in a more strategic focus and realign resources such as dealing with prolific offenders and dealing with analyzing in areas where crime patterns are occurring and then putting resources in that fashion to deal with those specific incidents. Putting more police officers on the streets does not make people safer. What makes people safer is having police resources in place to be strategically focused and address the underlying causes of crime and make those inroads.

MR. SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I realize we've been spending a bit of time in the House this session but I would suggest that the Minister of Justice go speak to the heads of the police forces in Nova Scotia prior to making the statement that more police officers do not allow them to battle crime in this province. Speaking to captains and officers around the province, they have said how the Boots on the Street program gave them the additional resources to be able to deal with matters of crime, which previously were left unattended due to a lack of resources.

Nova Scotians do not want to hear about people being stabbed to death. They don't want to hear about people being killed with illegal assault rifles. Just recently we hear again of an assault on a convenience store clerk with bear spray. Nova Scotians are looking for a plan. The minister saying he has asked police forces to realign resources is not a plan, so my question to the Premier is, when is your government finally going to take violent crime seriously in this province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we do take violent crime very seriously. We all want safe streets. We all want safe neighbourhoods. We want to ensure that we have ones that are free of violence, particularly gun violence. We are working through the Department of Justice, with the police departments to ensure that they are utilizing those resources to respond to these very unfortunate events. The reality is that we haven't cut resources to those departments. What we have done is to ensure that the resources that are given through the Department of Justice are utilized and that we're working with them to make sure that the best possible result is the outcome.

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

**PREM.: LBR. MGT. LAWS: EMPLOYERS/WORKERS
- CONSULT**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. More than 82 per cent of Nova Scotia's private employers are non-unionized, but there is no doubt that they are affected by the labour management climate and by the labour laws of our province. In September 2001, in a newspaper article, the Premier is quoted as having said, "Governments will almost certainly go awry if they develop labour or any other policy without involving those who will be most affected by it . . ." I will table that document for the benefit of the House.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the Premier is this, will he now practice what he preached in 2001, admit that his own government has gone awry, and begin working with all workers and all employers in this province instead of insulting the ones who don't agree with him?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I don't make a practice of insulting people. In fact, I try to accommodate, wherever I can, the reasonable suggestions that are put forward. I think that the quote that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party just put into the record is an example of the fact that I am very considerate of the opinions of others.

The reality is that on one specific issue on the Labour-Management Review Committee, this was something that was widely consulted on. It was through three election campaigns. On minor housekeeping matters where we are simply reflecting what has been the public policy of the province for years, that is just simply putting into effect what was already there.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, there may be provisions that the Premier is speaking of that have been public policy for years, but they have not been put into legislation prior to this government coming in. Many hard-working Nova Scotians work at workplaces that are not unionized - 82 per cent in the private sector, 70 per cent overall. They put in a hard day's work too, but they have not been consulted on some of the anticipated labour directions of this government.

Mr. Speaker, I refer back to that article that I tabled a moment ago, where the Premier also said, "I have said frequently that the key to good government is to listen to people's needs and involve them in their government."

My question to the Premier is, will he involve all employers and all workers in his cozy club, instead of leaving them out in the cold, as he proposes to do?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the point of having a consultation mechanism like a Labour-Management Review Committee, so that there can be consultations carried out. I'm very proud that this government is making the progress that it is making. This will be good for industrial relations in the province.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, in that same article the Premier also said, "I believe a good measure of a government is how it treats workers." That means all workers, unionized, non-unionized, open shop, closed shop. The document has been tabled for all to see.

The fact of the matter is his government is running roughshod over 82 per cent of the workers of this province, so my final question to the Premier, will he start treating all workers with the respect that he himself once said they deserved?

THE PREMIER: He keeps referring to the article that was apparently an interview with me of some sort. I'm glad that he is paying attention to what I have been saying over the years. I wish him success with that.

He says it's an editorial - well, even better, Mr. Speaker. He would be wise to try and emulate the things that we have done on this side. Unfortunately, that was not the history of that government when they were in power.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

ENVIRON.: SEDIMENT/STORM WATER CONTROLS - CHANGE

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, in November of this year the Halifax region alone saw over 807 millimetres of rain. As many members would be aware, some other parts of the province saw even more rain. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member for Dartmouth East has the floor.

MR. YOUNGER: Thank you Mr. Speaker, we all witnessed the results: flooding, bridge losses and repeated major siltation events over different parts of the province including damage to fish habitat and other environmentally sensitive areas. The Minister of Environment knows that his department sets standards based on 1 in 50- and 1 in 100-year

storms. Yet while the rainfall amounts have increased and the intensity has increased, according to Environment Canada data collected over the past decade, the standards have not.

Many construction sites near sensitive habitats have only a bit of landscape fabric which is in line with the department's own document, which I will table. So my question for the Minister of Environment is, has he ordered changes to the sedimentation and storm water controls to reflect changing average rainfall amounts and the clear inadequacies with the current minimum standards?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, through you and to the honourable member, I thank you for the question. Certainly all watersheds - and I think the member opposite may be referring to a visit with a Sackville watershed that he may be making reference to, but I want to tell you, this minister thinks all the particular watersheds are very important to us. I also visited that particular area and we are moving forward with our coastal strategy. I can tell you, we are surrounded by 11,000 kilometres of shoreline, so whether it's a watershed or the Atlantic Ocean, this particular government, this minister, takes the environment very seriously. Thank you very much.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the member mentions the Sackville River and of course that's one, but we also saw events in the Shubenacadie Canal and in rivers across this province damaging fish habitat. The minister suggests that his department takes this seriously yet we've seen absolutely zero action on this issue since this government took power. So there's nothing to prove that.

Mr. Speaker, when will the minister ensure that stronger and more appropriate controls are in place to prevent siltation in places such as the Sackville River and the Shubenacadie Canal, and will he order his department to ensure that all construction sites have controls in place to prevent runoff?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I want to challenge the member opposite because we're actually doing something about this situation. I also want to point out that the Sackville Rivers Association, we're also working with the local MLA there from Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville, and I just want to tell you that not only does this minister read the briefing notes, we actually went and visited the site. And I also, if I can, I'd like to table a press release on a news article regarding that river system that has a very positive outcome. I suggest the member opposite get a copy and read that because this minister understands the environment and will do the right thing for Nova Scotians.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, it's very clear the minister doesn't understand his own powers or the powers of his department because he says by visiting it, he has done something. Well in fact, the minister knows full well that he has other powers and in fact that there are members, who were previous members of this House, and members of other bodies

who have asked and had previous Ministers of Environment use those powers to stop siltation events, and this minister has not done that.

Municipalities and the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, in fact, rely on his department's guidelines of 1 in 100- and 1 in 50- year storms for the design of bridges, pumping stations and so forth, but many organizations, including Dalhousie - and I will table their latest document - have now abandoned the Department of Environment's regulations for their own since they are so out of date.

So my final question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. In light of the fact that the Department of Environment has not updated their standards, have you ordered new tender specifications for bridges, storm-water culverts and other infrastructure to ensure that your department is ensuring it's not the cause of runoff events and that the infrastructure is appropriately protected?

HON. WILLIAM ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I just want to ensure the fact that I can match the number of minutes that the question was just delivered, I watched carefully as we were almost up to two minutes, but I can assure the House, in the spirit of co-operation that you have demonstrated, I'm not going to take the time to do that. It's a question that can be put quite simply, I mean, do the Environment Minister and the Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister talk about such important issues? We do. We do, we consult and our staff work with each other. You are completely correct in that part of the question.

[1:45 p.m.]

Then, of course, the preamble gets carried away and you want to make a point in the fact that we're not working together. We are aware, our staff is aware, we're working together on this issue. I can assure you, we are making sure Nova Scotians are facing the difficult decisions when it comes to this particular issue. I have full confidence in that good friend of mine and that good minister. He knows the Environment file, he knows it well.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

COM. SERV. - POSITIONS: ELIMINATION - DETAILS

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, late last week it became public that several Community Services caseworker positions in Cape Breton would be eliminated. These are front-line positions which serve Nova Scotians who are in most need of a helping hand. This cut will impact service to Community Services' clients who will wait longer to receive their income assistance and expense allotments. It will also increase waiting lists for those hoping to use the employment support path to get into the workforce - the very reason, the overall goal of the ESIA program. My question to the Premier is, are these the only Community Service positions that will be eliminated in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I can take the matter under advisement and get information back to the member.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I know the member for Cape Breton Nova is also aware of this issue so maybe he has some insight and information that we could use here in the House. Community Services caseworkers care about their work and they want to serve their clients as best they can. However, many are overworked as it is, with the average caseload of over 160 client cases per week. We all know these caseworkers are dealing with the realities of poverty, homelessness, mental health, drug abuse, youth at risk and many other complex issues. My question to the Premier is, with plans to eliminate caseworker positions, is this NDP Government suggesting Community Services staff are currently under-worked in Cape Breton?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, quite the opposite. We are very thankful for the work of all our employees. I am of the understanding that there have been no layoffs of regular full-time staff that I'm aware of, but as I said earlier, I'm happy to take the matter under advisement and if I can provide more information to the member, I'm certainly happy to do this.

All of the systems, of course, respond to great need. This government has been working very hard to ensure that we meet the needs of all of our citizens, but most particularly those who are the least fortunate.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, these positions are contract positions and they're also positions that aren't being refilled. I can tell you for sure, it doesn't matter what the status of those positions is, if positions are eliminated or reduced, we're going to feel the effect in Cape Breton, without question. (Applause) The clients feel that for sure in Nova Scotia. The dedication of these caseworkers has further shown their concern for their clients is above the concern for their own work and their own jobs. As one caseworker said, these clients have real needs, real needs that have to be addressed daily.

Income assistance recipients often fail to have their voices heard and it's convenient for the government to ignore these needs when budgets have to be cut. The Community Services employees hold tough jobs and we have to support them, so my question again to the Premier is, will the government revisit this decision to eliminate these positions in Cape Breton?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I said, I'm certainly willing to take the matter under advisement. As they know, the departments have budgets that they administer. They try to use those budgets to provide the maximum level of service to their clients. We often find, particularly caseworkers, go above and beyond the requirements of their employment in order to provide services and to look beyond the services provided by government into not-for-profits and into church organizations in order to ensure their clients get the kinds of service they need. We applaud that and we try to do everything we can to support them. The

member is right, we do have limited budgets and this is a time of restraint, but we try to ensure that those who are least fortunate get every bit of attention that we can give them.

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

TIR: FRENCHVALE RD. (C.B.) - UPGRADE

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Over the past while, the truck traffic on the Frenchvale Road has increased dramatically and this is as a result of the next phase of the Sydney Tar Ponds project. This project will see a minimum of 100 loads per day being hauled over this road for the next three years. The section of road from the gravel pit to where the road is already upgraded is about 2.5 kilometres and this section of the road is not suitable or safe for this volume of heavy traffic. My question to the minister, through you, is, will you commit to have your department look at the possibility of having this road upgraded?

HON. WILLIAM ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I must really compliment this member on how to do business in a very productive and proactive way. I've had the opportunity recently to meet with Councillor Mae Rowe and the member opposite on this particular topic. As the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal in this province - and I know members opposite and members of this side of the House - I was far from a geography expert but I have to compliment members such as the member for Cape Breton West who has a memorable road that I can never forget, the New Boston Road. (Interruption)

I can hear the new member for Cumberland South speak to me about the Lower Maccan Road. When those members and members of this side of the House and members of the Official Opposition also to their credit - the member for Annapolis when he recently took the opportunity to give me, when we met, there was a map, there were statistics, there were points that were delivered in a manner that's professional and productive. I can assure the member opposite that the following day I met with the deputy minister and Mr. Bruce Fitzner, and the Frenchvale Road will be addressed in a timely fashion.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the minister for his response. As I mentioned in my first question, safety is an issue on this road and especially on the 2.5-kilometre section, there is an area there that's referred to as Rankin's Turn. This portion of road at Rankin's Turn already presents a safety issue and this will be heightened even more with the increasing truck traffic. Also, there is a road called Campbell Road that would take drivers away from this heavily travelled area and that would require about three kilometres of resurfacing. My question to the minister is, would he ask his department to check out these issues in addition to the initial request for the Frenchvale Road?

MR. ESTABROOKS: Mr. Speaker, one of the key things, of course, when you become aware of roads across the province, is that you get a map and you very clearly point out to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal the specifics. I was blessed that evening with the fact that Councillor Rowe actually drew me a map, which made its way onto the deputy minister's desk. In fact, you know you're in Cape Breton when you come into something called Rankin's Turn and the Campbell Road. Those particular details, that's the way that we should be addressing such matters. It's a local issue that you're asking a provincial minister to pay attention to. The councillor has done her job, the MLA opposite has done his job and now the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal has to do his job.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, this is getting more encouraging the more often I get up. I guess my final question to the minister is concerning the Upper Leitches Creek Road. I'll certainly provide a map to the minister because it's as straight as a knot. On the Upper Leitches Creek Road there are four gravel pits in operation, and again this road, as well, was never designed for the heavy truck traffic and needs stabilization on 3.5 kilometres. My question to the minister is, would he add this to his list of roads requiring immediate attention.

MR. ESTABROOKS: To the member opposite, now the compliments were flowing in the first answer. You were proactive and we had a productive meeting. In the second question you were even more proactive and more productive. Now, in the third question, I have no map, I have no specifics, I have no details, and I'm concerned about the fact that for gravel pits, I need the map. I'll take it any way you give it, but I prefer it on a napkin. (Laughter)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

**ERD: MFG. & PROCESSING TAX CREDIT
- JOB CREATION**

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, this government has trumpeted the success of its economic policy. However, there is little proof that their efforts are actually helping Nova Scotians. Nova Scotians have witnessed the unemployment rate refuse to drop below 9 per cent for any length of time and, indeed, it has been hovering close to 10 per cent for the past few months. Recently the government has been boasting about the manufacturing and processing tax credit and its ability to create new jobs in the province. My question to the Minister of Economic and Rural Development is, exactly how many new jobs have been created by this tax credit since the announcement on August 17th?

HON. PERCY PARIS: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the manufacturing and processing has evolved into what we now refer to as the PIP, and I certainly would encourage the member opposite - as he has done in the past - if he wants to discuss the PIP in more detail, I would certainly be more than happy to do that.

What we have in the Province of Nova Scotia is a number of tools, the PIP being only one of them. We have created close to the vicinity of literally thousands and thousands of jobs in the province - created or maintained - to the tune of millions of dollars in taxpayers' revenue. What we have done with jobs here is, we've created a future for the Province of Nova Scotia based on innovation and certainly on education, giving people the skills for good jobs in the future; jobs here now will go a long way to advancing the causes here in the Province of Nova Scotia.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, it would be great if the minister could table that evidence. On November 17th, the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island stated that the government has created 2,200 jobs through the tax credit I mentioned earlier. I'll table the RKO announcement dated August 17th, 2010, stating that there had been only 30 jobs affected out of this tax credit. I will also table a copy of the member's comments from only three months later. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable member for Yarmouth has the floor.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'll also table a copy of the member's comments from only three months later, stating that they had already created a total of 2,200 jobs on November 17th. Unfortunately, I can't table the evidence to support that claim.

Would the minister either table in this House today the evidence that this tax credit created an additional 2,270 jobs between August 17th and November 17th or retract the member's statement on his behalf?

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I'm not about to retract something that is the truth.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the truth is that the government cannot provide any information to this House because there are no hard numbers available on jobs - that's the truth. I'll help the House as best I can with information related to the tax credit. There have been 71 applications received by the minister's office, but 19 of these are multiple applicants. Of these 19, credits have only been disbursed to six applicants, some of which may be the same company, and I'll table that.

The only evidence of any job creation so far are the 30 jobs at RKO Steel in Dartmouth. Until this House receives the complete facts, we'll be uncertain about the effectiveness of this tax credit. Mr. Speaker, will the minister table the real numbers with all the accompanying detail in the House today?

[2:00 p.m.]

MR. PARIS: Mr. Speaker, I think what the member opposite doesn't understand is that what we have - he's talking about a tax credit. A tax credit is to help maintain - a lot of times, a tax credit has helped to maintain - jobs. Sometimes it helps create jobs. That's why we have the film tax credit, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have tax incentives in the digital media. That's why we were the first ones in years to lower the corporate tax for small entrepreneurs in the Province of Nova Scotia. IEF - I could go on, and I've done this a number of times in this House. I'm sure people are getting tired of it.

I look at the Capital Investment Program, where we're investing millions and millions of dollars in Nova Scotia, especially in rural Nova Scotia, to create and maintain good jobs in the Province of Nova Scotia for Nova Scotians so Nova Scotians will be able to stay in the Province of Nova Scotia and not go away.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

**PREM. - KENDALL LANE HOUSING SOC.: LPNs
- WAGES**

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. The Kendall Lane Housing Society, located just outside of Windsor, off the Chester Road, presently looks after six severely disadvantaged adults suffering from everything from cerebral palsy to impaired vision to spina bifida to global development delay.

Your government presently does not allow LPNs to be paid their proper wage at this facility. They are being paid the same as residential care workers. I and the Warden of the Municipality of West Hants would like to know why?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the member is asking a very specific instance that I am not aware of. I am happy to take the matter under advisement and to see if I can provide him with the details. I am, of course, happy to discuss any case with any member of the House. It appears that he may be talking about a matter that is the subject of bargaining, but I am really not sure.

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

The honourable Minister of Education on an introduction.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to introduce in the east gallery Jamie Stevens. Jamie is a board member with the Chignecto Central Regional School Board and is also second vice-president of the Nova Scotia School Boards Association, and

we welcome him here today. I invite my colleagues to give him a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: 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.

[2:02 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Mr. Gordon Gosse in the Chair.]

[5:59 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Mr. Gordon Gosse in the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We have now reached the moment of interruption. The resolution, as chosen earlier, reads:

“Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Cape Breton Regional Library for this two-week celebration of literature and wish them many more years of service to the region.”

[6:00 p.m.]

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

C.B. REG. LIBRARY: TURNING LEAVES FEST. - CONGRATS.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise and address Resolution No. 2774. Just so everyone is clear on the resolution, I would like to read that, please:

“Whereas the Cape Breton Regional Library is celebrating 60 years of operation and is hosting a festival celebrating the work of the region's most accomplished writers; and

Whereas Turning Leaves Library Festival is a great opportunity to meet some of the fine writers from Cape Breton and the Maritimes and be introduced to their excellent work; and

Whereas various venues and free admission are expected to attract a large audience to hear short stories, poetry, and plays;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate the Cape Breton Regional Library for this two-week celebration of literature and wish them many more years of service to the region.”

Mr. Speaker, we are here debating Resolution No. 2774 because we did not have unanimous support for that resolution from all members of the Legislature. I think it's important that during the debate here tonight we try to help members of the Legislature who did not support that understand the importance of public libraries in our province.

There are 77 libraries around this province, and many towns and cities are proud of their library. For many of those towns, small towns, even some villages, a library is the centre. It is the focal point in the community. It is the place where the community comes together, all ages. There are programs in those public libraries for our preschoolers, and you can go in and see children sitting around engaged in reading or engaged in listening as an adult is reading to them. They begin at a very early age to appreciate libraries, to appreciate the resources that are available in the libraries, and it becomes a way of life for them.

Many parents are anxious to, and very successful in, engaging their children in reading. We know that early reading leads to better students, better attention, and better results when students enter public school. We know that people learn to read for enjoyment and they also learn to read for information. So early childhood exposure to good literature is critical. Many, many families provide that opportunity by using the public libraries that exist around the province. There are 77 libraries governed by nine library boards - a very critical part of our informal education system within the province.

We know that over the years the focus and the attention in libraries has changed and we've moved into more digital, on-line kinds of information. At a time there was some thought that it might hurt usage in our libraries. The fact that people would no longer be reading books might take away from the usage in our libraries. The opposite of that is true. Providing access to good literature and to information on the Internet has actually increased the number of users in our libraries, so those 77 libraries governed by the nine library boards continue to survive and thrive in our communities.

It's important that we recognize and appreciate and celebrate the work those libraries do. The Cape Breton Regional Library is one good example, where they have taken the opportunity to celebrate reading and writing. They've taken that opportunity through their Turning Leaves Festival - a two-week event that allows visitors to be exposed to young readers and young writers and for young readers to be exposed to authors whose work they enjoy and whose work they may want to follow along. So this event is one of many and in the funding for public libraries, we recognized as a Department of Education that it's an important budget line for the department.

Mr. Speaker, during the years probably 2007 to 2009, there was an extensive consultation around the province with library boards because they were recognizing that the funding that they were receiving was not allowing them to continue to operate their facilities, to pay their staff, to enhance their resources, and they were anxious to work with the government to come up with a funding formula that would give them sustainable and predictable funding.

So the consultation process took place - a lot of input, a lot of good thought, and a lot of good discussion about what the library needs actually were, what services the libraries would be providing and delivering, and what resources, both human and other resources, they would need in order to deliver those services. As I said, that was a very extensive consultation. It was a very extensive and labour-intense initiative on the part of library boards, and I might say volunteer boards, and they came up with a proposal which was received and reviewed by the Department of Education at the time.

In that work of the task force, they made it very clear that they were prepared to rethink the way they delivered services and to come up with a business plan so to speak, or a budget that was manageable and a budget that they were asking the Department of Education to support. So, as the minister of the day, I accepted that report and it really reflected the true needs of libraries in our province.

It's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that that Library Funding Task Force report was tabled in October 2009, and we are now in December 2010, and there has been absolutely no implementation of the recommendations in that task force report. With no implementation, boards are continuing to try to deliver services without the resources that they need. Obviously, it has not been a priority for this government and it's my understanding that there are no ongoing discussions about that report.

So with school boards having to cut and slash - and one of the first things to go will be libraries - and with no support for the provincial libraries that are out there, Mr. Speaker, I'm not surprised that this resolution was shot down and I'm disappointed that we don't have the full support of the members of this House for the work that a regional library board does to help celebrate reading and writing in our communities.

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

HON. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, first I want to congratulate the member for Victoria-The Lakes for bringing this resolution to the House, yesterday, I believe it was. I also want to congratulate the member for Colchester North for engaging in this debate tonight. Of course, you know that the member for Colchester North is the Education Critic for the Progressive Conservative Party and also a former Minister of Education, so she certainly knows of what she speaks regarding the necessary things that we have to keep in place in the education system in Nova Scotia.

I'm not going to read the entire Resolution No. 2774, but I will say that, "Whereas the Cape Breton Regional Library is celebrating 60 years of operation and is hosting a festival celebrating the work of the region's most accomplished writers;" that in itself is something that should have received support from this government. When this resolution was read yesterday and asked for waiver of notice and passage without debate, the NDP Government members refused to give consent for this resolution to be passed unanimously, a resolution celebrating the Cape Breton Regional Library and its 60 years of operation. That is the kind of contempt that this government had and has for some of the most important institutions in our education system in this province.

I believe that the Cape Breton Regional Library in itself, of itself, has contributed greatly to the education of children in my area over the years. I can remember when Sydney had its own library way back when, and the other smaller communities had a library also, and then it was combined to form the Cape Breton Regional Library some number of years ago. Back in my former life as Mayor of Sydney, I was involved with the Sydney library at the time and later on the Cape Breton Regional Library as well. I can recall that many prominent citizens would want to serve on the library board in and around Sydney because they believed in the value of the library and its teaching of children, and the teaching not only of children but the reading skills that some adults put together because of the fact that they had the access.

The gift of reading is a precious gift, and all too often we forget about things and take those kinds of things for granted when, indeed, we should be paying attention to them. You know, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, as the member for Cape Breton Nova, and you would agree with me, a number of the people in your area always took advantage of the library services in the Sydney area. It's a very important public service. Not only did many prominent citizens take part in the library board over the years and were out promoting the library in the community, but many councillors, aldermen in the former City of Sydney, councillors and some of the wardens and mayors in the area also took an active interest in the Cape Breton Regional Library over the years.

One institution that was a tremendous help to people in our community who didn't have the actual physical library was the bookmobile that used to go around to the different communities and to schools and to smaller communities that didn't have the services of a library. The bookmobile over the years filled that void and was the kind of instrument that helped [Interruption] The Speaker is helping me out here, because it was vast knowledge from Cape Breton Nova in what went on there. The bookmobile was very important and brought home the need - if the children or even adults in our community could not get to a library, then the library could get to them on a regular basis, come down to your community as well, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, on a number of occasions. It was well received by your people and reports that I would get as Mayor of Sydney at the time were that the regional library, the Sydney Library first and then the regional later, were providing excellent service and were deserving of the kind of funding necessary to keep the libraries going at the time.

Over the years, as the member for Colchester North has said, things have changed a little bit in how we deliver the message or how we communicate with one another. There's a number of new communication methods that the library has employed as well in keeping up with the times, but I still firmly believe that there's no greater gift than having children get involved in literacy. Even adults who had difficulty reading, thereby holding back careers, perhaps, have the opportunity to take advantage of the many services of the regional library.

[6:15 p.m.]

The cuts being contemplated in this current government could possibly have a devastating effect on libraries, and I hope that doesn't happen. I hope that the government will see the wisdom of not only keeping the library services and those services performed in the schools by library technicians, not only to keep the funding in place for that vital service of providing reading services to our children, but also to enhance those services over the next few years. It's a known fact that if young children start off on the wrong foot and don't learn to read properly, it will hinder their education in the future. It will hinder their education at the elementary level, it will further hinder it in the high school level, and certainly in post-secondary education, and it will have a devastating effect on their ability to compete in today's world.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the library that I'm most familiar with, the one that is in my community and serves the greater community of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, all you have to do is drive by there and the place is packed every day; people are using that library.

Every year it seems the library has a problem getting permanent-type funding and getting increases in funding to promote new services. It always seems to be a fight with the government of the day, or the educational people running the system, to encourage them to realize the value of this particular service to our community and to the children of our community.

As I said before, Mr. Speaker, each community in our Cape Breton area, a small area, but the CBRM and, indeed, the other areas in Cape Breton such as the community of the member for Victoria-The Lakes, and also Richmond and Victoria Counties, always had access to library services. That put their children on an even footing with children who were fortunate enough to have the services on a daily basis in the urban area.

As I said, some very prominent citizens put their own money into the library in the past. Some private citizens gave donations to the library to keep the library going, they felt that strongly about it. The public sector has now become more involved than they were in the past and that's a good thing, and I would hope that this particular government, I would hope there's no malice intended in turning that resolution down, congratulating the Cape Breton Regional Library, and I would hope that they would reconsider this resolution if it

comes back to the House at a future date. I think the Cape Breton Regional Library and the work it has been doing for the past 60 years deserves the unanimous support of everybody in this House, on the government side and on this side of the House - with all three political Parties.

I'm sure the government would want to rethink their refusal to endorse this particular resolution and perhaps ask the member for Victoria-The Lakes to put this resolution back to the House at some future date, so that obvious slight by the government could be rectified and we could legitimately, unanimously congratulate the Cape Breton Regional Library Board in celebrating 60 years of operation and all of the other things that library is doing.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to go down there and present some literacy awards, present some awards for some activities that young people were doing at the library last year and I was amazed, absolutely amazed, at the number of young children who were taking advantage of the services provided by the library. Not only that, I was amazed at the number of volunteers and people working at the library, at the interest they were showing in these groups of children from all age groups. They were doing their different projects by age groups and they were competing against one another, but it was a friendly competition, so friendly that - there were no winners or losers - everybody was given credit for the level of ability they exhibited in talking about the facilities of the library and taking part in all the things that are going on at that library on a daily basis.

So, Mr. Speaker, my time is up, but I just want to leave the government with one message: please, no cuts to libraries. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, it's always a pleasure to have an opportunity to talk about public libraries, and certainly my interest in libraries goes well beyond my responsibilities for them as the Minister of Education. I've been fortunate to be a library user since the age of seven and also fortunate to have two public libraries within my constituency - Alderney Gate Library and the new Woodlawn library.

Over the past number of months I've had the opportunity to travel extensively throughout the province and have opened the new library in the community of Weymouth, just along the waterfront. It's beautiful, and the pride and involvement of the community in the design, construction, and location of that library is something that community should be very proud of. I was also up to the Westville Public Library in Pictou County this summer. So I fully understand that libraries are truly the cornerstones of our communities across this province, and certainly the Cape Breton Regional Library is no exception. Sixty years is quite a milestone and I would like to acknowledge and thank all of the volunteers and library staff who have served Cape Breton families for so many years.

Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I know in your role as the MLA for Cape Breton Nova, you've had many opportunities over the last number of years to bring the contributions of libraries in your constituency to my attention and, along with you, I had the pleasure of meeting the regional Faye MacDougall, and I thank you for that introduction. I know you at various times have filled me in on the achievements of people like Theresa MacDonald, Rosalie Gillis, and Rita Marman, and I thank you for continuing to bring their contributions to my attention.

I would also like to recognize the hard work and valuable input and service to their communities of other regional library staff - people like Ian MacIntosh, Cindy Tiller, Clare MacKillop, Tara MacNeil, Chris Thompson, Lisa Mulak-MacPhee, Marie Young, Erin Phillips, and Nicholas Warren. So I know of your great interest and that of other members of your family in the services and programs of the Cape Breton Regional Library, and I thank you for continuing to bring those to my attention.

Reading is an essential part of our educational system and I am pleased to report that our province's students are doing very well in reading. Nova Scotia's 15-year-old students did very well in reading in the 2009 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) released yesterday. Nova Scotia placed 13th in the world in this category and that should make all of us very proud.

Libraries are not just for students. About a third of Nova Scotians are active library users. Now, give or take a few, that number is about 300,000, and the reason that number is so high is that Nova Scotians realize that their library is a valuable and important resource. The public library is no longer just a quiet place to go to borrow a book. More and more Nova Scotians are learning about what services are available. For instance, there are computer and Internet services, meeting rooms, and a variety of group-learning opportunities. Many libraries host community events and libraries have become multi-use facilities. More importantly, they are the learning centres for Nova Scotian families.

The Cape Breton Regional Library's 60th Anniversary celebration is a good example of how libraries also act as centres of culture. I understand that the celebrations will include the work of the area's most accomplished writers and it's an opportunity for Nova Scotians, young and old, to come together and learn from each other.

As so many Nova Scotians are taking advantage of the services that libraries provide, the demand is always growing. The Provincial Library continues to work with library boards and partners to help meet this growing demand. The Provincial Library consults with library boards and staff to help them expand and maintain collections, promote their range of services and accomplish many other things but also to help them manage their human resources issues.

As a focal point for library services in this province, the Provincial Library looks at what each library board has accomplished and shares their successes with all libraries. The goal is to maximize libraries' collective accomplishments through communication and collaboration.

The library growth in Nova Scotia would not have been possible without the very strong partnerships we have with our province's municipalities. Nova Scotia municipalities have been and continue to be essential library supporters. As a government we intend to help maintain those relationships and find ways to grow together. The amount of collaboration between library boards and their partners is astounding. Libraries and library boards are already working well together to provide excellent services and programs to our many communities.

Initiatives such as Borrow Anywhere, Return Anywhere, consortia purchasing of books and materials and the shared integrated library system are excellent examples of how our province's library boards are working collaboratively to reduce costs. Last year the province increased library boards' funding by \$900,000. This is a significant increase during a very difficult budget year. The base operating grant to boards is now \$14,163,000 - a 6.8 per cent increase over the 2009-10 year.

In addition, the province invested \$310,000 for libraries' Internet connectivity. Library boards' approaches to collaborative procurements such as the licensing of databases, the integrated library system and new downloadable collections are making it easier to provide more reading materials to more Nova Scotians while keeping costs down. The Borrow Anywhere, Return Anywhere program is a good example of how libraries are making books more accessible and available to families from every region, especially those who travel to find the books they want to read.

I appreciate that people in communities are using their public libraries for many different reasons. Along with access to reading materials, community activities and partnerships, courses and events, we know how important the computer and Internet services are. Service from library staff is exceptional. People go to the library because they know the staff are friendly and knowledgeable and very, very helpful.

I commend all public libraries on their reputation for providing excellent service. Our library staff are some of the friendliest people and they are the ones who make libraries what they are in Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity the last couple of years to attend the provincial conference of regional libraries and library boards. I must say that I've been very warmly received. I'm absolutely thrilled with the way they work together, they're a good investment for public money.

In closing, I congratulate the Cape Breton Regional Library for reaching its 60th year. I wish them the best of luck with their celebrations and I'm very grateful for this opportunity

to thank them and thank all regional library boards and staff across this province for the incredible work that they do under very difficult circumstances. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to thank all the members of the House of Assembly who took part in an excellent debate tonight.

We will now revert to Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

[6:30 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Mr. Gordon Gosse in the Chair.]

[11:01 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Charlie Parker, resumed the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: Good evening, it's good to see everyone. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills reports:

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

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. Now I hand it over to the Acting Opposition House Leader.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Acting Opposition House Leader.

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, the House will sit from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Following the daily routine and Question Period, we will be calling Resolution No. 2777 and Resolution No. 2480.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

A recorded vote has been requested.

Ring the bells. Call in the members.

We'll let the bells ring and we'll have the vote in an hour, or whenever the Whips are satisfied.

[11:02 p.m.]

[The Division bells were rung.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We have a recorded vote on the motion to adjourn until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.

Are the Whips satisfied?

[The Clerk calls the roll.]

[12:02 a.m.]

YEAS

NAYS

Mr. Landry
Mr. Corbett
Mr. Steele
Ms. Maureen MacDonald
Mr. Paris
Ms. Jennex
Mr. Belliveau
Ms. Zann
Mr. MacKinnon
Mr. Gosse
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Preyra
Ms. Raymond
Mr. Smith
Mr. Epstein
Mr. Ramey
Mr. Skabar
Mr. Whynott
Mr. Morton
Ms. Birdsall
Mr. Boudreau
Mr. MacMaster
Mr. Clarke
Mr. MacLellan

THE CLERK: For, 24. Against, 0.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

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

[The House rose at 12:04 a.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 2859**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle)

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 December 5, 2010 a mass of thanksgiving was offered in Ste. Anne Church in Ste. Anne du Ruisseau in honour of Bernadette Armstrong of Bell Neck who will turn a very young 90 years of age on December 9, 2010; and

Whereas Bernadette was surrounded by five or her six children as well as extended family and numerous friends who gathered to rejoice in her long life;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Bernadette Armstrong on her 90th birthday and wish her many more happy, healthy years.

RESOLUTION NO. 2860

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Jaiden Debruyne and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jaiden and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2861

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Julien Benigno and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Julien and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2862

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Alex Canning and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Alex and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2863

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Bruen Fisher and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Bruen and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2864

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Daniel Davidson and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Daniel and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2865

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Jacob Doggett and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jacob and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2866

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Scott Gamble and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Scott and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2867

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Scott Fahie and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Scott and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2868

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Jackson Hayward and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jackson and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2869

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Matthew Torrey and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Matthew and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2870

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Logan Young and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Logan and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2871

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Logan Gillis and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Logan and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2872

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3-5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Matthew Connors and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Matthew and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2873

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3 to 5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division, to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Morgan Clark and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Morgan and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2874

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3 to 5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division, to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Ryan Murphy and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ryan and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2875

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3 to 5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division, to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Stephen Warwick and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Stephen and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.

RESOLUTION NO. 2876

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Moncton Black Hawks hosted the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup hockey tournament from December 3 to 5, 2010; and

Whereas the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team outplayed all other teams in their division, to meet the Moncton Black Hawks in the gold medal game on Sunday, December 5th; and

Whereas Michael Naugle and the Dartmouth team defeated Moncton in the nail-biter final with a win of 4-3;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Michael and the Dartmouth Whalers Atom AA team on their gold medal win at the 2010 Moncton Challenge Cup, and wish them success in the remainder of the 2010-11 hockey season.