



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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Third Session

MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS:	
Energy: Potential For Use of Hydraulic Fracturing in Shale Gas Operations (N.S.), Hon. C. Parker	138
Environ.: Gov.'t Review - Potential for Use of Hydraulic Fracturing, Hon. S. Belliveau	141
GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 127, Immigrant Settlement & Int. Serv.: Vols. - Thank, Hon. D. Dexter (The Premier)	145
Vote - Affirmative	145
Res. 128, Prov. Vol. Awards (2011): Recipients - Congrats., Hon. M. More	145
Vote - Affirmative	146
Res. 129, Can. Winter Games (2011): Athletes/Coaches/Managers/ Staff - Congrats., Hon. Maureen MacDonald (by Hon. G. Steele)	146
Vote - Affirmative	147
Res. 130, Cumb. African N.S. Assoc. - Commend, Hon. P. Paris	147
Vote - Affirmative	148

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:

No. 7, Justice Administration Amendment (2011) Act, Hon. R. Landry	148
No. 8, Maintenance and Custody Act, Hon. K. Casey	148
No. 9, Gaelic College Foundation Act, Mr. K. Bain	148
No. 10, Electricity Act, Mr. A. Younger	148

NOTICES OF MOTION:

Res. 131, Prov. Vol. Awards (2011): Recipients - Congrats., Hon. S. McNeil	148
Vote - Affirmative	149
Res. 132, École secondaire de Par-en-Bas: Volleyball Team - Congrats., Hon. C. d'Entremont	149
Vote - Affirmative	150
Res. 133, Wood, Sonya/Mansky, Chris: Nat. History Preservation - Thank, Hon. R. Jennex	150
Vote - Affirmative	151
Res. 134, Diabetes: Action Plan - Support, Ms. D. Whalen	151
Res. 135, Sylliboy, Ben - Mi'kmaq Nation: Grand Chief - Recognize, Mr. A. MacMaster	152
Vote - Affirmative	152
Res. 136, Royal Cdn. Leg. - River John: Annual Smelt Fry - Congrats., Hon. C. Parker	153
Vote - Affirmative	153
Res. 137, Chute, Esther: Berwick Vol. of the Year - Congrats., Mr. L. Glavine	153
Vote - Affirmative	154
Res. 138, Oliver, Sen. Donald - Dream KEEPERS Life Achievement Award - Congrats., Hon. J. Baillie	154
Vote - Affirmative	155
Res. 139, Jensen, Elsa: St. F.X. Outreach Award - Congrats., Mr. M. Smith	155
Vote - Affirmative	156
Res. 140, Hopkins, Bruce: Veteran Firefighter of the Yr. - Congrats., Mr. Z. Churchill,	156
Vote - Affirmative	156
Res. 141, Canning, Flora: Death of - Sympathy, Mr. K. Bain	157
Vote - Affirmative	157

Res. 142, Hatfield, Derek: Velux 5 Oceans Race - Wish Success, Ms. P. Birdsall	157
Vote - Affirmative	158
Res. 143, Cdn. Sen. Amateur Boxing Championship - Ring 73 Soc.: Host - Congrats., Mr. G. MacLellan	158
Vote - Affirmative	159
Res. 144, Rankin, Tom: Economic Achievements - Recognize, Mr. A. MacMaster	159
Vote - Affirmative	160
Res. 145, Clements, Jeff (CBU) - Atl. Prov. Coun. on Sciences: Best Oral Presentation - Congrats., Mr. A. Younger	160
Vote - Affirmative	160
Res. 146, Doucette, Kris/McNeil, Heather: Youth Engage. Leg. Trust - Congrats., Mr. K. Bain	161
Vote - Affirmative	161
Res. 147, Royal Cdn. Army Cadet Corps (603 Weymouth): Most Improved - Congrats., Mr. H. Theriault	161
Vote - Affirmative	162
Res. 148, Southwest Surge Under 16 Volleyball: Gold Medal - Congrats., Mr. Z. Churchill	162
Vote - Affirmative	163
Res. 149, Digby Area Rec. Comm'n/Digby Curling Ctr.: 2011 Cdn. Curling Championship Host - Recognize, Mr. H. Theriault	163
Vote - Affirmative	164
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS	
GOVERNMENT MOTIONS:	
ADDRESS IN REPLY:	
The Premier	165
Mr. A. Younger	172
Hon. C. d'Entremont	180
Adjourned Debate	187
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Tue., Apr. 5 th at 2:00 p.m.	187
NOTICE OF QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS (RESPONSES)	
No. 1, LWD-ENS: Univ. Employment Serv. - Details, Hon. M. More to Hon. C. d'Entremont	188
No. 2, LWD-ENS: 3-Mo. Job Search - Disability Exemption, Hon. M. More to Hon. C. d'Entremont	188
No. 3, LWD-ENS: 3-Yr. Job Search - Disability Exemption, Hon. M. More to Hon. C. d'Entremont	188
No. 4, LWD-ENS: Reg. Assessment Officer - Provide, Hon. M. More to Hon. C. d'Entremont	189

No. 5, LWD-ENS - Gov't. Freeze - Explain, Hon. M. More to Hon. C. d'Entremont	189
No. 6, LWD - Prog. Issues: Disabled Commun. - Consult, Hon. M. More to Hon. C. d'Entremont	190
NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):	
Res. 150, Parsons, Jessica: Prov. Youth Vol. Award - Congrats., Mr. A. Younger	191
Res. 151, Mancini, Tony: Prov. Vol. Award - Congrats., Mr. A. Younger	191
Res. 152, Locke, Alan - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	192
Res. 153, Buchanan, Chris - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	192
Res. 154, Deinstadt, Darren - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	193
Res. 155, Hartley, Doug (Coach) - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	193
Res. 156, Poole, Doug - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	194
Res. 157, Underwood, Forest - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	194
Res. 158, Williams, Garrett (Coach) - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	195
Res. 159, Blinkhorn, Matt - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	195
Res. 160, Jacklyn, Matt - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	196
Res. 161, Williams, Nick - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	196
Res. 162, Butler, Quinn - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	197
Res. 163, Davis, Steven - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	198
Res. 164, Greig, Steven - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	198
Res. 165, Pippy, Steven (Coach) - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	199
Res. 166, Balcolm, Ryan - Shelburne Reg. HS: NSAA Basketball Championship - Congrats., Hon. S. Belliveau	199



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2011

Sixty-first General Assembly

Third Session

7:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Gordon Gosse

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Ms. Becky Kent, Mr. Leo Glavine, Mr. Alfie MacLeod

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We will now begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. CHARLIE PARKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in this House today with my colleague, the Minister of Environment, on an issue that has become a matter of considerable public discussion in recent months, the potential for the use of hydraulic fracturing in shale gas operations in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the government has listened to the concerns of Nova Scotians and in response we are announcing a review of issues associated with shale gas hydraulic fracturing and our current regulations in this regard. Where necessary, external subject matter experts will be brought in to provide focused technical advice.

Mr. Speaker, given that we do not currently have any applications for the use of hydraulic fracturing of shale in this province, nor do we anticipate any in the near future, this is a good time for us to do this work. The process will result in recommendations on any additional conditions or measures that are warranted to enhance the current regulatory standard, requiring the very best industry practices to be used here in Nova Scotia. Senior technical and policy staff from both departments will work collaboratively to identify potential environmental issues, determine how best to manage those issues, monitor reviews and developments in other jurisdictions, and prepare recommendations to improve regulatory requirements where necessary.

The public will have an opportunity to provide written comments on issues covered by the scope of the review, as well as on any proposed regulatory changes before they are made.

Mr. Speaker, we understand the concerns of Nova Scotians over drinking water and protecting their communities, that is why it is important that we make decisions based on facts and based on science. Oil and gas is critical to the global economy and central to our daily lives, to fuel our cars, heat our homes, and balance the intermittent nature of wind and tidal energy resources.

Mr. Speaker, we here in Nova Scotia will never be a Fort McMurray, we will never be an Alberta, we do not have the resource, but we do have the potential to support a strong, made-in-Nova Scotia onshore oil and gas industry that can provide jobs, spinoff benefits, and an important source of revenue. At the same time, I can assure all Nova Scotians that if a proposed activity is not determined or demonstrated that it can be done safely and done right, then it will not be approved.

Mr. Speaker, we all want the same thing: we want a strong Nova Scotia and a good quality of life for our children and grandchildren. The last thing we want to see is harm to our environment or our drinking water.

We will monitor what is happening in other jurisdictions. I recently had the opportunity to travel to Oklahoma and see the oil and gas operation there first-hand, including a hydraulic fracturing operation, and also met with regulators and interest groups in the area. I have also spoken to my counterpart in the Province of New Brunswick.

Through this review we will continue to learn from the experiences of others like British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, where close to half a million wells have been hydraulically fractured with no incidents at all. We will look to places where they are doing things right. The Department of Environment has an important independent role in reviewing applications for oil and gas activity in this province and the Minister of Environment will be speaking on that in his role very shortly. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for the advance copy of his remarks, as well as congratulate him on his first ministerial statement in the House as Minister of Energy and, in fact, as a Minister of the Crown. I would also like to thank the Minister of Energy for coming to speak with me about this issue the other day, about how we might work together on this issue following the introduction of my bill on Friday, which would not only have required the review that the minister is announcing today but would have also gone a step further and required a moratorium on fracking permits during that review period.

I have been speaking about the issue of fracking across Nova Scotia and in this House for over a year now. In the Fall of last year I asked the former minister questions and asked for a review, but government seemed unwilling to consider one. So while I'm disappointed that it took this long for government to respond, the review is nonetheless welcome.

Mr. Speaker, the minister states his government has listened to Nova Scotians on this issue. The minister has certainly listened to part of what Nova Scotians have been saying, which is the request for a review, but they are also asking for a moratorium and a halt on any permits being issued even though none have been applied for yet. They want to guarantee that no permits will be issued until such time that this review is completed. I know the minister is well aware of having had his constituency office full of some interested Nova Scotians on this issue recently.

The minister states that this is a good time to do the review because no applications are before government and while it's always preferable that the review take place when applications are not before government, we do know that there are projects underway in Nova Scotia, some of which have indicated that they may make application and it's still a shame that it has taken this long to act.

Mr. Speaker, I agree that we'll never be an Alberta and I don't want Nova Scotia to be an Alberta and I would hope the minister is not suggesting we should aspire to be Alberta, because we aspire to be the best province in Canada - and we are the best province in Canada - and obviously to take any other position would be only a step backwards.

Mr. Speaker, last Spring and summer I met with residents in the Lake Ainslie area - and I think he's aware of that - who were concerned about the issue. No one from government, or at that time the Third Party, had met with those folks. More recently I have met with and spoke to residents throughout Nova Scotia who have grown to share the same concerns as those in Lake Ainslie. This is not to suggest that drilling and exploring for shale gas in Nova Scotia or elsewhere can't be done safely. The minister has suggested the same, but we believe a review must be open to hearing from those concerned about fracking and those proponents of it.

We also believe the review must examine the alternatives to fracking in the onshore gas exploration. Above all, however, we must understand that this review must put first and foremost that these resources belong to Nova Scotians and Nova Scotians alone. Nova Scotians must be the primary beneficiaries, not the victims of a poorly regulated process.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate our support for the review and our strong view that this must be accompanied by a freeze on industrial permits for fracking until the review reports back to the Legislature. Once again, I would like to thank the minister for not only his advance remarks but for offering a briefing on this issue and speaking to me after my bill was introduced on Friday.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister of Energy for providing his statement in advance of today's proceedings. I would also like to thank him for our meeting last week when we discussed this matter. Hydraulic fracturing has been one of the main issues for the people in the constituency of Inverness over the past year. Land at West Lake Ainslie has been leased to PetroWorth Resources to explore for oil and gas.

My constituents are hearing competing information from a company that stands to profit, from government that needs to find new revenue sources, and also from environmental activists who present frightening scenarios. The provincial government needs to recognize that the current regulatory process in place is not working. People are not happy, the residents, and this is a fine point to highlight - you know, this process has been in place for years but I think what's important here is we have to look at what's happening in the community. That's what's most important to me because people are upset. Local residents are very afraid of the activity. The broader community - there's a Facebook site with over 1,400 names attached to it; the Aboriginal community has voiced

their opposition to it. The company involved has received death threats - it's a very serious matter.

This company has been made responsible to hold public hearings to try to convince people that their activities are going to be safe. Licences are being offered before the people have decided if they want this development. Nova Scotians' opinions are placed last when it comes to development and the type of development. They are the last to be asked - and when we put people last we can't expect them to accept the outcomes.

Let us first decide with the people whether or not we want fracking. We agree decisions made must be based on fact and science. Today we have debate in Nova Scotia on hydraulic fracturing, but we don't really know who's listening to that debate and we don't know who is going to evaluate that debate. People feel left out. A licence was issued for this parcel of land in Lake Ainslie, the Ainslie block, without much consultation with the people, so it's reasonable to expect that those same people would have little faith in the process that could approve hydraulic fracturing.

We are pleased to see the government initiate the review and that they will consult with external experts, and we trust you will be working together with other provinces to share your findings. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Environment.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleague at the Department of Energy to speak about this review. We know that Nova Scotians are concerned about hydraulic fracturing and its potential to impact the environment, and this is why it is so important that we do this review. It will help us better understand the possible impact on our soil, including issues around soil contamination.

We are taking steps to address the concerns about our water resources and we will look at the potential effects on ground and surface water. We will examine waste water management, including surface ponds created as a result of water used in this process. This review will also address any chemicals that are used as part of this process. We understand Nova Scotians want reassurance from government about hydraulic fracturing. The environment must be a top priority when considering shale gas operations, which is why it is the focus of this review.

I'd like to take a few moments to talk about the rules and regulations that we already have. Any company that would like to frack in Nova Scotia must obtain an industrial approval which considers the environmental impacts on or of a project. Our process looks at things like proximity to watercourses, details on fluids and any chemicals being used, how fluids are monitored, and emergency response plans. We also include project terms and conditions, and may require public consultation.

Even with these rules and processes in place, we know our citizens want to know that government understands how industry practices affect our environment. We are working with our colleagues at the Department of Energy to ensure proper safeguards are in place to protect our water supplies; we are keeping an eye on the fracking debate and we will investigate any environment issues that are identified around fracking; and we will determine with our colleagues what changes to our regulations or processes are needed.

As the Minister of Energy mentioned, currently there are no applications for fracking in Nova Scotia - that makes it a good time to take a closer look at this issue. As part of our review, we want to understand best practices, and certainly in other jurisdictions, so we can ensure we have the right rules in place in Nova Scotia.

We welcome feedback from our citizens and look forward to hearing from them. Together we can make sure our water and our environment is safe for today and for our future generations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank the Minister of Environment for the advance copy of his remarks, as similar as they were to the previous one.

As I said in my remarks to the previous statement, we certainly welcome the review. This was indeed one element of the bill I introduced Friday but I reiterate that without a moratorium on issuing of the industrial approvals for fracking, the statement by government simply doesn't go far enough, notwithstanding the fact that we certainly support the review.

The minister has suggested that the industrial approval process does look at various issues; however, we must remember that this is a permit approval process that is not a substitute for enhanced regulations or environmental reviews, which is why a freeze on even considering such applications should be in place until the review is complete.

The Minister of Environment, and the Minister of Energy before him, talked about the many fracked wells, which have been done without incident and done safely. That is absolutely true but that is no different than noting that there are many nuclear power plants that have operated safely around the world, too, and yet we've seen in the past week it only takes one. Just because something has been done safely, and can be done safely, certainly doesn't mean that the regulations are sufficient or that the risk is worth it.

Fracking done wrong can be extremely dangerous to the environment and to human health. In the United States, the drilling industry's own research is now suggesting that fracking is not as safe, or without as much risk, as previously thought. In fact, the Obama

administration in the U.S. last week has demanded that companies disclose what chemicals are used in fracking operations so governments and individuals know what to test for.

Will the minister guarantee to Nova Scotians that this will form part of regulations here? After all, if we don't know what chemicals are parts of the fracking process, how can we prepare for accidents and how can we monitor for those trace chemicals in water supply? We must also look in this process at how waste water is recycled, whether waste water is permitted to be disposed of in the sewage treatment systems as happens elsewhere in Canada and the United States. We must address the amount of water that is used in the fracking process, especially at a time when water resources are a paramount concern, as the Premier himself said just a couple of weeks ago.

Most importantly, we must ensure that the dialogue with citizens and industry is open, frank and complete. In the U.S., the drilling industry has now admitted that radioactive outflows to rivers and lakes from the very surface ponds the minister himself referenced are not being diluted sufficiently and compose a safety risk. This is happening in many of the jurisdictions where the Minister of Energy said the fracking is going well. This must not be allowed to happen here.

Nova Scotians want reassurance from the government about hydraulic fracturing. The minister is absolutely correct about that and this is a good first step - an overdue step but a good step - but it will take a proper and open review to put the faith of Nova Scotians back in government on this issue.

It is my hope that the minister will be open to submissions from the Official Opposition on this issue. After all, we've spent a year researching this, collecting information from stakeholders, meeting with people across the province, and meeting with people in the industry who have researched this across North America. We, of course, want to be partners with government in finding a solution to this very important issue in Nova Scotia and we hope that he will be open to that. We certainly do support the idea of a review on fracking and we hope the government will take the next step and ensure that there is a moratorium on permits until the review is complete. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, again I would like to thank the Minister of Environment for providing his remarks in advance of today's proceedings. While no permit applications are currently before government for hydraulic fracturing, we agree that it is important for government to initiate a review on hydraulic fracturing and this process for extracting natural gas.

Last week, I called on government to issue a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing and it is nice to see the Liberals following my lead on that measure. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Inverness has the floor.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I have seen firsthand in my constituency those who are upset about this issue. I want to assure those who are upset about this technique that it cannot be approved without a scientific review of its impact. We are living in a world where there is a very low degree of trust for hydraulic fracturing, especially here in eastern Canada. Some of the concerns brought to my office include too much environmental risk for too little economic gain; the health of tourism in the fishery may be threatened. Lake Ainslie exists, in part, because of a limestone aquifer, an underground lake, and a case can be made that fluids from hydraulic fracturing could get into the water system. Some have suggested a crack caused by the pressure associated with fracking could reduce the depth of the lake and change the ecosystem.

The Margaree watershed may be very valuable for food production going forward into the future and damage to the aquifer could eliminate that resource. So the low degree of trust in this technique, in this hydraulic fracturing, is why we have recommended a moratorium but also an independent assessment of the proposed review.

Now some people may trust those working in the Departments of Energy and Environment, but some people may not because a lot of people, a lot of Nova Scotians, don't see government as separate departments, they see it as the government and they may not trust one department to protect an interest, one interest over another - for instance, the Department of Environment protecting an environmental interest over the mandate of the Department of Energy to develop energy resources in the province.

So I do believe the key to this review will be the evaluation of the debate that unfolds. We recommend an independent assessment of that debate. We also recommend that a timeline of six to eight months be made to ensure that Nova Scotians and their government have time to make informed decisions.

In the minister's remarks he mentioned that Nova Scotians want reassurance about fracking. Mr. Speaker, they may not want it at all and we need to be prepared for that. The minister has also said that the government may require public consultation. I think public consultation is a must because, after all, it is people's communities that are being affected and we must make sure that we are in tune with what they believe. Thank you.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 127

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

Whereas April 10th to April 16th is National Volunteer Week in Canada; and

Whereas the Immigration Settlement and Integration Services Agency in Halifax benefits from the contributions of more than 100 employer volunteers who help immigrant professionals and job seekers; and

Whereas these employers offer their time to provide practice interviews, mentoring, and work placements, all essential to the settlement process for immigrants to this province.

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in thanking these employer volunteers of Immigration Settlement and Integration Services who make a real and positive impact on the lives of immigrants who want to settle and succeed in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of the Voluntary Sector.

RESOLUTION NO. 128

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

Whereas our province has a long tradition of volunteerism with Nova Scotia consistently having one of the highest participation rates; and

Whereas every year we take time to celebrate some of our most outstanding volunteers and put the spotlight on all the great work being done every day across the province by Nova Scotian volunteers; and

Whereas today representatives from communities across the province gathered in Halifax to be recognized for their community engagement and specialty awards;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House join me in congratulating all the recipients of the 2011 provincial volunteer awards, including specialty award winners: Best Buy of Dartmouth, Community of Sheffield Mills, Simon Dugas from Clare, and Mary MacDonald and John Hawkins from Lower East Chezzetcook, and encourage all Nova Scotians to follow the excellent example set by these individuals, organizations, and businesses.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Finance.

RESOLUTION NO. 129

HON. GRAHAM STEELE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Health and Wellness, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas more than 220 athletes from Nova Scotia competed in the 2011 Canada Winter Games, in figure skating, alpine skiing, hockey, judo, artistic gymnastics and other events; and

Whereas Team Nova Scotia took home 12 medals, comprised of five gold, six silver, and one bronze; and

Whereas our athletes displayed excellent sportsmanship through the Games at all times;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize our province's athletes, coaches, managers, and mission staff, and congratulate them for their success at the 2011 Canada Winter Games.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 130

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

Whereas the Cumberland African Nova Scotian Association, or CANSA, has spent the past year celebrating 225 years of a Black presence in Cumberland County; and

Whereas these celebrations have included a community reunion, a sports banquet, historical research, several concerts, and the release of a documentary on Cumberland County's oldest churches; and

Whereas CANSA capped off this historic year in March by producing interpretive panels that will showcase the community's history in schools, museums, and other places of interest;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in commending the Cumberland African Nova Scotian Association for celebrating its vibrant heritage and leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 7 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Administration of Justice. (Hon. Ross Landry)

Bill No. 8 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 160 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Maintenance and Custody Act. (Hon. Karen Casey)

Bill No. 9 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 89 of the Acts of 1980. The Gaelic College Foundation Act. (Mr. Keith Bain)

Bill No. 10 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 25 of the Acts of 2004. The Electricity Act, Respecting Renewable Energy Providers. (Mr. Andrew Younger)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 131

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

Whereas volunteers provide immeasurable benefit to their communities and our province by putting their minds, hands, and most importantly their hearts, at the service of others; and

Whereas earlier today 70 individuals and organizations from across Nova Scotia were honoured for their generosity at the 37th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards held in Halifax; and

Whereas their dedication, support, and true desire to make a difference in both their community and in the lives of others is what makes our province so great;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Legislature congratulate the individuals and organizations recognized at today's 37th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards, and extend our appreciation for the difference they have made in the lives of others.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Argyle.

RESOLUTION NO. 132

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, à une date ultérieure, je demanderai l'adoption de la résolution suivante:

Entendu que le championnat provincial de la division 2 de la Nouvelle-Écosse est tenu le 3 et 4 décembre dans la vallée Annapolis; et

Entendu que l'équipe senior de volleyball masculin de l'École secondaire de Par-en-Bas a remporté le championnat provincial; et

Entendu que l'équipe de l'École secondaire de Par-en-Bas est composé de 6 élèves de la 12^{ième} année et 4 de la 11^{ième} année, conduit par leur entraîneur, Aldéric Boudreau;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de cette Assemblée se joignent à moi pour féliciter l'École secondaire de Par-en-Bas, son équipe de volleyball et l'entraîneur de leur succès au championnat provincial et les remercier pour avoir fait preuve véritable de son esprit d'équipe.

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation's Division 2 boys volleyball provincial finals were held over the December 3rd and December 4th weekend in the Annapolis Valley; and

Whereas in a rematch of a preliminary round contest, École secondaire de Par-en-Bas defeated two opposing teams, Northeast Kings and Horton, to become the provincial champions; and

Whereas Par-en-Bas is a Division 3 school winning the Division 2 title with the teams consisting of six Grade 12 students and four junior members, led by their coach, Aldéric Boudreau;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating École secondaire de Par-en-Bas, its volleyball team, and their coach on their success at the championship, and thank them for demonstrating true team spirit.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Education.

RESOLUTION NO. 133

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

Whereas the Blue Beach Fossil Museum, located in Hantsport Border, Nova Scotia, is the oldest and only site in the world that shows evidence of the very first creatures that ever moved out of water and walked onto land; and

Whereas the director of the museum, Sonya Wood, and curator Chris Mansky have been operating a small, home-based museum for nine years and the fossils that have been unearthed have earned the museum international recognition from experts studying palaeontology; and

Whereas the museum has the world's oldest footprint collection of the tetrapods, evolution's greatest mystery, and some fossils date back 350 million years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Sonya Wood and Chris Mansky for their persistent efforts in preserving the natural history of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and with your permission I'd like to do an introduction prior to my resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Absolutely.

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Thank you very much. I'd like to draw the attention of the members to the west gallery where we're joined today by Marilyn Holm, who is the regional manager for the Atlantic Canada Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, and two of the community volunteers who work with Marilyn: Stephen Beamish, who is a constituent of Clayton Park, and also Jay Cassidy. I wonder if you would rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 134

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

Whereas in November 2010, the Canadian Diabetes Association estimated the cost of diabetes in Nova Scotia to be \$383 million with \$36 million being direct costs related to hospitalization; and

Whereas the report released today by the Canadian Diabetes Association, titled *Canada at the Tipping Point - Charting a New Path*, ranks Nova Scotia at close to the top when it comes to the prevalence of diabetes and cost burden to individuals; and

Whereas despite tabling a \$448 million deficit budget on March 22nd, the New Brunswick Government announced an investment in a comprehensive diabetes plan focusing on the prevention, detection and management of diabetes, including funding for insulin pumps and other essential supplies;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize the devastating impact of diabetes on individuals and our health care system and call on government to follow the lead of New Brunswick by outlining a diabetic action plan in our province starting with funding for insulin pumps.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 135

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

Whereas Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy celebrated his 70th birthday on March 2nd with family and friends at the We'koqma'q First Nation School; and

Whereas Chief Sylliboy is the leader of the Mi'kmaq nation which stretches from eastern Quebec to Newfoundland and Labrador; and

Whereas Queen Elizabeth II had the privilege to enjoy the company of Chief Sylliboy during her visit last summer;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize Chief Ben Sylliboy for his leadership presence here in Nova Scotia as he enters his 20th year of service to his people as Grand Chief.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Energy.

RESOLUTION NO. 136

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

Whereas the River John Royal Canadian Legion's 17th Annual Smelt Fry was held on February 12, 2011 and is one of the Legion's largest fundraisers; and

Whereas the Annual Smelt Fry serves over 200 people who dine on about 300 pounds of the small silvery fish; and

Whereas the Annual Smelt Fry held in River John, Pictou County, not only supports the River John Legion but also the local fishing industry and promotes community spirit;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly congratulate and thank the River John Royal Canadian Legion and its members for a successful event that promotes a local fish product and provides an opportunity for people to support a very active and important member of the Nova Scotia North Shore community, the River John Royal Canadian Legion.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 137

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

Whereas Esther Chute was honoured as Berwick's representative volunteer at the 37th provincial volunteer award ceremony on April 4, 2011; and

Whereas nearing the age of 98, she remains active in her community as a lifetime member of the South Berwick Women's Institute, Belles & Beaus Square Dance Group for 46 years, and Rebecca Lodge for over 30 years; and

Whereas Esther exemplifies the true spirit of volunteerism and through her kind heart and willing nature, she has made a difference to Berwick and area as a better place to live;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Mrs. Esther Chute on being named Berwick's Volunteer of the Year for 2011 and recognize her many years of service and dedication to her community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

RESOLUTION NO. 138

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

Whereas Senator Donald Oliver was honoured for his passionate and influential advocacy for Black Canadians and other visible minorities with the DreamKEEPERS Life Achievement Award from the Canadian Martin Luther King Day Coalition; and

Whereas among Senator Oliver's many achievements is his leadership of the first-ever national study that definitively proved the business case for diversity; and

Whereas the Canadian Martin Luther King Day Coalition fosters pride, racial harmony and social justice;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Senator Oliver on being recognized with the DreamKEEPERS Life Achievement Award and join him in working to keep Dr. King's message alive.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Antigonish.

RESOLUTION NO. 139

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

Whereas Elsa Jensen is an associate professor in the St. Francis Xavier University School of Nursing; and

Whereas Professor Jensen has done extensive outreach work, most prominently in Rwanda, where she uses a community-based approach to health promotion, and within Nova Scotia she works tirelessly toward removing educational and health barriers for Aboriginal and African Canadians; and

Whereas at the Fall Convocation ceremony on December 12, 2010, St. F.X. awarded the Outreach Award to Elsa Jensen in absentia, as she was in Rwanda;

Therefore be it resolved the members of this House thank Professor Jensen for her commitment to health care both in Nova Scotia and abroad and congratulate her on receiving St. Francis Xavier University Outreach Award.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 140

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 resident Bruce Hopkins was a firefighter for 34 years and curator of the local Firefighters' Museum for nearly 10; and

Whereas Mr. Hopkins is also one of the driving forces behind the Yarmouth Food Bank, donating his time and energy to help ensure that members of the Yarmouth community are not without food; and

Whereas on March 15th, Mr. Hopkins' dedication to firefighting and to his community was recognized at the Veteran Firefighters' Association's annual banquet when he was named Veteran Firefighter of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mr. Bruce Hopkins on being named Veteran Firefighter of Yarmouth for 2011 and recognize his many years of service and dedication 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?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 141

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

Whereas on February 14, 2011, Flora Canning of Middle River passed away leaving a legacy of over 40 years of dedicated volunteer work and commitment that earned her the title of The Great One, the reigning Queen of Volunteers; and

Whereas the late Flora Canning travelled through many stormy winters over Hunter's Mountain to spend endless hours volunteering, advocating for and supporting the residents at the Alderwood Guest Home; and

Whereas Flora was an accomplished musician with a love of piano and a passion for traditional Cape Breton music;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly extend our deepest sympathy to the Canning family and residents, volunteers and staff at the Alderwood Guest Home on the passing of such a dynamic individual and community volunteer.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Lunenburg.

RESOLUTION NO. 142

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

Whereas veteran solo sailor and Mader's Cove, Nova Scotia resident Derek Hatfield is currently competing with the Velux 5 Oceans Race, made up of five ocean sprints across the world; and

Whereas Derek Hatfield, representing Canada, is one of five world-renowned sailors participating in what is dubbed the ultimate solo challenge, a race comprising 30,000 nautical miles during 3,000 hours of sailing time; and

Whereas Mr. Hatfield is currently in second place during the fourth sprint with an overall standing of third place;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly recognize the skills required and the challenges faced by Derek Hatfield as he participates in the Velux 5 Oceans Race and wish him success in his quest to finish in first place.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 143

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

Whereas the Ring 73 Society has been selected to host the 2012 Canadian Senior Amateur Boxing Championships in Cape Breton, which will bring close to 400 male and female amateur boxers, coaches, officials, family members and friends to the island in addition to thousands of boxing fans; and

Whereas the Ring 73 Society, a partnership between the historic Ring 73 in Glace Bay and the Membertou Boxing Club, has been steadily developing boxers from communities across Cape Breton and provides young kids with a safe environment to hone their talents while belonging to a famous athletic club; and

Whereas with a skilled coaching staff, committed board of directors, diligent organizing committee and a long list of accomplished alumni including my good friend Mr. John John McCarthy, the Ring 73 Society will be sure to host a memorable championship that will have a lasting effect on the visiting fighters and our community;

Therefore be it resolved that this House join me in congratulating William MacNeil, Paul Carrigan, Mike Kelloway, Greg, Jenn and Daniel Martin, Blair Boone, Pat Glancey, Dannie Pottie and Harry Reid and the organizing committee for their successful bid and we offer our best wishes as they prepare for the event in January 2012.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

RESOLUTION NO. 144

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

Whereas Tom Rankin of Judique was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Hall of Fame Award by Brock University's Faculty of Business; and

Whereas Mr. Rankin, president of Rankin Construction, built infrastructure in the Niagara region of Ontario for over 32 years and many of his 325 employees have been Nova Scotians; and

Whereas Tom continues to remember the community where he grew up by supporting Judique's Celtic Music Interpretive Centre;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the economic achievements of Tom Rankin and his loyalty to our Province of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 145

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

Whereas Jeff Clements is a fourth year student at Cape Breton University and recently participated in the Atlantic Provinces Council on the Sciences, a conference highlighting scientific contributions of undergraduate students; and

Whereas Jeff's presentation entitled Feeding Ecology of the Northern Moonsnail in Cape Breton was named the best oral presentation of the council's conference; and

Whereas Jeff is the first Cape Breton University student in 35 years to receive this honour;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jeff on this prestigious award and thank him for his valuable contributions to the betterment of ecological research in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

RESOLUTION NO. 146

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 Democracy 250 Youth Legacy Trust Project was established to encourage young Nova Scotians to become active, engaged in their communities and encouraged to vote; and

Whereas this program allows for youth related projects right across the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas programs through the Democracy 250 Youth Legacy Trust Project focus on getting youth involved, understanding the government process and connecting to their community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate all of those involved with the Youth Engagement Legacy Trust Project across Nova Scotia and specifically intervention coordinators Kris Doucette and Heather McNeil on the successful implementation of his program in the Northside area of Cape Breton.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 147

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

Whereas the 603 Weymouth Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps has received Nova Scotia's most improved army cadet corps award, presented to them by cadet inspector Major Ken Hynes; and

Whereas there are 35 registered cadets in our local West Nova Scotian Regiment, whose roles have expanded over the years to include assisting the Weymouth Legion's Colour Party and laying of the wreaths at Remembrance Day ceremonies; and

Whereas these young people participate in valuable training and programs that will prepare them in their role as future citizens;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House congratulate the 603 Weymouth Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps on their achievement of most improved army cadet corps award and continued success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, could you please call the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. (Interruption) Sorry, I'll take my place, apparently there's one more resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. It's always nice when you have the list of resolutions before we start. I thank all the caucuses that submit them.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

RESOLUTION NO. 148

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

Whereas during the weekend of March 5th and March 6th, the Carnivolley under-16 volleyball tournament was held in Yarmouth; and

Whereas the Southwest Surge Under-16 Girls Volleyball team were the gold medal champions during this tournament, which saw 22 teams participating in all age categories, spread over three gymnasiums; and

Whereas just the previous weekend, the Southwest Surge Under-16 Girls Volleyball team were the champions of a tournament in Western Valley;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate the Southwest Surge Under-16 Girls Volleyball team on their consecutive gold medal wins and wish them continued success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 149

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

Whereas the Digby Area Recreation Commission and the Digby Curling Centre recently co-hosted the 2011 Canadian Senior Men's and Women's Curling Championships; and

Whereas 24 teams from across Canada travelled to Digby to take part in this week-long event; and

Whereas over 200 volunteers from Digby participated in making this a truly wonderful event for the teams and all the visitors;

Therefore be it resolved that this House recognize the Digby Area Recreation Commission and the Digby Curling Centre for making this a memorable event for everyone.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Government Motions.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move that the adjourned debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne be now resumed.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier. (Applause)

Order, please. I just realized that the honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville adjourned debate, so in order for the Premier to speak, I'll ask for the unanimous consent of the House.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker - your wise ruling, of course. (Laughter)

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and join the debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. First of all, I'd like to thank Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Mayann Francis, for delivering the Speech from the Throne, and for the gracious and generous manner in which she performs her public duties. Also, thank you to the honourable members for Kings North and Truro-Bible Hill for moving and seconding the Speech from the Throne as read by Her Honour.

I would also like to acknowledge that this is the first full session for your honour and the first session for the new Deputy Speaker, as well as the first for our new Chief Clerk of the House. I am confident that all of you will carry on the customs and procedures of the longest established democratic Assembly in the Commonwealth. I also want to recognize and send our support for all the members of the Canadian Forces wherever they are serving, as well as those in the Reserves.

I could not be present for the responses to the Speech from the Throne by the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, but I have read their remarks and I have found them thoughtful. I would like to note their support for Lower Churchill and the Irving bid - they also, of course, highlighted the differences as well.

When Nova Scotians went to the polls in June 2009, the people were clear. They voted to make life better for today's families - they wanted change that ends the chronic emergency room closures; change from the worst economic development on record in Canada for the last 20 years; change to keep our deficit from ballooning to \$1.4 billion; change that helps people make ends meet. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to report to members of this House and to all Nova Scotians that these changes are well underway. These changes will not only help make life better for families in Nova Scotia, but they have put this province on a new path, a path to good jobs and a stronger and better economy, balanced books and better health care for Nova Scotians. An important example of the new and better path for this province is that the government is keeping its platform commitments.

I will table the "Clip and save" checklist that the NDP distributed to households throughout Nova Scotia almost two years ago. Members can go through this list and see how hard this government is working to keep each and every commitment in the NDP platform. Just as I said back then, those commitments are being kept through collaboration and engagement with Nova Scotians in general and, in particular, with the industries, communities and individuals who are directly involved. People often have good ideas about how to implement an NDP commitment in a way that makes it even stronger, and the government welcomes those good ideas from every corner.

The NDP promised to create the secure jobs that the Nova Scotia economy needs, and that is exactly what we are doing. DSME is fast approaching the opening of its Trenton plant, a symbol of new jobs and new investment, and Nova Scotia's place in the green economy of the future. And LED Roadway Lighting in Amherst is busy working to create more environmental and economic street lights for communities all over the globe, while the community of Amherst is working hard to revitalize their downtown core to highlight the business and tourism opportunities available within that unique community. Those are just two of the many new steps taken to create secure, sustainable jobs, as I will detail later in my remarks.

The NDP promised to keep emergency rooms open and reduce health care waits - and that is exactly what we are doing. The reduced wait times and reduction in surgery cancellations that the Minister of Health and Wellness announced on Friday are but the latest example of how health care workers are now actively engaged in developing and delivering ways to provide better care sooner.

A year ago, the members of the Opposition Parties were fearlessly forecasting that their record of failure in keeping emergency rooms open would continue. Getting the care you need when you need it in an emergency room is an issue for Nova Scotians - it was a big issue in the election campaign and it remains a big issue for this government. This government is taking the steps required to deliver what was promised.

I have more to say about health, but let me turn to the third key commitment. The NDP promised to ensure that more young people will be able to stay and build a life here in Nova Scotia, and that is exactly what we are doing. Talented young people have new incentives to stay here and to move here. Tuition fees for Nova Scotia students are below the national average. The province has a Graduate Retention Rebate program encouraging young people to work here after graduation, and tomorrow, as part of the budget, government will announce changes to the province's Student Assistance Program. And those are just a few ways that young people are gaining new support and new reasons to stay in Nova Scotia.

The NDP promised to create 250 subsidized child care spaces and we will deliver on that promise this year, Mr. Speaker. The NDP promised to take the HST off home energy to make life more affordable and that is exactly what we have done, saving Nova Scotia families \$28 million a year. The two Parties opposite voted in favour of a tax on basic home electricity. Nova Scotians rejected (Interruptions)

At the first opportunity, this government took the tax off the basic necessities of life, Mr. Speaker, and yet, despite the overwhelming support of Nova Scotians, both the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives still voted to keep taxing basic home electricity and thus to tax home heating for thousands of the poorest Nova Scotians. (Interruptions)

The NDP is proceeding with our other commitments to help families and the province is now doing much more to help people make ends meet.

The NDP promised to fix rural roads and keep communities strong and that is exactly what we are doing. Each step outlined is underway, some a year earlier than promised. For example, the province's immigration strategy will soon be released and when this government has a plan to pay less and pave more, the Opposition Parties tried to stop change. They tried to stop efforts to ensure competition, stop a plan that will mean more roads and paving and improve in areas like Inverness, Shelburne, Queens County and Victoria County. (Interruptions) A former government launched the biggest slowdown in paving that Nova Scotia ever suffered when it sold the province's asphalt and chip-sealing operation. The NDP is winding down the Liberal-Tory approach to paying more and paving less. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, it's about time to pave more and fix more rural roads and it is the NDP that has moved beyond the old failed promises with action that will be proven on the roads of this province. The NDP promised to give seniors options to stay in their homes and communities longer. Those specific commitments are being checked off one by one as they become accomplishments. The NDP promised to live within our means, (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: The NDP promised to live within our means and every single specific commitment in our platform to ensure that the province lives within its means has been kept, Mr. Speaker. (Applause) It has been a lot tougher than anyone would have expected on the basis of the financial information and forecast released by the former government. Public sector workers, pensioners, health authorities and others have recognized that every element of society must be part of the solution in a province that carries one of the biggest per capita debts thanks to the unwise and spendthrift habits of the former government. The members of Doctors Nova Scotia showed particular leadership and public spirit by agreeing to forgo agreed increases and to accept the 1 per cent increase that has become the standard across the provincial Public Service.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, I can announce that through good fortune and good management, not only did the NDP balance the budget on the schedule we outlined, it has proven possible this year to reduce the net debt of the province. (Applause) I'm also pleased to announce that 2010-11 spending will be reduced by \$133.5 million because the NDP doesn't just talk the talk about spending controls. This is a government that really does control spending. Thanks to reduced borrowing rates and favourable interest rates, debt servicing costs were \$80 million less than estimated. There was a one-time prior adjustment of revenue, which provided \$196.1 million in Nova Scotia's favour, and thanks to better than expected economic performance, most provincial source revenues were

higher than estimated. Personal income tax, corporate income tax and retail sales were all higher despite the gloomy forecasts from the Opposition. (Applause)

As a result, tomorrow's budget will show an updated forecast of a surplus in the year just ended, a surplus of \$447 million. As a result, the first full year of an NDP Government, will be one of only seven years in the last 50 when Nova Scotia has reduced its net debt. And, Mr. Speaker, we will be one of only a few jurisdictions in North America that will pay down their debt this year. Rather than spend the surplus at year end, which has been the practice of past governments, this government took the view that a penny saved is a penny saved.

The last Liberal Government was defeated on a promise to improve health care by borrowing \$600 million and then claiming the budget was balanced. The Progressive Conservatives, whose new leader is trying to claim some high ground, spent an average of \$277 million a year in unauthorized, year-end spending, spending that this House never had an opportunity to review. In fact year-end spending by the previous government added at least \$2.5 billion to the debt of this province. I have always said that if you want to get out of a hole, you have to stop digging and that is exactly what we are doing.

We will not spend the surplus. The NDP is using the surplus to reduce the debt of the province. Simply put, because of our decisions, the debt of this province is almost \$1 billion lower than estimated just last year. This is largely due to the fact that we had a surplus of \$447 million, rather than a deficit. A lower debt means that this government has lowered debt servicing costs, just like paying down a credit card, Mr. Speaker.

By reducing the provincial debt by almost \$1 billion, we saved approximately \$44 million on debt servicing costs. By avoiding the growth in debt, we will save approximately \$44 million a year, money that will be used to create good jobs and grow the economy, provide better health care and help Nova Scotians make ends meet. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, if the style of government delivered by the Opposition had continued, if their suggestions for higher spending and lower revenue had been adopted, the people of Nova Scotia would be deeper in debt with less hope for the future. The NDP is taking a new and better path no matter how much the Opposition tries to run up the debt and turn back the clock.

For example, spending was lower, not higher than estimated, in 2010-11, despite severe weather events like those in Meat Cove, in the Valley and in Yarmouth that caused major infrastructure damage to bridges and roads; those repairs cost millions of dollars. The fact that provincial expenses went down rather than up proves, not only to the members opposite but to all Nova Scotians, that when it comes to the management of the province's finances it is the NDP who are proper stewards of the people's money.

Mr. Speaker, I can report to the House and to all Nova Scotians that this is going to be the second year in a row that the province's spending will come in below estimates, the first time that this has happened in 23 years.

We of course, Mr. Speaker, will continue those efforts in 2011-12 because it is the right decision for the people of this province. This year's surplus does not change the underlying financial challenges. That's why the upcoming budget will be in accordance with the multi-year financial plan. It will continue to show sustained discipline on the spending side while still showing the deficit.

When the Minister of Finance delivers the budget tomorrow, the actual deficit will be very close to the planned amount, due largely to the return of the clear annual operating grants for universities.

I want to give credit to the Minister of Finance. He listened to Nova Scotians; he respected their reviews; he engaged them in the key tough decisions that have been made to ensure that this province lives within its means, not only occasionally, Mr. Speaker, but sustainably.

Let me also give credit to the minister's colleagues in Cabinet and in caucus who support him in keeping tight control on spending, fostering an informed debate about making the right decisions when faced with the great challenges that this government inherited.

Mr. Speaker, while much has already been accomplished, we are making significant strides to get the province back to balance. The reality is the province still faces significant financial challenges and must stick to the multi-year plan outlined in 2010.

We have a job to do and that job is to make life better for families in this province. The one way to do that is to improve health care. When I was first elected to this House back in 1998, Nova Scotians were talking about long emergency room wait lines and the need for change in the health care system. Well, Mr. Speaker, this government is making changes to ensure a better health care system for you and your family.

Last year the province released the Better Care Sooner plan; this plan will keep emergency rooms open and deliver faster, better health care to Nova Scotians. It will transform health care in this province so that all Nova Scotians, no matter where they live in this province, will have the right level of care when and where they need it.

Mr. Speaker, the plan, based on the recommendations of Dr. John Ross, will provide consistent, safe, quality care to every Nova Scotian. On Wednesday I will be joined by the Minister of Health and Wellness to announce the province's first collaborative emergency centre in Nova Scotia; it will be in Parrsboro.

The new centre means that people living in Parrsboro and surrounding areas will no longer wonder if their ER will be open. They will know that the lights will be on, that the doors will be open and that a health care professional will be on site to provide them with the care that they need.

As part of the government's plan to make life better for families in all regions of the province, we must ensure that Nova Scotians have good jobs and a strong economy. The province's jobsHere plan launched late last year will do just that. It is a different way of doing economic development in Nova Scotia, jobsHere focuses on three main priorities to ensure a strong economy in the province. They are learning, innovation, and competitiveness.

Mr. Speaker, \$200 million will be invested in jobsHere in the next four years. We have modified dozens of programs and introduced more than 20 new initiatives as part of the plan, including a \$25 million dollar productivity investment program.

New strategies and investments will be announced in the months to come including a new workforce strategy, International Commerce Strategy, money for improvements and apprenticeships, and helping African Nova Scotians have the skills they need to enter the labour market.

Small businesses are found in every community of this province, they are the backbone of the economy. That is why for the first time since 1992 the NDP cut the small business corporate tax rate by 10 per cent and we're doing it again. The rate is being cut again this year for a small business tax reduction of 20 per cent, saving individual businesses up to \$4,000 a year. (Applause)

I can't stand here today and talk about economic development, job creation and a strong economy without talking about the Lower Churchill project and the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy. The historic Lower Churchill agreement with Newfoundland and Labrador that will produce hydroelectricity out of Muskrat Falls is a game changer for Atlantic Canada. I am pleased that Prime Minister Harper announced just this week that his government would support the project in the form of a loan guarantee or equivalent funding. That's great news for Nova Scotia, it's great news for Newfoundland and Labrador and all Atlantic Canadians.

The Lower Churchill project will help stabilize energy prices for Nova Scotia families and businesses well into the future which will help grow the economy and make life more affordable. The project's construction will create \$3.5 billion in income for labour and businesses and generate 21,000 person-years of employment. The jobs, economic benefits and improved transmission will change the economic landscape of Atlantic Canada while creating hundreds of opportunities for clean-tech firms across the province to compete for work in the hydroelectricity field. This project will change the

economic landscape of Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada. Lower Churchill is not the only project that has the potential to do that.

The National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy holds incredible possibilities for Irving Shipbuilding Incorporated and the entire province. I recently had a presentation on the company's plans to bid on contracts within the strategy; the program represents \$35 billion worth of investment over the next 30 years. Everyone here knows the best ships are built in Atlantic Canada. (Applause) A successful bid on any of these federal contracts would mean a generation of work for hundreds of Maritime firms and as many as 2,500 workers.

This province is blessed with an abundance of natural resources. Natural resources that provide employment for thousands of Nova Scotians, natural resources that deserve to be protected as this government emphasized with our policy directions released in December. That is why the province's upcoming Natural Resources Strategy will offer an integrated approach to managing forests, biodiversity, provincial parks and geological resources.

The province's economy will be strong now and in the future because of the decisions that we make today. Nova Scotians believe in helping one another in tough times and that is why we're working hard to make life better for Nova Scotians, especially those who are facing the most difficult challenges coming out of the recession. We've already eliminated the provincial tax on essentials like home heating and children's clothing, keeping the commitments the NDP made to Nova Scotia families. We've introduced the Poverty Reduction Tax Credit, the Affordability Living Tax Credit, and seniors receiving the GIS will receive a full refund of their provincial income tax. (Applause)

I know that more needs to be done. New steps need to be taken to help Nova Scotians make ends meet and that is why this government is making improvements to Employment Support and Income Assistance programs. The province is creating a 211 system, working with the United Way. This system will allow Nova Scotians to access a full range of social services by making a simple phone call. Services for Nova Scotians living with disabilities will improve and we will shorten the waiting list for day programs.

These measures will make life better (Interruption)

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

THE PREMIER: These measures will make life better for families from Glace Bay to Digby.

As I said earlier, Nova Scotians elected the NDP because the status quo was not working. They wanted change. They wanted something different. The NDP is delivering

the change that Nova Scotians voted for and we will continue to do so. The time is right for change in this province. That change will provide a better life for today's families in every community across this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I was really glad to hear the Premier's words because I missed fairy tale time with my son tonight being here in the Legislature and it made up for it because it was a complete work of fiction.

I was just out in the hall a few minutes ago talking to a couple of people who attended the chamber of commerce speech - I guess was last week or maybe a bit over a week - by the Minister of Finance who suggested that the surplus was still reasonably close to \$97 million. Well, if this is reasonably close to \$97 million, then I think we need to question every number in the upcoming budget tomorrow because it is clear that not only do the NDP need a reading tutor but they need a math tutor as well. (Applause)

What the Premier has announced today is that the NDP gouged Nova Scotians by increasing the HST by 2 per cent last year when they didn't need to do it. In fact, what we have is a situation with a \$447 million surplus - which is great, we're all happy that there is a surplus. (Interruption) However let's not forget that the minister's own estimates said that would raise \$246 million by increasing the HST last year. Well, you still would have had a surplus of over \$200 million this year without an HST increase, without gouging Nova Scotians for no reason.

We know from economists and from Statistics Canada that Nova Scotia has faced some of the lowest growth because of that HST increase, and they have pointed to that. It's interesting because the Premier has talked about paying down the debt. (Interruptions) It's okay, I'll send the Premier a transcript later.

Yesterday the Minister of Finance criticized the Leader of the Official Opposition for saying the NDP had added \$1.7 billion to the debt. In fact, his department's website says they added \$1.7 billion to the debt, so the fact of the matter is just because they paid a little bit of that off - well, you know, I think I'll go rack my mortgage up tomorrow and then pay off some of what I racked up the next day. It doesn't mean I'm ahead of the game, it still means I'm behind and it's from the minister's own website. That's not some fictional number that the Leader of the Official Opposition made up.

It's interesting when you go back and read the Minister of Finance's own comments in committee to the then Deputy Minister of Finance when he complained about the previous government fudging the books and raising numbers to make it look like they were doing better than they were. (Interruptions) It's exactly true that he said that. Well, it's pretty easy to come in under budget when you have spending estimates of 7 per cent in

your first budget and 9 per cent in your second budget, which is three or four times CPI. It's just not realistic.

It's interesting that the Premier talked about his little flyer and the cut-out checklist of promises that they sent out. Before we knew this was coming, I brought this along because I was going to point out how they've all been broken, yet he tried to go through and say they've been kept. I want to just point out a few that were a little bit fudged, let us just say, in the Premier's comments moments ago. Let's start from the beginning.

First of all, the very first one on this list is, "Maximize Federal funds to build the infrastructure communities need." I'm going to give you two examples - it would be nice if they had done it, but they haven't, and I'm going to give you two examples right off the top. Last year we lost hundreds of thousands of dollars that would have gone to the Shubenacadie Canal System because the provincial NDP refused to match federal and municipal dollars, and that money disappeared.

The second one, in Glace Bay - the Premier just used Glace Bay as an example and the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal have written letters to the member for Glace Bay indicating that they are not able to match the federal funds for work at the BAYplex on energy efficiency needs. So I'm sorry, but you haven't maximized those funds - and there are other projects that other members have brought forward over time.

Mr. Speaker, I just spoke with our Fisheries Critic - whom we all know and I know we all love in this House - and I asked him about Ottawa and fisheries policies related to independent fishermen. I spoke to our Fisheries Critic, and they have yet to hear anything. What the NDP has done is actually cut off Nova Scotia - and the Premier just admitted it. He said that they are taking care of Nova Scotia, from Digby to Glace Bay. I'm sorry if you live in Yarmouth because that is past Digby, where we sunk the ferry, and I'm sorry if you live in Cape North, or further north in Cape Breton than Glace Bay because it doesn't matter according to the Premier, because Nova Scotia only goes from Glace Bay to Digby.

The fact of the matter is that when we go through here we can continue down the list of so-called promises. For example, let's look at this one - reduce the size of Cabinet from 18 to 12; that one didn't last long. Expenditure management review with a target of 1 per cent - 1 per cent across every department, remember that argument? Remember how fast the Minister of Finance walked away from that last year, saying that it was inappropriate to do that anymore? Balance the budget, there's my favourite one - balance the budget. It says here they were going to balance the budget from this last budget and so, tomorrow, are we going to see a balanced budget? According to this, there should be a balanced budget for the coming year next year. The Premier just stood up and said that every commitment on here has been made - and it says very clearly here that the budget will be balanced tomorrow, so I can't wait to see that one.

Mr. Speaker, the shame about that one is the fact that the member for Antigonish, who is sitting in the House now, still had this just a couple of months ago on his own Web site and he ran after the NDP government was already in power, so they knew the state of the finances, yet still ran on these.

When we go further down here, also in very small type (Interruptions) The member for Digby-Annapolis, our Fisheries Critic is also just wondering where that commitment is on nurse practitioners, because he is still waiting for the permanent nurse practitioner in Digby Neck. I just confirmed that with him that he's still waiting for that one yet, lo and behold, that was a commitment that was supposed to have been made by the end of this year - not there.

Mr. Speaker, you can't go down this list and claim they have all been met, because one after another they haven't been met. Are there a couple here that have been? Sure there have, but most of them have not. At the end of the day there are some really big questions that have to be asked in terms of this surplus. The main questions around this really have to be looked at - why would you gouge Nova Scotians? Let's think about who bore the brunt of this - \$142 million of that HST increase has been estimated to have been paid for by people with incomes between \$30,000 and \$100,000 a year. So is it fair now to say to them that actually we didn't need that money because it turns out that we have this enormous surplus?

No, it's not fair. In fact that's not a small mistake, that's a 301 per cent mistake, Mr. Speaker, a 301 per cent mistake. I might point out that the Leader of the Official Opposition said, in fact, when looking at the numbers and so forth with others - he was quoted in the media at the time as saying that HST increase would not be needed in order to achieve surplus this year. Of course he was right, just as he was right when he said during the election that it was irresponsible to promise a balanced budget when you didn't know the state of the books. He was right.

The fact of the matter is that the NDP are now trying to change history on that, when in fact they have a lot of explaining to do because when you look at Reading Recovery, why would you cut Reading Recovery if you have the money to pay for it when we know that it is now actually a program in the Obama budget in the States. They've actually put more money into Reading Recovery. To the 143 or thereabout programs available around the world, it's actually ranked as the single most effective program for literacy in the world. Yet you're going to cut that?

Mr. Speaker, the Premier made a lot about cutting a tax on electricity but he forgot the fact that he actually added a tax at the same time - you know, the NDP electricity tax, which is increasing each year - but he forgot to mention that in his remarks. That's fine that he took of the HST but that has almost been wiped out, more than been wiped out when you account for the other increases. He also forgot to mention that he relaxed mercury

regulations - the only province in Canada, I might add, that has relaxed mercury regulations, the only province in Canada, and while it's fine to say that we'll have tougher ones later on, mercury is a bio-accumulative substance in the environment that you can't make up for later.

Then we look at universities, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier has indicated repeatedly that there's a new student financial assistance program coming tomorrow and, you know, obviously we'll wait and we'll see the details of that and we hope that there are improvements, but actually leaving students with more debt, allowing tuitions to rise and leaving students with more debt is not the promise that the NDP made, which is why we saw so many university students out here on the opening day of the Legislature. Ask them if they feel that that promise was made? They don't.

Just as the Premier was speaking, it's worth noting that CBC reported that almost half of that new surplus comes from a windfall according to Finance Department officials; a \$196 million unexpected federal windfall. That's not the result of good NDP Government management. That's good luck. It's nothing more than good luck.

Mr. Speaker, just a couple weeks ago the NDP did something else that they criticized previous governments for doing. They raised user fees just a week before a budget. In fact, the man who is now the Minister of Finance, who criticized the previous government for doing exactly the same thing, announcing user fee increases within weeks of a budget announcement and yet he did exactly the same thing. Yet now we have this big surplus which makes you wonder why did we need to do that? He has downloaded costs to municipalities so that every property tax bill in this province will go up. The fact of the matter is that there was an agreement (Interruption)

The Minister of Finance would like to say that that's untrue but, in fact, I was at the UNSM conference a number of years ago as a councillor when the Premier stood there and indicated that he would fight for that agreement that was ultimately signed in 2007 and now he has turned his back on that agreement that he said that he would champion. That's not championing that agreement and, in fact, the UNSM estimates that it's a \$50 million cost to the property taxpayers of Nova Scotia. I loved the wording that the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations used when he said it's not downloading, it's a prevention of uploading. It's not a prevention of uploading.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement came as a result of studies that indicated that the province should no longer be charging municipalities for provincial services and provincial costs. It worked out what those changes should be and the province and the municipalities made an agreement. The fact of the matter is, how are you going to go to the municipalities and say, well, we have almost a \$450 million surplus last year but, yes, we think that you guys can absorb this on property tax bills. Tell that to the folks in CBRM when they're

already faced with massive challenges from everything from waste water to roads and so forth.

The Premier talked about road paving. If he hadn't brought it up, I wasn't going to get into this, but it's interesting that (Interruptions) Well, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal seems concerned about what I'm going to say and he should be since the Premier has given a different message than the department's staff gave in the briefing to the Liberal caucus office just a couple of weeks ago. All these members were there when the department said, no, it was not going to be cheaper and, you're right, the actual private tender costs may go up as a result of this because they will not have as much work to bid on and, yes, the prices were starting to come down and, no, we didn't actually talk to industry first or even take a look at that. No, we didn't look at changing tender specs, and oh yeah, I know that the minutes - in fact, my favourite one was we know the minister said in the press conference that prices here were more expensive than they were in New Brunswick and yet we know that the tender specs are less in New Brunswick. We know that - and yes the minister left that out of his remarks. (Interruption)

Well, that's interesting, isn't it? So even the department staff have trouble completely defending what the minister and the Premier have announced. So that's a problem. The fact is that . . .

HON. WILLIAM ESTABROOKS: Is that all you're going to say?

MR. YOUNGER: I don't know what the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is worried I'm going to say. The government . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: That's the point, you haven't said anything worth listening to. (Laughter)

MR. YOUNGER: You know, Mr. Speaker, I could refer to the Minister of Education's editorial on bullying at this moment, but I think I'll defer from that. (Interruptions)

We can talk a lot about ERs. They say we're going to fix it, we're going to fix it and you guys never did it - they haven't fixed it yet. The Premier knows full well and the Minister of Health knows full well that the number of incidents of overcrowding at the QE II and the Dartmouth General has increased. Our Health Critic and I have been briefed repeatedly by those hospitals - in my case, Dartmouth General - repeatedly saying they are increasing and they have been increasing and at this point there is not a plan in place to address that. There are options, but there's not a plan.

You only need to go and wait at either one of those hospitals and see those are major issues. That collaborative care model may work in some areas, but the Minister of Health and Wellness hasn't even suggested that's what's going to happen at either of those

two hospitals. So what are we going to do there? We've been waiting a couple of years for a solution and every time we've asked - we've asked in the estimates debate a couple of times now - oh, it's going to come in a few months, the solution. In that time the problem has only gotten worse.

There's a certain point where people will wonder if they keep having to wait. Last year we asked the Premier the question, why was there a new Speech from the Throne? He said that this is when we reset our agenda. The beginning was sort of this transitional year, we're going to reset the agenda, and we want to set the guide of what we want to get done. I'm just wondering how many times the agenda is going to be reset before anything is actually accomplished.

Again, we heard about the Natural Resources Strategy, which is overdue; the Wetlands Strategy, which the government is in violation of its own law by not having it completed by December - at what point are any of these proposals going to be completed? We waited a long time for the gambling strategy that was well overdue. It's in now, of course, but we waited a long time for that - that was overdue.

It's not enough to re-announce and re-announce, and re-announce and re-announce programs, or plans and studies that never actually come to fruition. You can't do that for four years, or however long this government plans to stay in its mandate.

At the end of the day there will be a lot of people watching tomorrow's budget. I'm serious when I say we're very happy there's a surplus and that things are going to go in that direction, but let's be honest about this. The fact of the matter is that you haven't paid down the debt until you've paid down the \$1.7 billion that has been added to the debt in the past 21 months. You haven't (Interruptions)

The Minister of Finance would like us to believe his catcalls and yells across the table, yet his own department's Web site says that's what has been added to the debt. If he would like to update that tomorrow, we'll be pleased, but that is the latest data from his own department. Interestingly enough, if his own department is providing out-of-date information then he should go back and read his own comments from the meeting of the Public Accounts Committee, and I might even have the date for him - I don't offhand but, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure he can find it himself - when he had a bit of a battle with the then deputy minister over that very issue that the numbers on the government's Web site and from the government should be updated at all times, yet he's telling us the numbers are a year out of date. I'm sorry, he was either right then or he's right now.

We're going to go by the numbers his own department is providing us, which suggests \$1.7 billion has been added. His own spending estimates, including last year's, showed a 7 per cent increase in spending in his first budget and a 9 per cent increase in the

following year, when he's saying that the spending should be in line with growth. That just doesn't work.

The Premier stood up and did not answer how he could justify increasing university tuitions, cutting things like Reading Recovery, watching as schools may be closed across the province, all of these things, while he is sitting on a \$446 million surplus. He didn't explain that. One would hope that's going to be answered by him when he walks out that door, or answered by the Minister of Finance tomorrow. Mr. Speaker, a 301 per cent error is a bit much for a lot of people to believe, especially when it was many of these same members who when in Opposition criticized previous governments for having their estimates so out of whack.

At the end of the day, when we look at what this government has done over the past few years, when we look at what this government has done over the last 21 months or so, there are things that we have all agreed on. We have all agreed that it is a success to be involved in the Churchill Falls project. There are bills that we've all supported together, changes in drunk-driving legislation, legislation from the member for Sackville-Cobequid on the safety for police and paramedics and so forth on the highways. There are things like that that we have worked on together and successfully achieved. There are things that we've supported that the government has moved forward on but when we watch the government doing the exact same things that they complained about the Tories doing when they were in Opposition, it becomes extremely troubling to us.

Mr. Speaker, when we hear the government proclaiming that they have suddenly found this wonderful \$446 million surplus - from their own good government, apparently, even though now the CBC reports that almost half of that is actually from an unexpected federal windfall. Then when we see that they are doing that at the same time as raising the tuitions of university students in this province, increasing their debt load - even though they may get a better loan program but they're going to have a lot more debt - when we see the HST being increased on those who could least afford it and, in fact, now we know that that HST increase wasn't even needed, that's troubling. That's very troubling.

When we see that the Yarmouth ferry was cancelled for the sake of \$3 million, and we now see the impact of that is far greater than \$3 million, far, far greater than \$3 million, and yet there was \$446 million in the bank. I wonder how that is going to be explained to people living in Yarmouth. (Interruption)

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has said nine; well, that makes it better. We know that the municipalities wanted to make a contribution but let's say the province had to make that whole \$9 million contribution to get a year's notice, out of almost \$450 million, I don't think people living in Yarmouth are going to give a hoot whether it's \$9 million or \$3 million when it's a \$450 million surplus. I think they're going to say that the government could have invested for that year and given them time to work on a solution. But they

didn't, they cut the rug out from under them, without notice, and we've seen that the impact is far greater than that investment would have been.

You have to wonder what this government was thinking about for the families in Yarmouth. You have to think about what this government was thinking about for the families that are paying higher HST on so many different things. Yes, there were some credits, it's not to take away from those credits, but they certainly paid more on so many things.

Obviously, we won't know until tomorrow exactly what the budget includes, although we've heard a lot of information about that, but in the coming year this is what Nova Scotians can expect. Unless this minister is prepared to roll back that HST tomorrow in his budget in light of the surplus, unless he's willing to do that, Nova Scotians will face another year of the highest tax in the country. Unless he's willing to do as he promised for so many years and live up to the provincial law that requires getting rid of bracket creep, people will pay more income tax. Unless they roll back the plan to increase user fees, Nova Scotians will pay more for all of those services. Unless the NDP Government honours the commitment and the agreement and the contract with municipalities in this province, every Nova Scotian will pay higher property taxes as a result.

Those are choices that the government now has the ability to make tomorrow, they've just admitted that. They also have the ability to ensure that tuition fees at universities don't rise. They have the ability to ensure that important programs like Reading Recovery stay for the want of what we understand is a \$2 million difference between a program that works and is recognized around the world and a program that we don't even know the details of yet, but is unlikely to be anywhere near as effective as a program that is so highly regarded around the world and is now the subject of increased investments in other provinces and elsewhere.

We know we have the money to make choices like the fifth floor of the Dartmouth General Hospital or the geothermal project at the Bayplex in Glace Bay or MS Liberation Therapy trials or insulin pumps for diabetics. Those are choices that the government can now not run away from, saying they have no money. They are choices that this government has to answer for and answer why they are not delivering on those promises - promises that they have made to Nova Scotians over the years, promises that they walked away from under the guise of not having any money, but promises that Nova Scotians will now expect them to keep and will now be asking, why did you raise my taxes when you didn't need to?

We will, of course, be watching tomorrow, as I'm sure Nova Scotians will, despite the fact that the government may hope that they can hide any bad news in the budget under this announcement or under a federal election. Nova Scotians will be watching.

When this time comes next year and the government resets their agenda again - to quote the Premier - and re-announces again in another Speech from the Throne, a whole list of studies and programs, again, that they still haven't completed and still say they're coming - just like the Premier just said with the natural resources study - we'll be here, Nova Scotians will be watching. They'll still be waiting for those promises to be answered, promises that are either not kept or massaged to make it look like, well, they're almost being kept.

Nova Scotians don't believe this anymore and I'm sure that many members of this House who have been out on doorsteps with federal candidates have heard that already because it's being said loud and clear. It's being said in ridings across this province and by people across this province who expected something different, haven't gotten something different, and they're seeing exactly the opposite of what these members claimed in Opposition. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand tonight and have a response to the Speech from the Throne that was delivered by Her Honour just a few days ago. Of course it is better fuelled by another speech that was brought forward by the Premier tonight to fill us in on all the great stuff that they feel they've brought forward and they've accomplished during their two long years of government.

Mr. Speaker, as much as I have a fully listed speech here that I do want to go through, I just want to say that to listen to the fairy tale from the Premier just now is amazing, to say that just before his budget, just before informing the rest of the business community in Nova Scotia, every living citizen of what they are to expect from their budget, he comes out tonight and tries to tell everybody that everything is okay.

The biggest thing that he underlines is a mistake of \$700 million on a projected deficit. How can a Premier of this province consider saying this is such a success when they missed the mark by \$700 million? How can we believe you now after that kind of deficit? How can we trust them now after that kind of "whoops"? It's a big whoops, and I'm going to get to maybe more of the issues that we find are such drastic mistakes in that kind of logic and that kind of thinking - that on one hand you say look how good we are, but look at all the things you had to do to get there. Apparently you didn't have to raise taxes, you didn't have to cancel the Yarmouth ferry, you didn't have to say that there was a 23 per cent cut in education - you didn't have to do all these things because, look, we've got over a \$446 million surplus in the year ending this year. I mean, wow, how silly do you think we are in believing that kind of drivel?

Mr. Speaker, my speech tonight will be focused in and around my constituents of the great constituency of Argyle. As many of you know, in the southwest portion of this great province sits Argyle. It shares the County of Yarmouth, and it is the second-largest French-speaking area in all Nova Scotia. I can tell you from the people I talk to every day, whether I'm talking to folks at the Red Cap or I'm talking to people at the Dennis Point Café or if I'm travelling through East Pubnico, I can tell you that people tell me that the province is going in the wrong direction.

Being impacted by the CAT, being impacted - you know the truckers are asking questions about the paving plan and how they are participating in it and how they are going to be able to get work when the province says it is going to be doing some of their work. People are saying we are going in the wrong direction.

Mr. Speaker, the government has failed to achieve the economic conditions needed for a modern, dynamic economy to grow and thrive and to create real prosperity that would provide real jobs and great career choices for many Nova Scotians. We are far from the commitments of living within our means, creating a competitive tax environment, and attracting investment, which are key words, and we hear this government talk about these things at end. This government was elected because people wanted change, and I can accept that. While the government is announcing strategies, plans and committees, some of them for the third time - we saw them in the platforms of the NDP Government at the time, we saw them in the first Throne Speech, we saw them in the second Throne Speech - Mr. Speaker, re-announcing a plan doesn't mean you are actually going to do it is what this is telling Nova Scotians. We can continue to say it and it will give no proof of actually what is going to be happening.

The government has boasted of coming in under budget on spending, and I know I wrote this yesterday, and to actually see the comments today that they are coming in under on everything and actually now posting a surplus, and after two years of a majority government, there is little to brag about and even less to show for it, which makes sense given the goalposts are consistently changing. Two Throne Speeches ago the government spoke about keeping ERs open and now they're instead talking about something different. They're changing the name. They're calling them collaborative care centres. I look forward to the announcement on Wednesday. The Premier says he will be going to Parrsboro to make the announcement with his Minister of Health and Wellness and I look forward to seeing the full details of how you change from saying we're going to keep all ERs open to we're going to now call them collaborative care centres and how those are going to work, how they're going to stay open, and how they're not going to stay open. So I know there's more detail for us to see about that.

Mr. Speaker, if this third Throne Speech was the right plan for the future, I'm sure we can expect more name changes. We've already seen the Minister of Finance change the name of taxes. He has now labelled them user fees. I can remember the Minister of Finance

standing and talking ad nauseum about user fees in this House and yet today, and I'm sure tomorrow - the 1st of April he talked about how, you know, it's just happening, the cost of living, we need to increase these things, but was that actually needed because actually we just posted a \$442 million or \$446 million surplus. Do we have to actually do these things? That's what people are going to be questioning. Strategies and plans alone won't create a single job. They won't keep an ER open nor will they lower people's taxes.

Mr. Speaker, you know, we've said this many times. We have a per capita debt that is the second highest in Canada. It's closing in on almost \$14,000 per man, woman and child in this province. It's growing and it will continue to grow, even though the Premier was talking about that one tonight, as long as this government sticks to their four-year plan to eliminate a deficit that they should have eliminated in two. In 2009 the deficit was \$329 million. Next year's projected deficit is \$370 million. Government spending has continued to go up and it's clear to me that we are headed in the wrong direction.

So what's the right direction, we have to ask. We believe it is the key responsibility of government to present a balanced budget. It's through balanced budgets that we can make progress on reducing our province's \$13 billion debt. I mentioned earlier that the per capita debt is almost \$14,000 for every man, woman and child and I think it's important to note that it is our children and our grandchildren who will inherit this debt. They'll be the ones who shoulder this burden even though there will be fewer and fewer young people in this province.

It is expensive to have that much debt and we are spending 10 per cent of revenues just in trying to meet those debt payments. New graduates, I am sure, are becoming increasingly aware that these burdens lead to higher taxes and fewer services and they will. Some have already factored this into their decision about where to build a future. That's why when a government chooses to present a deficit budget rather than make some real tough choices, it takes the balance of that budget every year, they're hurting us all in the long run. This government is avoiding the short-term pain of required cuts because it believes it will make them unpopular. That's their choice but the members of our caucus disagree.

The Throne Speech with all its plans, strategies, committees and studies, shows the government is putting off until tomorrow what they should be doing today. The result of these delays and referrals is that some day someone will have to pay. A cut that should be made now is far easier than a cut that must be made later. The current government came to power at a time of global recession and declining offshore revenues, and I'll give them that, it makes it that much harder. However, their assertion that they inherited a financial mess doesn't hold up. The NDP inherited books that had been balanced eight consecutive times. That's confirmed by the Auditor General and their projection of a deficit of \$1.4 billion was just conjecture, hyperbole, based on some unfavourable assumptions. Unfortunately for Nova Scotians, this frightening number was used to higher taxes and user fees. I've

heard that hyperbole and I've heard that conjecture and I've heard that made-up story in this Throne Speech once again.

I would like to point out some differences between our current government's approach to our fiscal problems today and 10 years ago when we last faced a deficit. Premier John Hamm inherited a government in 1999 that was spending just over \$5 billion a year. There was pressure to increase spendings. There is always increased pressure to increase spending but he inherited a Liberal deficit of \$497 million. It was almost 10 per cent of the total budget and he knew something had to change. Premier Hamm's first action was to constrain government spending. It was a steady process that was in line with ordinary inflation and population rates. By the end of the third year, that budget was balanced and now almost two years into this government's mandate - I hear my Liberal friends have woken up, when I talked about their \$497 million deficit that they left the previous PC Government. By the end of the third year, that budget was balanced and we're almost two years into this government's mandate and two budgets later but the government is spending 9 per cent more than it was two years ago. There was no inflation or no population growth to drive costs higher. Not surprisingly, we're still in deficit but we're still paying 2 per cent higher in HST for that honour.

On top of that, \$50 million in spending was downloaded to the municipalities, which will likely mean more taxes. I know the minister has shaken his head and is saying, no, it's not happening. The Minister of Finance is doing the same thing, but when we talked to the UNSM, we talked to our municipalities, we talked to our mayors and wardens, they're telling us that they are going to have to make some very stark decisions when it comes to their tax base and how they're going to be able to offer the services that they're supposed to do in their municipalities.

The government didn't have to do this. The government could have balanced the budget this year. A \$200 million economic strategy, a \$500 million bail-out of government pensions, these expenditures will not make tomorrow's Nova Scotia better than it is today. Next door in New Brunswick they have a deficit of almost three times as large as ours. Minister of Finance, quite honestly they had one three times the size of ours, mostly contributed by the previous Liberal Government. The Progressive Conservative Premier, David Alward, was on the job for two weeks and he directed civil servants to find 2 per cent cost savings in their departments and he gave them two weeks to get back to him on it. This government didn't start this exercise until a year and a half into their mandate.

Nova Scotia needs a competitive tax structure with all the plans and strategies and committees talked about in the Speech from the Throne. None of them will work to reduce or set targets to lower our taxes. We pay the highest sales tax in Canada. We have the highest business tax in Canada. This is the wrong direction and high taxes are stalling our economy. This government recently announced a \$200 million economic development strategy, roughly the same amount that they're taking in HST revenue. In other words, they

raise the HST by 2 per cent and are now spending your money in an attempt to put back in what they just took out. This is pointless, it was absurd, it's bad economics and it's hurting Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia needs a good business climate that attracts investment but we've seen this government pursue agendas that undermine business. The government's entering into the paving industry, for example. Their plan will make government the third largest paving operation in the province. This was done without consultation; they had no warning that their taxes and the taxes of their employees were going to be used to take business from them.

We can talk about other investments in the areas. I could go at length about the ferry in southwest Nova Scotia. It becomes even more frustrating today to try to explain this to the constituents of the County of Yarmouth so whether it's in the constituency of Yarmouth, the constituency of Argyle, the constituency of Shelburne - because I know I get a lot of calls from there - from Digby-Annapolis, how can you now equate cutting a service or at least not giving an exit plan for a service, when you've now posted a \$446 million surplus? Nothing washes. You save money for what? You shut down a full tourist area. Even in the Premier's speech, he admits that Nova Scotia ends at Digby. He said from Digby to Glace Bay and I have to agree with the member for Dartmouth East that there seems to be a line there and it seems to be that line continues to be completely shut out by any decision-making by this government.

But - let me say a but - in the Speech from the Throne, Page 2, Her Honour read, "My government is also pleased to take part in Yarmouth's 250th Anniversary this year. And government will support efforts to aggressively market southwestern Nova Scotia as a premium tourist destination."

How can you be a tourist destination when you can't get there? The majority of the people who came to visit southwestern Nova Scotia came across the ferry. They didn't come down the highway; they didn't take the airplane because we don't have one; they didn't take the train because we don't have one. They came by boat. What we really need to do is to concentrate and help that community get themselves out of this hole.

It's not just the lack of the service; it's also the fact that people have lost hope. I've been watching the announcements really closely, the chatter on Facebook to see what happens when people don't necessarily have that hope in their government to help them along the way. Recently there was an individual who came to Yarmouth saying, I've got a boat, look at the boat that I have. If you just provide me with \$500 a piece to make me \$15 million, I'll give you a boat.

That's the kind of stuff that's happening everyday in Yarmouth; you get somebody that's trying to sell snake oil to this area because they're grasping at anything that they

possibly can grasp at to get their service back. That's what the shame is of what happened in this instance. There was no parachute to transfer them into another paradigm, to move them into another way of doing things.

I think if ever it's not the ongoing system. We believe today - our caucus believes - there can be a ferry service in Yarmouth, there can be a sustainable service in Yarmouth and it can be supported by all levels of government. Sustainable, we could have got there with less pain and that was by providing some kind of parachute or some kind of transition, which most compassionate governments would have been able to do but this government decided to just completely cut it off. (Interruption)

I know the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is yapping his gums there, but what he can say is that we understood the impact of a ferry service in Yarmouth and from the investment of \$6 million - I know the Premier tried to spin it to be \$9 million - but for \$6 million it's creating \$23 million in economic activity in Southwest Nova Scotia, so shame on them.

What does today's announcement say? What did they say today? They said that they could have balanced the budget. They could have balanced the budget with a \$446 million surplus this year, they could have said we're going to balance it and then there wouldn't be this \$700 million gap. They could have ensured Nova Scotia has a competitive tax structure. They could have made sure Nova Scotia had a positive investment climate. Every service we count on - hospitals, senior care, education and social services - depends on the success of our economy so we can't afford to ignore the problem any longer.

I believe, and our Party believes, a different approach is in order, that government should be efficient and should be responsible and the NDP say their plan is working and they say their plan is on track and we believe it has already failed. Tomorrow is budget day; we look forward to seeing the comments of the Minister of Finance to see exactly what they have in store for Nova Scotians going into next year.

I hope that he's sharpened his pencil a little better than he did last time. I'm sure he's not the kind of guy who really wants to show a \$700 million gap in what he projected and what actually came out. I know he's an honourable person. He didn't want to see that but yet his Premier was here trying to boast it. Tomorrow we'll find out maybe more details around Reading Recovery and I look forward to those comments.

Just to quickly talk about Reading Recovery for a moment, Reading Recovery has done really good things for lots of children in this province, including my own. Alec went through that program and is a better reader today for it. But, if there's another program that can do as good a job and can see more children, then I would support that. But, it'd be nice to see the plan for that before you say you're cutting something, you need to see the plan of

what the program actually is so that educators have an idea of what is actually going to be happening.

I thank the Minister of Education for her work that she did in bringing out this crisis of 23 per cent talk and finding a reasonable solution for the school boards. Of course there will be more details on that in the budget, to see exactly what some of those projections will really mean.

We look forward to things in health care and we look forward to see what the future investments in long-term care are going to be, what the future investments around the province, not just at the Capital District when it comes to rapid assessments, what about rapid assessments for other emergency rooms across this province?

Mr. Speaker, to look at what possibly we can do to expand work in our communities for wellness programs, it would be lovely to see a better concentration on keeping us all healthy, keeping us all fit. We'd like to see some of those investments happening because I've always said, and even in my time as minister, that this change in our society is going to be very important, which is why I look forward to sharing the road with the Minister of Justice during the Heartland Tour that is going to be coming up this summer, to try to demonstrate that folks like us can get out there and try to be healthy. I know it is very difficult to do and I know that you'll be joining us, Mr. Speaker, when we do come through Sydney and I invite every one of you MLAs to participate in the Heartland Tour as we go through your communities.

I have a lot more to talk about and I look forward to many more comments from different MLAs in this House of Assembly, whether it be on the government benches to talk about their constituents and their issues. I do want to thank the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, I spoke to him quickly about an issue that is brewing in my constituency, which is the issue of the water system in East Pubnico. I know the Minister of Environment has been up to speed on that one, I look forward to discussions on that. There are a number of businesses in the East Pubnico area that require fresh water that has been supplied by the province for somewhere close to 40 years, if not longer, that the department is looking at maybe closing. This creates a bit of uncertainty for the jobs that are in southwestern Nova Scotia once again. So I thank them for their input on this and their help on this.

Mr. Speaker, I'll take my seat in a couple of moments and look forward to what happens tomorrow and I'm sure we'll see some good in there but I'm going to bet we are going to see maybe a lot that we don't like. We'll be commenting on that as time comes.

I don't know if we want to bring up another speaker there, I'm just looking over at the government. I could stretch it but you'd just be bored out of your skulls. I could say -

I'm not going to do that, so for now I can adjourn debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for adjournment of the debate. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. The hours tomorrow will be from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tomorrow we will be presenting the government's budget and then we will be doing the daily routine. After daily routine, we will do question period and following question period, if time permits, we will debate Bill No. 1.

That's it, Mr. Speaker. I move that we do now rise, to meet tomorrow from the hours of 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn debate. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

We will now rise, to sit between the hours of 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. tomorrow. Thank you.

[The House rose at 9:19 p.m.]

**NOTICE OF QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS
(RESPONSES)**

PURSUANT TO RULE 30

QUESTION NO. 1

TO: HON. M. MORE (Minister of Labour and Advanced Education)

BY: HON. C. d'ENTREMONT (Argyle)

- (1) Why has ENS not advised universal employment service providers to refer individuals with disabilities to the ENS funded specialized agencies and further to be accountable when they do not refer?

RESPONSE:

Persons with disabilities can select the employment service provider of their choosing. Employment Nova Scotia requests that universal service providers advise individuals with a list of employment service providers that offer specialized services in Nova Scotia.

QUESTION NO. 2

TO: HON. M. MORE (Minister of Labour and Advanced Education)

BY: HON. C. d'ENTREMONT (Argyle)

- (2) Will the government grant an exemption to individuals with disabilities to the three-month intensive job search requirements with ENS?

RESPONSE:

The Skills Development program requires that all applicants engage in a three-month job search to demonstrate that they lack the marketable skills needed to re-enter the labour market. Employment Nova Scotia remains open to considering a number of ways that an individual can be accommodated in satisfying this program requirement (e.g., telephone employer contacts, on-line applications). In exceptional cases where it is very evident that an individual lacks marketable skills, Employment Nova Scotia will consider an exemption to this requirement providing a strong rationale is provided by the individual's case manager. Exemptions are considered on a case-by-case basis.

QUESTION NO. 3

TO: HON. M. MORE (Minister of Labour and Advanced Education)

BY: HON. C. d'ENTREMONT (Argyle)

- (3) Can there be an exemption to the three-year rule or flexibility within the three-year rule for persons with disabilities who can prove that due to the nature of their disability, they will not be able to successfully attach themselves to the labour force without a skill development intervention?

RESPONSE:

All Skill Development applicants must satisfy the three-year rule requirement in order to be approved for Skill Development funding. This program is meant to support individuals who need assistance regarding attaching to the labour market. Individuals who do not satisfy the three-year requirement can explore other educational supports such as student loan.

QUESTION NO. 4

TO: HON. M. MORE (Minister of Labour and Advanced Education)

BY: HON. C. d'ENTREMONT (Argyle)

- (4) Would ENS provide and train one assessment officer per region who would assess all applications for persons with disabilities?

RESPONSE:

All Employment Nova Scotia assessment officers work with specialized employment service provider case managers and persons with disabilities to fully understand and consider their support requirements. A team of assessment officers able to respond to a broad range of client needs is essential to provide quality client supports, particularly during times of the year when there are high application volumes.

QUESTION NO. 5

TO: HON. M. MORE (Minister of Labour and Advanced Education)

BY: HON. C. d'ENTREMONT (Argyle)

- (5) How can the government support a budget freeze for ENS when the economic spinoffs of having more people in the workforce provide additional benefit to the economy, beyond what is spent by the department?

RESPONSE:

Employment Nova Scotia is losing \$16M of Federal Economic Stimulus funds in its 2011/2012 LMDA budget. We are working with federal government to maximize flexibility and innovation to maintain high-quality employment

programs with strong outcomes. In addition, as you know, the Province's new jobsHere strategy will strengthen labour market programming by investing in provincial programs that align with ENS programs, such as apprenticeship, workplace education and adult education.

QUESTION NO. 6

TO: HON. M. MORE (Minister of Labour and Advanced Education)

BY: HON. C. d'ENTREMONT (Argyle)

- (6) Will the government create an ongoing avenue to consult with the disabled community on relevant program issues, in an effort to avoid the creation of unequal program access?

RESPONSE:

Employment Nova Scotia enjoys an ongoing partnership with the Persons with Disabilities community through the Collaborative Partnership Network (CPN) and organizations that represent the employment needs of individual groups within the disabled community. Employment Nova Scotia consults regularly with a Persons with Disabilities Employability table to discuss matters that are related to employment and labour market programs.

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 150**

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 Jessica Parsons is a Grade 9 student at Eric Graves Memorial Junior High School in Dartmouth and is a volunteer at the Stevens Road United Baptist Church; and

Whereas the 37th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony will take place today, April 4, 2011, in Halifax; and

Whereas Jessica is one of five metro youth nominated for the 2011 Provincial Youth Volunteer Award for her volunteer work with her school and church;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Jessica Parsons on her nomination, and thank her for her outstanding volunteerism and selfless service to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 151

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 Tony Mancini of Dartmouth has been a long-serving volunteer within the Halifax Regional Municipality, serving with various community committees and groups, including the Port Wallace Scout Troop; and

Whereas the 37th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony will take place today, April 4, 2011, in Halifax; and

Whereas Tony will be honoured today for his dedication to community service and will receive a 2011 Provincial Volunteer Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Tony Mancini on this achievement, and thank him for his outstanding volunteerism and selfless service to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 152

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Alan Locke is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Alan Locke who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 153

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Chris Buchanan is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Chris Buchanan who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova

Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 154

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Darren Deinstadt is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Darren Deinstadt who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 155

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Doug Hartley coached the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Shelburne Rebels coach Doug Hartley for capturing the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 156

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Doug Poole is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Doug Poole who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 157

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Forest Underwood is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Forest Underwood who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 158

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Garret Williams coached the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Coach Garret Williams for capturing the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 159

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Matt Blinkhorn is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Matt Blinkhorn who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 160

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Matt Jacklyn is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Matt Jacklyn who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 161

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Nick Williams is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Nick Williams who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 162

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Quinn Butler is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Quinn Butler who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 163

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Steven Davis is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Steven Davis who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 164

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Steven Greig is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels, who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Steven Greig who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 165

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Steven Pippy coached the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Shelburne Rebels Coach Steven Pippy for capturing the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 166

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture, Environment)

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

Whereas Ryan Balcolm is a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels who captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011; and

Whereas the provincial basketball championship was the crowning glory for the Shelburne Rebels who posted a 30-8 record for the 2010-11 season in which they also captured the district and regional senior boys' basketball banners; and

Whereas the 2010-11 championship banner is the fourth senior boys provincial basketball title won by Shelburne Regional High School teams in the past 14 years

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulates Ryan Balcolm who, as a member of the Shelburne Regional High School Rebels, captured the Nova Scotia Schools Athletic Federation Division III Senior Boys Basketball Championship on March 5, 2011.