



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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Third Session

FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2011

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2011

Sixty-first General Assembly

Third Session

9:00 A.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Gordon Gosse

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I have a Speaker's Ruling this morning that I'd like to read before we go into the daily routine.

SPEAKER'S RULING: Photograph taken from Gallery (Pt. of order by Hon. M. Samson [Hansard p. 567, 04/12/11])

On Tuesday, April 12th, the member for Richmond rose on what he described as a point of order, or possibly, he said, a point of privilege, as it went to the Rules of this House. It is a point of order as it deals with the rules and usages of the House, but it does approach the area of privilege known as contempt.

The member's complaint was that a person whom he understood to be a political staff person for the governing Party had posted a comment on the Web site known as Twitter regarding activities here in the Legislature, and had included a photo of the floor of this Chamber taken from the gallery.

The House passed a resolution in 1991 respecting the use of television or camera equipment in this House. That resolution set out a number of rules that have remained in effect to this day.

As the member for Richmond pointed out, Item No. 6 in those rules states: **“Only media personnel accredited by the Speaker in consultation with the Press Gallery are permitted to shoot still or TV film from the galleries.”**

The seating chart available at the entrance to the gallery area sets out several rules, in bold print, in a highlighted box on the front of the brochure, and one of those rules states: **“Photographs or recordings are not permitted.”**

The member delivered a printout of the Twitter posting to me and it contains a photo taken from the galleries, in direct contravention of the rule passed by the House and set out on the seating brochure. For a person to flout the rule and deliberately take a photo, knowing it is against the rules, could be considered contempt of Parliament, so it is a grave matter. Further, the posting on Twitter and the comment used could be considered embarrassing.

I am not satisfied that the person in question set about with intent to flout our rules, but I am very disappointed at what has taken place, largely because it involves a staff person for one of our political Parties whom I would have expected to be aware of the rules in place here. I am very disappointed that the person involved did this.

I've asked all members, ministers, and caucus chairs to make any staff who come to this place on their behalf clearly aware of the decorum and rules expected in this place. And, further, I do not want this type of occurrence to happen again, and I take anything like this very seriously.

I thank you for your attention in this matter. (Applause)

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. GRAHAM STEELE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a certified copy of an Order in Council dated March 31, 2011, pursuant to Section 27 of the Finance Act, respecting additional appropriations for the fiscal year 2010-11.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the 2010 Annual Report of the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 27 - Entitled an Act Respecting Certain Financial Measures. (Hon. Graham Steele)

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be read a second time on a future day.

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

RESOLUTION NO. 516

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

Whereas during the 2009 election campaign, the then NDP Leader and now Premier indicated he would honour all previous commitments made by the former government; and

Whereas on March 22, 2011, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations informed municipalities that he is tearing up the agreement on mandatory payments on province-wide services; and

Whereas yesterday the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, during Question Period, admitted that despite the NDP Government not honouring their side of the agreement, they expect municipalities to foot the bill for the municipal Auditor General and the Property Valuation Services Corporation;

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Justice admit that his government's actions will lead to increased property taxes, and apologize to municipalities and the people of Nova Scotia for yet another broken NDP promise.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

Before we continue with Notices of Motion, I wonder if I can have the permission of the House to revert back to Introduction of Bills.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 28 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 371 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Highways Act. (Ms. Kelly Regan)

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be read a second time on a future day.

[NOTICES OF MOTION]

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

RESOLUTION NO. 517

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

Whereas this government's decision to break the memorandum of understanding with Nova Scotia's municipalities is just another example of the NDP digging deeper into the pockets of Nova Scotians; and

Whereas the NDP refuses to do the hard work to balance their own provincial budget but then forces municipalities to do it for them; and

Whereas the Minister of Finance recently said, "If there's any increase in municipal taxes it is 100 percent due to the decisions that will be made by municipalities. It will not be due to anything that this government has done.";

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature urge the government to stop blaming municipalities for the NDP's financial mismanagement and admit that shifting the tax burden from one level of government to another will accomplish nothing.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 518

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

Whereas today marks the 99th Anniversary of the tragic sinking of the Titanic; and

Whereas Halifax was not only the closest landfall to the sinking, but also served as a home port for rescue operations as well as a media centre; and

Whereas today our strong legacy with the Titanic can be found in historic gravesites throughout Halifax where victims of the sinking of the Titanic were laid to rest;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House remember this tragic event and acknowledge the individuals, past and present, who continue to commemorate this historical anniversary.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

RESOLUTION NO. 519

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

Whereas during the 2009 election campaign, the then NDP Leader and now Premier indicated he would honour all previous commitments made by the former government; and

Whereas on March 22, 2011, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations informed municipalities that he is tearing up the agreement on mandatory payments on province-wide services; and

Whereas yesterday the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, during Question Period, admitted that despite the NDP Government not honouring their side of the agreement, they expect municipalities to foot the bill for the municipal Auditor General and the Property Valuation Services Corporation;

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations admit that his actions will lead to increased property taxes, and apologize to municipalities and the people of Nova Scotia for yet another broken NDP promise.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

RESOLUTION NO. 520

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

Whereas the Titanic struck an iceberg in the North Atlantic and sunk 99 years ago today; and

Whereas the loss of life was considerable - more than 1,500 perished - and many of the victims are buried here in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas beginning at midnight last night on Twitter, the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic recreated the wireless traffic connected with that tragedy, creating a fascinating educational opportunity;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic for its creative commemoration of this event.

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. 521

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 2009 election campaign, the then NDP Leader and now Premier indicated he would honour all previous commitments made by the former government; and

Whereas on March 22, 2011, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations informed municipalities that he is tearing up the agreement on mandatory payments on province-wide services; and

Whereas yesterday the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, during Question Period, admitted that despite the NDP Government not honouring their side of the agreement, they expect municipalities to foot the bill for the municipal Auditor General and the Property Valuation Services Corporation;

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism admit that his actions will lead to increased property taxes, and apologize to municipalities and the people of Nova Scotia for yet another broken NDP promise.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Kings West.

RESOLUTION NO. 522

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

Whereas the NDP Government is withholding and hiding a study on the socio-economic impacts of gambling, even though the freedom of information review officer said the government needs to release the document; and

Whereas while in Opposition, the member for Halifax Fairview served as counsel in *O'Connor v. Nova Scotia*, and after the court ruled in their favour, the member said, "It establishes a precedent, really forever. When a government has made a decision, it must release the information that led to that decision . . . so Nova Scotians can judge for themselves whether it was a good decision."; and

Whereas in 2001 the member for Halifax Fairview said, "Secrecy is a habit that if left unchallenged becomes a permanent feature of government.";

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly call on the Minister of Finance to offer pro bono services to the Canadian Press to ensure that secrecy does not become a permanent feature of his government.

Mr. Speaker, I will table the notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 523

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

Whereas during the 2009 election campaign, the then NDP Leader and now Premier indicated he would honour all previous commitments made by the former government; and

Whereas on March 22, 2011, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations informed municipalities that he is tearing up the agreement on mandatory payments on province-wide services; and

Whereas yesterday the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, during Question Period, admitted that despite the NDP Government not honouring their side of the agreement, they expect municipalities to foot the bill for the municipal Auditor General and the Property Valuation Services Corporation;

Therefore be it resolved that the Premier admit that his actions will lead to increased property taxes, and apologize to municipalities and the people of Nova Scotia for yet another broken NDP promise.

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

RESOLUTION NO. 524

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

Whereas during the 2009 election campaign, the then NDP Leader and now Premier indicated he would honour all previous commitments made by the former government; and

Whereas on March 22, 2011, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations informed municipalities that he is tearing up - tearing up - the agreement on mandatory payments on province-wide services; and

Whereas yesterday the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, during Question Period, admitted that despite the NDP Government not honouring their side of the agreement, they expect municipalities to foot the bill for the municipal Auditor General and the Property Valuation Services Corporation;

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Community Services admit that the government's actions will lead to increased property taxes and will have a deep and negative impact on the CBRM and all municipalities 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?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

RESOLUTION NO. 525

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

Whereas during the 2009 election campaign, the then NDP Leader and now Premier indicated he would honour all previous commitments made by the former government; and

Whereas on March 22, 2011, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations informed municipalities that he is tearing up the agreement that reduced the amount property taxpayers are forced to pay for provincial services; and

Whereas yesterday the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, during Question Period, admitted that despite the NDP Government not honouring their side of the agreement, they expect municipalities to foot the bill for the municipal Auditor General and the Property Valuation Services Corporation and continue to pay for provincial responsibilities;

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Energy admit that his actions will lead to increased property taxes, and apologize to municipalities and the people of Nova Scotia for yet another broken NDP promise.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

RESOLUTION NO. 526

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

Whereas during the 2009 election campaign, the then NDP Leader and now Premier indicated he would honour all previous commitments made by the former government; and

Whereas on March 22, 2011, the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations informed municipalities that he is tearing up the agreement on mandatory payments on province-wide services: and

Whereas yesterday the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, during Question Period, admitted that despite the NDP Government not honouring their side of the agreement, they expect municipalities to foot the bill for the municipal Auditor General and the Property Valuation Services Corporation;

Therefore be it resolved that the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture admit that his actions will lead to increased property taxes, and apologize to municipalities and the people of Nova Scotia for yet another broken NDP promise.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

RESOLUTION NO. 527

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

Whereas communities, organizations and municipalities across Nova Scotia have used the week of April 11th to April 16th to honour the dedication of volunteers; and

Whereas volunteers throughout Nova Scotia contribute their time, talents, professionalism and community spirit to make our province the great place that it is; and

Whereas volunteers in Nova Scotia are leading to positive change on all fronts, from community health care, sports and recreation, heritage and the arts, environmental protection and advocacy, disaster relief, international development, and volunteer firefighting and search and rescue;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House extend their deepest appreciation to Nova Scotia's greatest asset, our volunteers, and salute their efforts in making Nova Scotia and the world a much better place to live.

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 on an introduction.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to draw the members' attention to some folks who are in the west gallery. I'd like to welcome from the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority, NSGEU Local 47, who are here to take in some of the proceedings and are hoping to speak to a few ministers, I believe. As well, there are a numbers of members from my own constituency there, so perhaps we can welcome them. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all visitors to our gallery and hope you enjoy today's proceedings.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Government Motions.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

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

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a motion.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We will now take a short recess so I can let the minister set up with her staff. We will now be going into the Committee of the Whole House on Supply. (Interruptions) Oh, okay.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it's my pleasure to speak today, going into Committee of the Whole House on Supply. I think it's timely that I will speak about the members from the various municipalities who are coming and joining us today, outside protesting on the streets because the government has torn up an agreement on a memorandum of understanding on the issue of municipal taxes.

A number of years ago, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities had an agreement done called Fair and Equitable Funding. That study was done by a number of university professors who looked at the issue of how municipalities - what they paid for in terms of provincial services. We all understand that going back to 1996 there was service exchange and the province took on certain responsibilities and the municipalities took on certain other responsibilities.

We now learn, and in 2007 the previous government, to their credit, did actually begin that process (Interruptions) I know that but credit where credit is due. They did sign that agreement and it was supported by all Parties at the time, in my understanding. What would happen is there would be a phase-out of responsibilities for things like education, corrections and social housing, which the municipalities had no control over.

Mr. Speaker, of course we understand that taxation without representation is a significant issue and that was the fundamental premise of this issue. What has happened in that time is we have reduced the amount, or the province has reduced the amount that municipalities could expect to pay for that and that was expected to continue for a number of years. In return, the municipalities took over control of the Property Services Valuation Corporation, or assessments, from the province and, as well, took on the responsibility of creating the position of an auditor general, both provincially and also there was a separate one for the Halifax Regional Municipality, due to its size. We already know that that person is already underway.

Mr. Speaker, we are obviously deeply concerned about this change by the government because we know, as the minister himself has said, there is only one taxpayer and that taxpayer is now going to be hit with higher property taxes. As the member for Preston quite rightly pointed out the other day, the fact is that you are going to hit a certain group of taxpayers for services that are delivered by people, including those who don't pay property taxes directly.

Mr. Speaker, the minister and the Premier have tried to say that is a prevention of uploading; of course that is not remotely the case. We know that the truth of the matter, or the facts of the matter are that these were provincial services that the municipalities were being asked to help fund and then that was being gradually phased out and municipalities, in return, picked up services. The work on this was done independently by a number of respected university researchers and professors around the province who looked at this issue and said it was simply not right that municipalities should have to pick up these services.

There has been an argument by the minister and by the Premier that the municipalities will not be paying any more than they are now going into the future and that it shouldn't impact them. Of course, we know that's not the case because the minister in the press briefing has indicated that there are certain costs that will increase along with assessments, which means individuals will pay more. We also know that municipalities were asked a number of years ago by the department and by others to budget on a five year basis and they entered into collective agreements, they entered into long-term contracts such as for landfills and garbage collection and recycling and many other services that they entered into long-term agreements for.

Because they entered into those long-term agreements, they have those costs fixed for a number of years and they fixed those costs based on the room they felt they would have on tax bills without actually being forced to raise taxes. We know that a lot of municipalities are having difficulty. We know that CBRM, for example, is facing serious financial challenges, they perhaps are facing the most significant, but we also know there are other many smaller municipalities facing challenges.

We have been given information by the municipalities. HRM, I think, is \$46 million over four years that they will be impacted and CBRM is \$3.2 million - I think \$3.2 million is probably annually over the four years. That's a significant hit.

I'd like to talk about the CBRM situation for a second. We know they have significant debt challenges and if they're forced to move this funding towards the debt or towards other costs, that will reduce their capacity to deal with real and pressing needs. We also know that municipalities across the province are going to be dealing with the challenges of waste water increases and water quality increases, which are important, those are important things to have addressed. We want the water quality issues addressed, drinking water. We want the sanitary issues addressed - absolutely.

But the municipalities can't then be beat over the head like a Whac-A-Mole program when the province finds its having financial troubles. That's what this is all about. We know from the study that was done prior to 2007, we know that property tax is the wrong way to be charging for things like education, social services and corrections. Issues which the municipalities have no say in and no representation over. I know there are members on all sides who have sat on municipal councils and know they get the call to answer for those charges despite the fact they have no say in them and no control over them. That's significant. What this government has done is unfair.

For a number of weeks the minister used the example of the Memorandum of Understanding and said there's a clause in the Memorandum of Understanding that if the financial situation of the province changes, we can back out. That's in a lot of Memorandums of Understanding and frankly, if I was holding a Memorandum of Understanding with the government that had any kind of out clause, I would be extremely concerned at this point because that means that any one of those agreements is up for change.

This went further than just a Memorandum of Understanding. This was entrenched in legislation in the Financial Measures (2008) Act and this morning the Minister of Finance introduced legislation to repeal that provision of the Financial Measures (2008) Act. That should be of concern to everybody. It was more than just a Memorandum of Understanding, it was the law of the land. It was passed by this Legislature, it was the law of the land. Nova Scotians have the right and the expectation to believe that the law of the land will be upheld by their governments and won't be arbitrarily changed. That's exactly what's happened and it's happened because the province wants to balance the books on the back of property taxpayers in this province and on the backs of the municipalities - the municipalities that they already know are having financial challenges.

Because this isn't saying to the municipalities, well we think that you should pick up the cost for garbage collection, which of course is a municipal service. This is, we think you should pick it up for social housing which is a provincial responsibility; this is, we think you should pick it up for education which is a provincial responsibility. And this is

why those university researchers and professors found when they did their research that it was fundamentally unfair for the province to charge those fees, and at the time, obviously, UNSM and the other municipalities would have preferred for those charges to disappear overnight. That was obviously impractical at the time and the agreement was reached to phase out the majority of these charges.

In return - and let's not forget that the municipalities gave up things in return - they took on the responsibility for what was Assessment Services at the time under Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and what has changed now to become the Property Services Evaluation Corporation, and the municipalities have taken responsibility for that. They've taken not only the financial responsibility, but the governance responsibility - and they have also taken the responsibility for the costs and the calls from residents because they are directly accountable for the operation of that organization.

They've also, as I indicated, taken the cost of the Auditor General and, if I'm not mistaken, in HRM alone, picking up that responsibility is roughly a \$400,000 annual cost. I don't know what the cost will be for the provincial Auditor General for the other municipalities, but one has to assume that if it's not that much it would be in that ballpark - maybe a little bit more, maybe a little bit less - and that is significant.

Mr. Speaker, that's why you're going to see - in, let's see, twenty-three minutes - wardens, councillors and mayors from various parts of Nova Scotia here at the Legislature. At ten o'clock they will be here because they believe that this is an important issue, an important issue for the taxpayers in their respective municipalities. I don't disagree that the province has some challenging financial situations, I don't dispute that for a second; however it is not right to download those costs, and to suggest that it's the prevention of an upload is disingenuous, because they are provincial services - they are very clearly provincial services.

All the research at the time, all the background on it, showed that they are provincial services, and, you know, the minister is absolutely right, there's a clause in that MOU that allows him to tear it up - it doesn't mean he should. And I remember, to use the Finance Minister's line, this crowd over here jumping up and down - and quite rightly jumping up and down - when the Atlantic Accord was torn up, which also had a similar clause in it. So what's going to happen on the next one? Maybe we should be - and they were right to jump up and down about that, just as we jumped up and down about that, but the fact is that this went further than an MOU and was entrenched in legislation, which the Minister of Finance introduced a bill today to repeal.

That's troubling, Mr. Speaker, and that's why these representatives of various municipalities are here today - or will be here today - because they are concerned about this. They shouldn't be expected to answer to property taxpayers for increased property tax costs as a result of the province giving up on its responsibility to pay for services that it has

control and jurisdiction over. There was a reason in 1996 that the province took over social services and social housing and there was a reason why . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Which government did that?

MR. YOUNGER: Well, it was a Liberal Government, and they did that for very good reasons because they knew municipalities couldn't bear those costs - I'm glad you brought that up - and now the NDP and this minister are trying to download those costs back to them. (Interruption)

Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that the minister - I don't know if he's suggesting that it's a bad thing that they just saved them from debt, because all you do is you've got to look at Ottawa or Toronto at the moment who still have a responsibility for the delivery and funding of social services, and if you talk to either one of their mayors they'll tell you that's the biggest challenge because it's a very difficult thing to charge against property tax.

So those services were taken on by the province, and municipalities in 1996 took over other services in return - it was a service exchange. It was an agreement that was reached, and it made sense, so that services that were local and properties, and so from 1996 until - the study was commissioned shortly after 2000, the fact is that study looked at it and said okay, we have to now move to a point where the municipalities pay for and have governance over the services they deliver and provinces pay for and deliver the services that they have responsibility for. That just makes sense because the Minister of Community Services answers for community services issues, as the minister should. The municipalities now answer for assessment services because they are responsible for the Property Services Valuation Corporation.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why does HRM have supplementary funding?

MR. YOUNGER: The minister has asked about supplementary funding - this is great, he's helping me fill the 15 minutes, I'll answer that. The fact is that residents voted in a plebiscite, Mr. Speaker, the residents voted by choice to add supplementary funding. That's taxation with representation because the municipality sets that tax rate. In fact they just set it last week or two weeks ago, on supplementary funding, and they reached an agreement with the school board on what services will be provided for that. That is a choice by the municipality to do it; they have governance over that. They do not have governance over how social services are delivered, how corrections services are delivered, or how social housing is delivered. (Interruption) Thank you, so supplementary funding actually proves my point, that it's taxation with representation only.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time of the House today, thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to have an opportunity this morning to speak going into Supply on what is, indeed, a very important issue when it comes to things like agreements, things like credibility, responsibility. We don't hear it very often but there is only one taxpayer here in this province. No matter how many ways you look at it and you try to do it, it doesn't matter, there's still only one taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, I spent a couple of years on the municipal council, Town of Windsor, prior to being elected here to this House, a number of years ago. I know the importance that municipal council has, the responsibility they have, the grassroots level that they have and the expectation from the local people they represent; it is very important. The responsibility they have, of course, is trying to manage, as best they can with the dollars they have. Fortunately, unlike federal and provincial governments, they're not allowed to go into a deficit position and they try to do their very best, although they are struggling financially and I think that's very well-known across the board, hence the reason that this agreement has, and is going to have, some long-term effects. I think it's fair to say that municipal units have budgeted, in this current year and in previous years, based on that agreement and where it is going to take them and projects they can do, infrastructure projects, whether it be roads or whatever the projects might be, their water, their sewer, all of the things that towns and municipal units are responsible to maintain.

They also have to have some future idea of where they are going. They have to be able to think well into the future. I know their mandate is only four years but they are certainly planning well beyond that when it comes to projects and it is fair for them to do that, they have to do that, that's responsible government. They are, as I said, really at the grassroots level where people are going and talking and trying to get their things done, like the assessments and taxes. Where do they go when they have that argument? They make it there? Who sets it? They do. All of it is based on the dollars and cents.

Now this agreement being torn up, yes, there's a clause in it that says yes, the minister can tear it up when he wants - he or she. That's great, they gave them a few hours' notice and they tore it up. That's not so great. We need . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: One year.

MR. PORTER: It's in effect for a year. What consultation was done? None. I'm hopeful, I guess, in having been in the seat of a municipal councillor in the past, that the government will come to the table and put something back that is just as good, if not better. I'm not holding my breath, nor is council. They've not yet had any idea, the UNSM, where this is going, but I know that they don't like it. Oftentimes people don't like change. I'm willing to stand here and I'm going to say that people are often worried and they are scared what change will bring. Well change is not necessarily always a bad thing. There can be some positives in it so I'm going to hope that there are some positives in it.

The issue here is the credibility issue, and the minister is hollering across the floor that there is. Well that is yet to be seen because there's been no discussion. Some of the questions out there - well when are they planning to bring us to the table and have this discussion? Maybe they will and maybe they won't. There would be other agreements that have been written where people would argue that no consultation or no discussion has been had, we're going to do what we want and you are going to have to take it, you are going to have to eat it as it is.

There are some opportunities with this agreement being torn up. Some are going to have to look at the positive side and say, what might those opportunities be? Municipalities are different all across the board. Towns versus rural municipalities have different agreements; perhaps it's time to look at the road agreement, for example, in the Town of Windsor, where I come from. The municipality, transportation, the province looks after it; the Town of Windsor, town taxpayers look after it. Perhaps they should be looking after all the roads, town included. There has to be some room if we're just going to step in and tear up agreements that are already in place. They have to be able to budget; they have to be able to survive. I'm not sure that tearing up the MOU is going to help small towns like Windsor and Springhill, and other small towns across the Province of Nova Scotia that are already financially strapped, with budgeting. It's not going to help with infrastructure. It's not going to help with anything.

What about the town's task force? I had a chance to question the minister about this during estimate debate and there wasn't a whole lot answered on it other than they're hoping to get started pretty soon. But if you sit and you talk to the municipal towns - I talked to Paul Beazley in the Town of Windsor, he's the mayor there, he's anxious. He's more than anxious, he's waiting, wanting this thing to get going and he's now frustrated that nothing's happened. We need to see town task force underway. We need to see something positive coming out of that. Even a discussion, in his mind, would be positive with some direction or some negotiation and opportunity. So far there's been nothing. It's just one frustration after the other.

Then to have a few hours' notice and they'll call it a year, I guess it is a year, plus a few hours, but the few hours came and it was done. Like I said, no time to sit down, no credibility, but there is a responsibility. The government has to take on the responsibility for doing just this. The municipal units are going to say today when they arrive here, I'm sure, they're going, if they haven't already - and I'm sure most of them have - advised the minister of their concerns and their position on this. I'm sure of, very clearly, the frustration they're going through, the anxiety they're going through, wondering what they're going to do well into the future.

How long did it take to negotiate the last agreement? Well they may not have had everything, I don't think you ever get everything in any agreement that you negotiate regardless of what it is, but they had an agreement, one that all parties agreed on, one that sent some kind of direction for the municipal units going forward. Then, all of a sudden,

that's gone. How long it will take is one of the fears to negotiate another agreement. It could take a very long time but in all likelihood, let's say a year out, maybe two years out, you could almost project this as being political and it would all of a sudden arrive and be signed, just prior to the next election, as a ploy.

These aren't my words; these are the worries and concerns of municipal councillors who are out there trying to figure out where we're going. They don't know what to do even going forward now as far as budgeting goes and we've already heard, in this House, how they are strapped. We've already heard that they can't negotiate and plan for a deficit budget. They can't do it.

Towns are in a position, and a lot of municipal units, not just towns, but a lot of municipal units are in a position whereby they don't know what's going to happen next year with programs. How many people, how many organizations come to any municipal unit, a hockey club, a daycare or you name it? They're coming and asking for money with an expectation that level of government is there to assist them. They'll all claim we pay high taxes, we should get something back, and there should be grants in lieu. I would say that is all out the window right now when it comes to planning because we don't know where it's going, we don't know what agreements will be made, we don't know what transfers will be made, we don't know about roads.

There are ways, there are opportunities to always come back to the table and to always negotiate new and further agreements without tearing up what's there and just saying, we'll let you know. The importance of what this means has to be noted to the municipal units and I'm not sure the government understands clearly and if they do the appearance is that they don't care. I would really hate to think that any government doesn't care. But if you talk to the municipal councillors - and there will be an opportunity here today - you're going to hear them protesting about their disappointment as to where this has gone and their anxiety about where it's going. It's just not right.

Governments have to stand up, they have to be credible. They have to be responsible. We are not showing that in Nova Scotia today when we do things like tearing up agreements with our municipalities who are, as I said before, the grassroots; they're the heart and soul of communities. People are wondering - not just the councillors - where they're going to get support from when council tells them, well, we don't know where we're going in the next year. How are we going to support you? How are we going to pave the roads they're complaining about in the towns, as an example? They're not. Things will be held up, unless there's an agreement that's going to come into place very quickly and we've no commitment on that.

With that, just a few minutes I wanted to get on and have a chat about that and let people know that this Party does care. We were responsible for negotiating and sitting down in the years past and putting this agreement in place. As I said, agreements are good things when everyone can agree. You don't always get what you want, but you can reach

agreements that are good. At this point in time, there are some worries moving forward on behalf of the UNSM and municipal units all across the province.

With that, thank you very much for the opportunity this morning to speak going into Supply and I look forward to other comments. Perhaps the minister will get up and enlighten us a bit or other members of his government will get up and enlighten us as to where this isn't going. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville.

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and speak on an issue that is important for me and for many people in my community and that is this week's announcement with regard to autism. The investment that this government made to the autism community and to the people, the families that face this issue every day is quite an accomplishment, I think, for any government. I know I had the opportunity to be at the announcement. I saw a few folks from the constituency that I represent there, as well as the member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage; the Ministers of Health and Wellness, Education, and Community Services; and, of course, the Premier. The member for Argyle was there as well.

What this means for families is that, under previous governments, the EIBI program was unfortunately given to families under a lottery. I am very proud to stand in my place - under this government that will no longer happen. It is an investment in the families of this province of over \$5 million and it means a lot to people.

There was a wonderful woman who spoke at the announcement who said - and I'll try to quote her as best I can: This investment is the best thing that I have ever heard from any government. (Interruption) She did say that, it's true; \$5.5 million and that means that families in this province will no longer have to be in a lottery for this service.

Autism is faced by many families across Nova Scotia. Let's break down some of the investment: \$4 million alone over two years will allow families to access the EIBI program; and \$1.3 million over three years to support the Direct Family Support program which will allow families to have the support mechanisms necessary to allow them to receive good services for their child who may have autism.

I've received several phone calls from constituents in Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville who have said, it's such a good thing to hear a government doing. Oftentimes we hear a lot of the negative things that governments or elected officials may do but, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that this government has taken an initiative like this and is moving forward on this.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to talk a little bit about how this government is making life better for families in Nova Scotia. One of the commitments that our Party made in the last

election was that we would put this Legislature back to work. I'm also proud to stand here and say that we, in fact, have sat more days than any Party in the last 15 to 20 years. During the Fall 2009 session, we sat for 35 days . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: That's not very many.

MR. WHYNOTT: That's not very many?

AN HON. MEMBER: Not compared to us.

MR. WHYNOTT: Okay, well, let's talk about that because I believe it was one session under the previous government, the Rodney MacDonald Government in fact, I believe that they sat 14 days in a year's span. Mr. Speaker, that's unacceptable, it's shameful.

Mr. Speaker, in the Spring 2010 session, we sat 32 days and that was a budget session. Not only did we pass a budget but there were legislative items that moved forward. In the Fall 2010 session, we sat for 30 days . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: I need a calculator now.

MR. WHYNOTT: Yes, that's what we said we would do and that's what we've done.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that this government has put forward is the Better Care Sooner plan. I know the Minister of Health and Wellness has been up speaking about this in estimates, but Better Care Sooner will allow families to get access to health care professionals when and where they need it the most. I know my colleague, the member for Lunenburg, had an opportunity to have the Minister of Health and Wellness down in her constituency and the response from her community was phenomenal, the fact that we will be working to establish collaborative practices. I know my friend, the member for Cumberland North, attended the announcement in Parrsboro for the first collaborative practice centre opened in the province. It will reduce wait times and it will ensure that people get the care when they need it.

We will be rolling out the clot-busting drug program across the province and that has already saved hundreds of lives because of this initiative. We're also ensuring better drug prices and process for Nova Scotians. We hear often from seniors in this province that drug prices are expensive for them and this will help us put money back in the pockets of the people who need it the most. Again, that's a positive thing that we need to focus on and let our constituents know that these are the sorts of things that we are moving forward on.

Mr. Speaker, we also want to talk a little bit about jobsHere. Over the next three years our government will commit \$200 million to jobsHere and the three pillars that are

most important in this plan are innovation, competitiveness and learning - three pillars that will move this province forward to allow our economy to grow. I believe that, even in the last month, we had the lowest unemployment rate of any Atlantic Canadian province. That's because we're spending the money wisely and allowing this money to get out to the people and the companies and the businesses that need it the most.

Part of jobsHere was a commitment that we saw last year from our government that decreased the small business tax for the first time since 1992. Small businesses, as we all know, are the lifeblood of many communities across this province. They employ a large amount of Nova Scotians, and for them to see a decrease in their small business tax was putting \$6 million back in their pockets.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to say as well that we will be decreasing that small business tax again - again - for the first time since 1992, so back-to-back years the small business tax went from 5 per cent to 4 per cent, again putting money back into the businesses that employ many people across this province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also proud to say that we've put an initiative forward to invest in a service that will allow Nova Scotians to get more services delivered to them faster, which will allow a full range of social services within their own local communities, and that's with the announcement of the 211 system - 211 is a positive thing happening in many provinces across Canada, and I'm glad to say that we are putting that forward. The positive thing about that is we will be the first province in Canada to, in fact, roll this system out province-wide, and I think that's good.

I know, in fact, in HRM, the Halifax Regional Municipality has the 490-4000 number that you can call and get direct service. That's a good service. I tell many of my constituents who may have issues with the municipality or have a road complaint or a bylaw problem, I would say call 490-4000. So that would be a positive thing to allow many Nova Scotians to get services in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, there's one last thing that I would like to talk about before I take my place today, and that is ensuring that this province lives within its means. Now I know the Opposition will say they're saying one thing and then they're saying another thing, it depends on the day - right? And they talk about how we're not doing enough; we're not doing enough to get this province back to balance. Now I remember the most extensive consultation ever taken by any government in this province - the Minister of Finance went out and he talked to Nova Scotians. He talked to Nova Scotians, and over 2,000 people came to the event, with over 1,000 submissions. (Interruptions)

You know, one of the things that we heard was that if you try to decrease the spending, if you do it too fast we will lose the social services and the services that we want to protect. Now, I think that we all have a place in our heart for health care and education in this province. The interesting part is that the Opposition will say you're not cutting enough;

you're not cutting enough. Well, I haven't heard from them where they would want us to cut - what would they cut? What would they cut? They're not saying it. (Interruptions) So, Mr. Speaker, that's one thing.

One of the things that we've done is we've stopped the March "madness." We stopped the March madness in this province. We've saved multi-millions of dollars from March madness. Now, you know, it's interesting that the Opposition will say, oh well, that's still not good enough. So, again, they're saying one thing today and then another thing tomorrow, and then maybe on Monday they'll say something else - it depends on the day. So I think it's irresponsible for them to do those sorts of things.

Mr. Speaker, it was the first time since 2005-06 that expenses went down. One of the things that I heard at the two consultations I went to was that the government must decrease the amount of money that it spends - we have to, but we have to do it responsibly. We have to do it responsibly to protect the services that we care about the most. So I think that we're taking a balanced approach, we're listening to Nova Scotians. I've certainly heard from people in the constituency I represent that they think we're taking a good approach to this and moving this province forward because we all know, that with a balanced budget our province will prosper; with a balanced budget we will continue to be able to deliver the services that each and every one of us cares about.

Mr. Speaker, with that I am always proud to stand up today in my place and talk about the many initiatives that this government has put forward. With that, I take my place. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, first of all, before I get started on the topic I want to talk about here, I want to clarify something that the honourable member just spoke about and indicated that the NDP has the longest-sitting time in the Legislature, in the last 20 years. Well, I can tell you, I've been around here a lot longer than he has and I can remember sitting for days and days, 16-hour days and longer. If he wants to check the record, I think that the number of days that were set at that time, one time in a row, were a whole lot longer than this government has ever sat or ever will sit. So they want to check the records before they make statements in this House.

The other issue I really want to talk about here is property taxes. We talk about this memorandum of understanding and I want to really clarify to people in the communities who may be listening to this today, this memorandum of understanding doesn't sound like much if you are sitting at home and watching this debate on television or if you are thinking about it, but I'll tell you what it means to you, as a taxpayer - your property taxes are going up, that's the simple way to put it. There's no other easy way to put it, that's what is going to happen. Because of this memorandum of understanding being cancelled by this NDP Government, your property taxes will go up.

The Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations continually says there is only one taxpayer, but there are two taxpayers in this province: ones who pay property tax and ones who pay no property tax. I can tell you, the more you download on the property tax side of it, the less likely people are to be able to afford their homes when they retire.

Now most people think that's not a serious issue, it doesn't happen. Well I can tell you that in my riding - and I spoke about this before - a lot of people are losing their properties because they cannot pay their property taxes. So if you put more burden on those property tax owners, more burden for services they shouldn't even be paying for, they are going to continually - more and more people are either going to lose their homes or they are going to be forced to sell them and move into an apartment some place. Sell the one thing - the biggest investment that most people ever have in their lives, they are going to have to sell it. They spend years and years saving money to buy it, years and years fixing the properties, making them better to live in, more comfortable, the way they want them and at the end of the day, their retirement and their golden years, the time that they could do it, they'll have to sell their property.

This is happening, I'm getting calls all the time right now and they don't understand about this memorandum of understanding. Then this fantastic budget that the NDP is talking about, with 1,400 new user fees, another cost that people have to bear. Then we add the 2 per cent on the GST, which everybody pays, everybody in this province every time they buy anything. So there's more than one taxpayer in this province.

The more we download on the municipalities - especially when there was an agreement in place and arrangements have been made by many municipalities to use this money to do the upgrades that they need in their communities and not cost the taxpayers more, things that are being downloaded again, or new programs that they have to do to keep up with sewer and water systems, which need to be done, they have to be done. This is a very bad time for the municipalities to get this and they are coming here today.

You see our municipal leaders here at Province House, which I can't remember ever, since I've been here. Now I could be wrong but I can't remember them coming to demonstrate on the street - these are the municipal leaders - and then the minister and the Premier say that they're not going to affect the municipalities with the MOU being cancelled, there's something wrong with this picture.

Again I have to stress, anyone who is watching this, be assured that your property tax is going up. I truly hope that every single municipality in this province shows on a tax bill exactly how much this NDP Government is costing the taxpayer in your area. The individual, when you get your property tax bill, I hope that they surely put that on there and show that this money is actually going, because of the MOU being cancelled by this NDP Government.

I can tell you, I sat on council and I remember the \$14 million bill that came with the property services when the assessment department was moved over to the municipalities and it came late in the year. I can remember sitting on council at that time in Halifax Regional Municipality and the Halifax Regional Municipality compared to other municipalities is very rich. They still had trouble battling with a \$14 million increase and eventually who paid for it? The property tax owners. Not everybody, just the people who own property. In that case, that's justified cost that they would have to pay that, but the MOU covers a lot more area and, indeed, if the government would have done what they said, especially when they had a surplus year of \$400 million and said they were in a bad financial situation, I think it's bad estimating.

When you look at the estimates they did, there's three-quarters of a billion dollars from what they estimated to what actually is supposed to happen and then they download on the municipalities again on the property tax owners. You've got to be very careful here - the property tax owners are going to pay more tax because of the cancellation of this MOU. You won't see it for this year. Probably next year you'll start to see it and the year after. Thank you.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't anticipating 30 seconds, but I do just want to add my two cents' worth as fast as I can because there is an important principle at play beyond the dollars and cents when it comes to agreements that a government signs. I find it interesting that the government has actually admitted that they're motivated by . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Time has run out for debate going into Supply. We will now take a short recess to let the minister and her staff set up for the Committee of the Whole House on Supply.

The motion is carried.

[10:12 a.m. The House recessed.]

[10:15 a.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Supply with Deputy Speaker Mr. Leo Glavine in the Chair.]

[2:25 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

MADAM SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on Supply reports:

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole House on Supply has met, has made considerable progress and begs leave to sit again.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Madam Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Second Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 19.

Bill No. 19 - Nova Scotia Business Incorporated Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

HON. PERCY PARIS: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in my place this afternoon to move second reading of Bill No. 19, which will amend the Nova Scotia Business Incorporated Act.

The amendment has two parts. The principle focus is to allow the corporation to be able to dispose of real property for less than fair market value. NSBI holds tangible assets such as land and buildings. NSBI inherited the bulk of these assets when government transferred them to the agency, in 2001. The overwhelming majority is booked at minimal value.

On Tuesday, in this House, I introduced members of Anchor Industries Society who were in the gallery. The society provides individualized vocational and recreational day options to adults with intellectual challenges. Anchor is located in the Sackville Business Park. Currently, Anchor has a lease agreement with NSBI and has expressed interest in taking ownership of the property.

However, Anchor is not able to pay market prices for such a property. If Anchor owned the property, it could take out a mortgage and expand its operation. NSBI would like to see a positive outcome for Anchor but, according to the current Act, NSBI cannot give grants. That also means the corporation cannot consider selling real property at less than fair market value.

Bill No. 19 would amend the NSBI Act and give the corporation the ability to consider transferring real property to a not-for-profit, or to the provincial government, for less than fair market value. This would not apply to private for-profit companies. Also, the NSBI board and Cabinet would consider transactions on a case-by-case basis.

Lastly, Bill No. 19's second focus takes care of a housekeeping matter under the NSBI Act. There is an inconsistency in due dates for the corporation's five-year evaluation reports and five-year strategic plans. This amendment will fix that inconsistency.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise in the House and speak to the elements of Bill No. 19. With that, I will take my seat.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MR. ZACH CHURCHILL: Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for bringing this bill forward. The bill seems to be, as the minister said, intended to support one particular organization, Anchor Industries, a good organization in the member for Sackville's riding. Anchor Industries, I know, operates a vocational training centre for intellectually-challenged adults. We have similar groups in Yarmouth that do that work, so I know how important it is and how vital it is to the clients who use those services.

Some of the clients are employed there and others receive training to help find jobs elsewhere in the community. I know Anchor, as the minister said, owns the facility; however, they're leasing the land the building is located on from NSBI. Marilyn Forrest, the executive director at Anchor, has said that she would like to expand that client base from 38 to 50, and this will help her do that.

So I do believe this is a positive step and a good move to support Anchor. I do wonder because of the wording in the bill if this could be the beginning of land transfers back to the province, and I think that's something that I guess we'll see as time goes on. The House will be able to evaluate that and the minister might be able to speak on it if it starts doing that.

The minister mentioned that this is a bill that involves wider implications with NSBI and economic development in the province. I think the real question is, why haven't we had a bill put forward which does address some of the larger economic development issues in our province, specifically those with NSBI and also with the Industrial Expansion Fund?

The IEF was established under the Industrial Development Act, Madam Speaker, which came into effect in 1952. I know that the mandate of the IEF is broad enough that it seems to be able to be something that can be everything to everyone, depending on whom the government of the day is and where their geographical power base is. I know the IEF loan capacity in 2008-09 started with a balance of about \$37.3 million. The Progressive

Conservatives in January 2009 added \$171 million to that loan capacity and the year end that year, I believe the loan capacity was up to \$206 million.

At the time the Opposition NDP was quite infuriated with this and this bill, Bill No. 19, doesn't make any substantial changes to the IEF nor NSBI and, I'm not sure, but perhaps that's intentional. Perhaps this government hasn't brought any changes forward because that's the way they like it. I know that this government has been accused of breaking certain promises and recently has been accused of engaging in some control and secrecy. My colleague, the member for Kings West, said yesterday that, "The NDP has ushered in a new era of controlled secrecy and manipulation, a level of which the Harper Government would be envious."

That's heavy stuff, I will admit that's some heavy language but perhaps this is why two years into the mandate this government hasn't been making some of the fundamental changes to this department, Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, which Nova Scotians were led to believe they would, Madam Speaker. In March 2010, the NDP actually bumped the IEF up by another \$75 million, on a whim it seems. Now, this didn't come to the House, no reason was given to this Chamber or to the public. No discussion was had publicly and the people of Nova Scotia weren't consulted whatsoever on this.

Now, I know that every request that comes into the IEF is reviewed by staff to see if it's eligible for funding but the criteria does seem to be vague and fluid when it comes to the IEF in particular, Madam Speaker, and at the end of the day I do believe that the Cabinet is the group of people who have the final say in that. There's no engagement with the private sector, with business leaders, with perhaps even economic development experts. So it is possible that a request which is turned down for funding by NSBI would be approved by Cabinet for IEF funding. This is true, this could happen. Is it possible that technical staff could recommend to Cabinet that a particular request not be approved? You would still have the ministers decide that the request would get money from IEF, that's possible.

I understand that there's a need to balance. You know, I've chatted with people who say the argument around the IEF is that there's a need to balance business proposals with proposals that are more important for social reasons - keeping a business in business, to provide the economic base for a town, provide the tax base for a municipality and whatnot, but these two things . . .

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Like the ferry.

MR. CHURCHILL: Like the ferry, yes. The member for Dartmouth East is trying to get me on the ferry topic again, which wouldn't be too hard to do, believe me.

I think these two things I mentioned earlier are problematic, especially considering the climate we have here in Nova Scotia, when people, our constituents, have been demanding for greater transparency and accountability from our governments. Transparency and accountability seem to be absent when it comes to the IEF in particular, and Bill No. 19 doesn't do anything to address that, as I mentioned before. Bill No. 19 does nothing to address transparency or accountability or any of those fundamental major issues that this caucus has with some of the agencies that work under the Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism - which a lot of individuals in the public have as well.

We can just see how money is doled out, how it has been doled out since this government took office. I believe that 60 per cent of the funds that have come from the IEF, which ranged in millions and millions of dollars, have all been funnelled into the Pictou constituencies, which I know the members over there are very happy about. We didn't see any money come to Yarmouth when there was a need to keep a needed economic driver alive, the ferry, and \$3 million was all that was needed. We weren't able to secure any money through the IEF at that point.

These things bring up the questions: What's going on with the IEF? Why are decisions being made that will dump a lot of money into one constituency and not into another? And those aren't questions that we have here in the Opposition, but those are questions that the NDP actually had when they were in Opposition, Madam Speaker. These are the same questions that were asked by some of the folks over on those benches.

When the Progressive Conservatives actually went over budget with the IEF, the Opposition New Democrats were appalled at the time. Their Finance Critic, who is now the Minister of Finance, was actually quoted as saying, when it comes to the IEF, it seems like anything goes - *The ChronicleHerald*, November 17, 2005. That seemed like a critique at the time but now it continues, Madam Speaker, with everything going with the Industrial Expansion Fund.

Now that the minister is in the position of power and control over the IEF, his position seems to have changed on that, and perhaps his former self might be a bit disappointed.

Now the minister mentioned earlier in the week that he thought he would have to start writing his own questions for himself in Question Period when he was asked questions by the member for Inverness. I would suggest that perhaps the minister can start writing some questions for himself on this very issue, because his past self and his current self seem to be divided and conflicted on the issue of the IEF.

I look forward to Question Period when the minister does start drafting some questions for himself on the IEF, and perhaps providing the House with some answers. That would be exciting; I'd be happy to read those questions on behalf of the minister. I

told him I would be happy to read them, as long as in the future, Madam Speaker - I had told him that I'd be happy to read his questions as long as he read my answers.

Back to Bill No. 19, which the minister has already said is the beginning of larger changes to NSBI and economic rural development, which is what we're talking about right now. Bill No. 19 doesn't address some of these fundamental problems that I've been chatting about. It does help one particular organization, a good organization, an important organization that does vital work in the community of Sackville, but it doesn't address these larger problems.

Now in speaking about the Progressive Conservatives, I'll go back to some of the quotes from the now Minister of Finance when he was in Opposition - he identified the problem with the IEF by stating that the problem here is that government can allocate itself a very large amount of money, in this case \$50 million, without ever informing the House, without requiring the approval of the House, without any accountability to the House, and that can't be right and the Auditor General has said so. That's from The ChronicleHerald, April 6, 2006.

Yet in this case, now that this Party is actually in government, this Minister of Finance beat the Conservatives by putting an additional \$25 million . . .

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Progressive Conservatives.

MR. CHURCHILL: It's funny that the member for Argyle says "Progressive Conservatives" when for the last week and a half all they've been doing is talking about Harper and federal issues. (Interruptions) They'll still have time to prove that there's still Progressive Conservatives in Nova Scotia. (Interruptions)

Yes, Bill No. 19, in this case. I'd like to thank the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal for bringing my focus back to the discussion at hand. The minister jacked up the funding by \$75 million last year to the IEF, and with no control or accountability. Just look at some other quotes that the minister has said in the past. I believe this was during the election leading up to the most recent general election.

The ChronicleHerald, February 19, 2009, the government knows that it's the only fund with virtually no controls and when they want to spend a lot of money quickly, it's the Industrial Expansion Fund they turn to.

The ChronicleHerald, February 19, 2009, it's very worrisome to see the roof being blown off spending limits. It doesn't bode well for the provincial finances. They've just given themselves the money to spend, whenever they want, however they want.

Those were from the now-Minister of Finance and these three quotes were in the context of that election running up and the then-NDP candidate, who is now the minister

said, under a New Democrat Government, the expansion fund would be transformed. I admit, it has been transformed. It's now bigger with seemingly less accountability, perhaps. Bill No. 19 is about economic development. It is one bill which makes a small change, designed to help one organization, and it's good that we're helping Anchor, as I said before. This is a good organization and, of course, the members of the House, from this side of the Chamber, want to support that organization, but I do believe that this government has missed the mark when it comes to bills that we need to have in this House that bring needed transformation to some of the issues in economic and rural development that we do have.

They have yet to change because they have yet to change the fundamental way that we do economic and rural development in this province. I believe when they were running for office, when they were in Opposition, these are things they said they were going to do. They have yet to address the underlying problems in the province and, as I mentioned before, this bill does not do that.

I will close by saying that the Liberal caucus does support this particular bill. (Interruptions) We do support this particular bill. I'm not sure why members opposite are confused on this issue. We were clear from the outset. We do support this particular bill. We support bills that help our not-for-profits and a lot of the individuals in this province who are out doing incredible work on a daily basis to help other people in our society do well and oftentimes for little money.

Again, we do have questions. If this bill is going to be the beginning of land transfers back to the province, that would be something that we'd like to know. From a caucus perspective and as the Critic for the Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism with the Liberal team, we would definitely like to see some bills come forward that address some of the more fundamental issues with the way that department is currently run with some of its agencies. I'd like to agree with the now-Minister of Finance when he was in Opposition to say that we do need to have some more accountability and transparency with the IEF in particular. I do look forward to hearing the minister ask himself those questions at some point in the future. Thank you very much for your time.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: I want to start just a little bit on the bill and I know we only have a few minutes left for the day. I do want to say that I was listening to the honourable member from Yarmouth speak and I would say that this is about the Industrial Expansion Fund and the Minister of Finance, at least when he arrived on that side of the House he had the good common sense to see what the Tory Government had put in place was beneficial to Nova Scotians, unlike a long lost Liberal Government that was in place in this province many moons ago. So it was the right thing to do and it's a good thing continue and I think that our Party would still agree with that position.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's that coalition you were talking about.

MR. PORTER: The coalition, you call it whatever you want if it's good for Nova Scotia, it's good for Nova Scotia, especially the business sector we're trying to survive, unlike the Liberals who would squash it anyway.

Madam Speaker, let's get to a couple minutes of the bill before we adjourn debate today because there's a lot to be said and there will be much more. This is an interesting bill that the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism has brought forward and it certainly looks like something fairly simple and that we would agree with. The only real concern is that it's fair, we designate one industry here we're talking about, being Anchor Industries, but what happens when the next one comes along? Are we going to have to make changes going forward in bills, any kind of bills for that matter, for single industries or single organizations and such like that? (Interruption) It does say not-for-profits generally and I was going there actually.

It's interesting that it adds not-for-profit in there as well as other industries; it's a little bit bizarre. You have to really ask yourself, how is it different than how business is done today in another sector, which is like surplus? When government surplus - there are things and members come here, and different organizations come, and they'll go to surplus and they'll look for a stove for their church or chairs. I know at Ski Martock they went when they set up the new office and they got office equipment. How is that really different? It doesn't seem like it is, it seems very similar, but I don't know whether that's legislated or not and I do know there is always a potential for problems in any legislation.

I think it's great that we're able to help out organizations that are not-for-profit when we can, and probably we should given the times and how they are, but what does it do to other levels of government and I'll just choose the municipal level as an example. Here is a great example: the Windsor Day Care Centre wants a piece of land and they want to buy it from the Town of Windsor but the MGA says that you have to sell that piece of property for fair market value, which today is \$74,000. So they're on the hook for that \$74,000 when if they had this example - and this is really signalling out an example, which is very much the same, they could have been given to for a reduce cost, \$50,000 or for free for that matter.

What's the difference? Are we going to set a precedence? Are we going to look forward to other changes, if it makes sense at the provincial level, would it not make sense at a municipal level? Some consideration has to be given to that so it comes back to the concern that I have and that's the one of fairness. I think that is what really matters that we should be able to treat at all levels across the board these non profit organizations fairly.

The only other side of it that I want to talk briefly about really is that on the industry side we have opportunities, or call it what you will, but we invest taxpayers' dollars. Oftentimes large amounts of taxpayers' dollars in business and what happens when they go

out of business, who is stuck with that? Are we now going to be able to move that along at a decreased cost and it's a loss to the taxpayer? I'm not sure what that math really means I know others much smarter than me would be able to figure that out but on face that is what it looks like. That does open a door, Anchor Industries is one that's been mentioned and I think that there are probably opportunities to confuse things.

I look forward, really, to getting to the Law Amendments Committee to see if there is any interest. Maybe we won't have much interest, maybe there won't be anybody to come in, maybe it will be fairly a quiet bill and it will pass through, but I would think and hope that there would be some discussion if people are paying attention to this one, especially not-for-profit groups. Also, as I mentioned earlier, that municipal level of government, where they are probably hit harder than any of the rest because the grassroots level I spoke to earlier, organizations and groups are coming to them looking for things for free all the time: grants in lieu, et cetera, properties like the Windsor Day Care Centre is just one example. It should be fair across the board.

If we're going to change rules perhaps we need to give some consideration in the Minister Service of Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations should think about that and maybe we'll have further discussion on it by way of allowing the municipal level some flexibility in the fair market value price of properties and goods when moving them along to not-for-profit groups. I think, in general, it looks like a good bill. We'll see what happens in the Committee on Law Amendments.

With that, given the hour, I would finish for the day. I was going to adjourn debate, but I guess we're going to wrap it up, nobody else on this side has an interest in speaking today. We'll look forward to commenting at the Committee on Law Amendments and when it comes back for further reading. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak to this bill - not for very long, I guess, we don't have much time left in the day.

This bill actually deals with two issues, the Anchor Industries one which, although this is how the government has promoted this bill, it actually is not, as it has been suggested, specific to one organization - certainly an organization that's doing a lot of very good work - but it allows property to be transferred to non-profit organizations at less than market value. Of course, NSBI holds 130 parcels currently, which this would apply to.

As the minister noted, it also applies to transfers to the government. I think it would be useful to have information from the minister about whether there are any transfers of parcels planned. There may not be at this . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. The chatter's getting a little high. The member for Dartmouth East has the floor.

MR. YOUNGER: It would be useful information for our caucus to have from the minister whether there are any predicted or projected parcels that would be transferred from NSBI to the Province of Nova Scotia. We don't necessarily have a problem with that or we don't necessarily have any significant concerns, but we would want to know the rationale in terms of the Minister of Finance when he's looking at the budget line items and the Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism when he's looking at the NSBI budget.

I think, Madam Speaker, when you were on municipal council you supported a number of transfers for less than market value to different organizations. Obviously NSBI has a financial issue in this and this would affect their balance sheets so the question becomes, is it better to have it set up so that NSBI transfers at full market value to the province and then the province is able to transfer it for less than market value? Obviously the benefit to some organization like Anchor or any other non-profit is the same but what it does is it doesn't negatively impact the balance sheet of what is supposed to be an independent Crown Corporation.

The other question around this is some details we'd like to get from the minister in terms of how these transfers were worked. When they're done for other levels of government there's generally a requirement that the land, if the group or organization receiving it at less than market value abandons that property for whatever reason - there are lots of very good reasons that can happen --that it then gets transferred back to NSBI or the province at the same price that it was originally transferred at. We see that a lot with the sales for \$1 for example, they'll get transferred back. We're really just looking for an answer from the minister in terms of how that's anticipated to work. That does not seem to be addressed in the bill.

My colleague, the member for Yarmouth, addressed the issue that the minister brought up. He said this bill not only goes that far, but this bill also addresses some housekeeping amendments related to the regulation and operation of Nova Scotia Business Inc. That's fine except there are obviously a lot more housekeeping amendments, or so-called housekeeping amendments, that we would want to see as part of that.

We certainly have questions around that in terms of what the impact - the minister mentioned it but didn't really go into detail around what the impact of that could potentially be. As we move forward through this process, it would be useful to have an answer from the minister just in terms of exactly what the specific issue is that those housekeeping amendments are deemed to address and why some of the other ones that have come up over the past while are also not being addressed in this bill.

This isn't a bill that's just about the sale of non-profit land, the minister said that in his remarks and so they have chosen to address other issues with NSBI in this so we would encourage the minister to be addressing some of the other concerns that have been raised regarding the governance of that organization and in terms of economic development in general. As well, on that front, we're just wondering why that's included in this overall bill as opposed to a separate bill just addressing all the issues, because it was advertised at the press conference and through the press release as, really, just being about the transfer of land.

Just recapping a bit in terms of some of the information that we're seeking from the minister on this issue, generally we look at this and we say, okay, we support this proposed transfer to Anchor Industries, which was, I guess, the impetus for the bill but isn't actually spoken to in the bill. But the issues that we would like to see answered are why it's structured this way and not a transfer through the province so that NSBI retains, on their balance sheet, the full value because, of course, the government is talking about, and the minister has talked a lot about, using NSBI in economic development and the job strategy and all that sort of thing but, of course, as they reduce the value of the balance sheet, that becomes problematic. So actually transferring it to the province first, at full market value, and then having the province transfer it at less than the market value, actually retains that value in the economic development arm.

So it would be interesting to know why that has been done in that way and, of course, very importantly, should the land be transferred to a non-profit, what happens in terms of a transfer back to the organization? Are they allowed to sell that at a full market value at that point or would this be the same way we deal with other levels of government?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, please. We're now approaching the time allotted for today's business and I wonder if the member would entertain a motion to adjourn debate on Bill No. 19?

MR. YOUNGER: I'll move that we adjourn debate now until a later time.

MADAM SPEAKER: A motion to adjourn has been made. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. CLARRIE MACKINNON: Madam Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet again on Monday, April 18th, at 4:00 p.m., the House hours being 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m., and that the order of business be the daily routine, followed by Supply debate, and if time allows, calling Public Bills for Second Reading, Bill Nos. 7, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 23.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is that the House do now rise to meet again on Monday, April 18th, between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

[The House rose at 2:58 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 528**

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 East Green Harbour resident, Taylor Cotter, was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Taylor Cotter taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate East Green Harbour resident Taylor Cotter who was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 529

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 East Green Harbour resident Shelby Cotter was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Shelby Cotter taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate East Green Harbour resident Shelby Cotter who was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 530

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 East Green Harbour resident Taylor Townsend has been recognized by the Municipality of the District of Shelburne for her participation as a Junior Volunteer Leader in recreational programming in 2010; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Taylor Townsend taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas programming such as the Junior Volunteer Leaders that is provided through the Shelburne Recreation and Parks Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate East Green Harbour resident Taylor Townsend for her participation as a Junior Volunteer Leader in recreational programming in 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. 531

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 West Green Harbour resident Charlotte Scott was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Charlotte Scott taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate West Green Harbour resident Charlotte Scott who was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 532

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 Sable River resident Alex Dash was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Alex Dash taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Sable River resident Alex Dash who was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 533

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 Lockport resident Alyssa Young was recognized by the Town of Lockport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Alyssa Young taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport resident Alyssa Young who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 534

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Lockeport resident Ashley Scott was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Ashley Scott taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport resident Ashley Scott who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 535

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 East Green Harbour resident Blair Acker was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Blair Acker taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate East Green Harbour resident Blair Acker who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 536

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 West Green Harbour resident Brandon Stuart was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Brandon Stuart taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate West Green Harbour resident Brandon Stuart who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 537

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 East Green Harbour resident Brandon Williams was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Brandon Williams taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate East Green Harbour resident Brandon Williams who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 538

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Lockeport resident Emily Atwood was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Emily Atwood taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport resident Emily Atwood who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 539

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Lockeport resident Emily Stephens was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10 -16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Emily Stephens taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport resident Emily Stephens who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 540

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Lockeport resident Hailey Cotter was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Hailey Cotter taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities, such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department, help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport resident Hailey Cotter who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 541

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Lockeport resident James Hanf was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as James Hanf taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport resident James Hanf who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 542

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 East Green Harbour resident Jevin Hamilton was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Jevin Hamilton taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate East Green Harbour resident Jevin Hamilton who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 543

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Lockeport resident Marissa MacIntosh was recognized by both the Town of Lockeport and the Municipality of the District of Shelburne for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Marissa MacIntosh taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport and the Municipality of Shelburne recreation departments help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport resident Marissa MacIntosh who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport and the Municipality of the District of Shelburne for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 544

By: Hon. Sterling Belliveau (Fisheries and Aquaculture)

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

Whereas Lockeport resident Meagan Cameron was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Meagan Cameron taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Lockeport resident Meagan Cameron who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for her involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.

RESOLUTION NO. 545

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 East Green Harbour resident Morgan Cotter was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming; and

Whereas it is inspiring to see youth such as Morgan Cotter taking an active role in the community as a volunteer, contributing to society and gaining valuable life skills; and

Whereas youth leadership opportunities such as those offered by the Town of Lockeport's Recreation Department help to give today's youth the foundation to be tomorrow's leaders;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate East Green Harbour resident Morgan Cotter who was recognized by the Town of Lockeport during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, 2011, for his involvement as a volunteer youth leader in recreational programming.