



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Gordon Gosse

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Third Session

TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2011

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2011**

**Sixty-first General Assembly**

**Third Session**

**12:00 NOON.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Gordon Gosse

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

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

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

The topic for the late debate has been chosen:

Therefore be it resolved that government recognize the importance of Nova Scotia's agricultural industries, invest in local food production and provide sustainable assistance to farmers in our province.

This was submitted by the honourable member for Clare.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of the Environment.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earth Week provides an excellent opportunity to celebrate our environmental achievements. I know that Nova Scotians are concerned about protecting our environment, to keep it clean and healthy today and for future generations. This is why one of our first acts, as a government, was to place regulatory caps on greenhouse gas emissions, starting with the electricity sector. Power generation is responsible for half of our greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions produced in Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia is the only jurisdiction in North America to place hard caps on greenhouse gas emissions in the electricity sector.

Mr. Speaker, we were recognized for this measure by the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen last December. The David Suzuki Foundation also recognized this initiative as one of the top five best moves on climate change by a province or territory. We have been working with Nova Scotia Power to increase sustainable energy sources and reduce the greenhouse gas being released into our atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, by working with Nova Scotia Power, we have a clear goal that will see greenhouse gas emissions from electricity-generated power lowered by 25 per cent by the year 2020. I am pleased to report to the members of this House that greenhouse gas cap is working. Nova Scotia Power's latest report to the department shows that in 2010, the first year of the greenhouse gas cap, emissions from NSPI were 850,000 tons less than the base year of 2007; that's a 9 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emission in one year. Nova Scotia Power is ahead of its greenhouse gas targets for the end of 2011 and we are pleased to see this progress.

Mr. Speaker, our government is not stopping there. In addition to capping greenhouse gas emissions, our renewable electricity plan is one of the most aggressive in the world. We have set a target of having 25 per cent of our power produced by sustainable sources by 2015. That target grows to 40 per cent by 2020. Our government tabled legislation this Spring that will allow the 40 per cent target to become law.

Mr. Speaker, we are demonstrating genuine leadership to address climate change and protect our environment. I am confident that when the federal numbers on greenhouse gas reductions come out later this Spring, they will clearly show that Nova Scotia is on track to meeting our targets. Other measures we have taken include anti-idling legislation and supporting projects through ecoNova Scotia to reduce greenhouse and air pollutants emissions. The projects supported by ecoNova Scotia will lower emissions today and certainly well into the future.

The results speak for themselves. The ecoNova Scotia projects will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 241,000 tons annually by 2020. Those are real results for Nova Scotian families. Our government will continue to support the clean technology sector.

Mr. Speaker, I am very excited about the potential of clean technology in our beautiful Province of Nova Scotia. These Nova Scotia-based clean technology companies use technologies that reduce energy consumption and lower greenhouse gas and air pollutants emissions. In addition, these companies are creating good jobs for Nova Scotians and they are helping to grow our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the people of Nova Scotia for the steps they have taken every day to help us meet our greenhouse gas and other environmental targets. By using public transit where it is available, by using energy-efficient light bulbs and appliances and by ensuring that their homes are as energy efficient as possible, Nova Scotians are certainly doing their part to help protect the environment.

I encourage everyone to keep up the good work and to look for even more ways to reduce energy use. This will help us keep the environment clean, green and healthy for generations to come. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise and respond to the statement by the Minister of Environment. I'd like to thank him for the advance copy of the remarks, although I will note it would be nice to have more than 30 minutes notice as it takes a bit of time to put together a response.

I agree with the minister that we must all work to reduce our energy usage, something which not only has environmental benefits, but economic benefits. I'd like to congratulate the minister on keeping a straight face when he said, ". . . we are demonstrating genuine leadership to address climate change and protect our environment." The fact is, while this government has made some positive moves such as the announced transition to LED street lighting, even this move followed the lead of some of our municipalities that had already gone in this direction. The minister spoke about changing light bulbs and other efficiency measures, and this is important and I join him in congratulating all businesses and residents who have taken these steps, but this is not leading by example. You just need to look around this Chamber to see how many incandescent bulbs there are here.

The government makes much of its anti-idling bill, despite the fact that it applied to only its own fleet and organizations which had anti-idling policies. Again, the government was not leading, it was following. The government speaks to caps on greenhouse gas



emissions from power generation in the province. This is indeed something to be proud of, something we support, but the government neglects to point out that greenhouse gas emissions for the province as a whole have continued to rise as these targets apply to power generation only and not to the province as a whole. The science is clear - greenhouse gas emissions must level off by 2015 and begin to decline at that point, otherwise we're all in for a big environmental mess. The government is dealing with one sector and one sector only and, in fact, it isn't even taking significant steps in its own operations.

Let's review. Last year on Earth Day, the NDP announced its "Kill a Coyote for Earth Day" program, which was widely panned by environmentalists and scientists. A year later, we see that those who panned the program were right and the populations appear to be increasing and there appears to be no reduction in aggressiveness. In its term in office thus far, the NDP has become the only province to back out of commitments to reduce mercury from power generation. This is a substance, which is highly dangerous to human health and the environment, and a substance which builds up toxicity in the environment, but this government said it was okay to be the only jurisdiction in Canada to relax those targets for the next few years; this, when other provinces such as Alberta and New Brunswick not only met, but exceeded those targets.

This government has approved seismic testing at a game sanctuary when it said it wouldn't. The government proposes to burn more trees to make electricity when the sustainability and carbon neutrality of this effort is dubious at best; this when the government had other options, including supporting agricultural biomass on marginal farmland to support struggling farmers.

The government hasn't even met its own laws of the province requiring the Natural Resources Strategy to be presented four months ago. The Coastline Strategy, which the government promised would be released in 2010, is missing in action and the Wetland Strategy is 18 months overdue. On renewable energy, the government says it has introduced legislation to ensure that 40 per cent of our energy comes from renewable sources, yet the bill does not even do that. This is a move the government could do already through existing regulations and, as I said yesterday, we will be introducing amendments to that bill to make it part of the law as the government said they were going to.

The Ecology Action Centre recently said, "When in opposition, the NDP were a strong voice for the environment and green economy, since coming to power that voice has dropped to a whisper." They're right. The EAC went on to say, "Since coming to power, the NDP have significantly undermined the Environmental Goals and Sustainability Prosperity Act (EGSPA) by missing, and in some cases, delaying by years, some of the goals." They are right.

In closing, in 21 months this government has made some modest moves on energy and environment, but this is a government that should not boast of its successes in protecting the environment. It should hang its head in shame that it has failed to accomplish many of the things Nova Scotians were expecting, many of the things that communities and

environmental groups across Nova Scotia are now expressing anger about. The minister can boast about one thing - I'm just wrapping up, but of course we got short notice . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The member must realize that he can only speak for as long as the minister spoke and now you're over the time limit, so I would ask you to wind down, please. Those are the rules and procedures in the Legislature. Thank you. I'll ask you to wrap up right now.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I would say that it's hard to do that when the minister gives us 30 minutes' notice . . .

MR. SPEAKER: All right, have a seat then.

The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, normally I would begin by thanking the minister for providing his statement in lots of time. Unfortunately, our caucus received the statement just less than an hour ago before the House sat, not nearly enough time to give this important topic the appropriate response that it deserves - much like the notice given to the municipal units in this province prior to having the MOU ripped up.

What struck me first, as I listened to the minister's statement, is there's nothing new here. It's just a restatement of goals, as we've heard from before from this government. Actually it wasn't even two weeks ago when his colleague, the Minister of Energy, announced new renewable electricity targets and it was only last week that the Premier announced investments in the clean technology sector. As the minister mentioned, Nova Scotia Power is ahead of its greenhouse gas emission targets for 2011.

As targets are being met and more renewable electricity begins to come on-line, Mr. Speaker, I hope that Nova Scotians will soon start seeing stable electricity prices. That is what our caucus would like to see - stable and, hopefully, lower prices for Nova Scotians who are already so overtaxed, and we are hopeful that the development of Lower Churchill will deliver lower power rates for our consumers in this province as well. However, that project is still in its early stages. While Lower Churchill will fill a lot of the renewable target, I will wait to see how this NDP Government plans to incorporate other sources of generation, for example, the wind and the tidal projects that are underway.

As the minister noted, Friday is Earth Day and I know I plan to spend some time in the great outdoors of Hants West enjoying it this week - maybe you should go for a hike or a walk in the local park, or a short distance instead of taking your cars, and think about Earth Day. Mr. Speaker, we'll all be home in our constituencies so I hope everyone has a chance to enjoy a beautiful day - and I'm sure it will be, raining or otherwise.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I wish I had had more time to prepare, but I will take my seat.

### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 573**

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

Whereas in February 2011 it was announced that Commodore Jennifer Bennett is to be promoted to rear-admiral and will take over as Chief of Reserves and Cadets; and

Whereas this announcement marks two historic firsts in that for the first time a woman has reached the rank of rear-admiral in the Canadian Navy and, as well, Commodore Bennett will also be the first woman appointed as the Canadian Forces' senior reservist; and

Whereas throughout her career in the Naval Reserve, Commodore Bennett has served in a variety of postings from that of Naval Communicator, Commanding Officer of HMCS MALAHAT, Commander of Naval Reserves, and a host of other appointments and commands;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Commodore Bennett on her coming promotion and appointment as the first woman to be appointed to be the Canadian Forces' senior reservist, and wish her well as she continues to break new ground for women in the Navy.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

**RESOLUTION NO. 574**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas Chelsea Nisbett is a young African Nova Scotian singer-songwriter from Lower Sackville who has earned critical acclaim for her inspiring lyrics and catchy musical blend of R&B, rock and hip-hop; and

Whereas Chelsea was a double award winner at the East Coast Music Awards this past weekend in Charlottetown, taking home Gospel Recording of the Year for her album *Anchored Roots*, and R&B/Soul Single of the Year for the album's title track, also called *Anchored Roots*; and

Whereas Chelsea was also named Artist of the Year at the African Nova Scotian Music Association Awards in January, adding to a growing collection of honours that include a national Covenant Award and two Music Nova Scotia Awards last Fall;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Chelsea Nisbett on the success of her album *Anchored Roots*, and wish her a long and prosperous future in the music industry.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Education.

**RESOLUTION NO. 575**

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

Whereas the Co-operative Education Program helps students make informed career and education decisions that open the door to the many good jobs Nova Scotia has to offer; and

Whereas in the year 2009-10, Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School awarded 12 co-op credits and this year it is projected they will almost double that with 21 credits; and

Whereas for the 2011-12 school year, Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School will accept 60 additional students in the program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the hard work and dedication of the administrator and teachers of the Co-operative Education Program at Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School in expanding the program to provide so many students with the valuable knowledge and experience that comes with co-operative education.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 576**

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

Whereas Trout Point Lodge is an environmentally-friendly wilderness resort in East Kentville, Yarmouth County; and

Whereas Trout Point Lodge has been chosen by *Men's Journal* as the only Canadian location in a feature about backcountry luxury; and

Whereas the *Men's Journal* recognized Trout Point Lodge for the high quality of their resort and their rugged national location as well as their most important criteria, distance from Starbucks;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature congratulate Trout Point Lodge for being chosen by *Men's Journal* as the only Canadian feature about backcountry luxury and wish them success in their future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction please?

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MR. MACDONELL: I'd like to draw the attention of all members to the east gallery. I'd like to introduce Mr. Norman Hill, the Registrar General of Land Titles with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our guests to the gallery and hope they enjoy today's proceedings.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 30 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 6 of the Acts of 2001. The Land Registration Act, and Chapter 392 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Registry Act. (Hon. John MacDonell)**

**Bill No. 31 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 195 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Health Act. (Hon. Stephen McNeil)**

**Bill No. 32 - Entitled an Act to Ensure a Supply of Physicians in Rural Nova Scotia. (Hon. Stephen McNeil)**

**Bill No. 33 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 23 of the Acts of 1996. The Court and Administrative Reform Act. (Hon. Charlie Parker)**

**Bill No. 34 - Entitled an Act to Bring Newly Trained Doctors Home to Nova Scotia. (Hon. Stephen McNeil)**

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

Before we go to notices of motion, I'd like to recognize the Minister of Community Services on an introduction.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: I wish to take this opportunity to introduce two individuals here today in the east gallery, if they could stand, and that would be Cyril Reid and Wanda Hebert. I've actually written down what I want to say because Cyril Reid has done so much in terms of helping children in the Province of Nova Scotia. Cyril is a chair of the Council of Chairs for the Community Child Welfare Boards, chair of the Cumberland County Children's Advocacy Board, and is also vice-president of the Nova Scotia Council for the Family. Cyril is also a retired school guidance counsellor and certainly has been a wonderful volunteer to many organizations throughout the province. I also hear that he does have some photos from the Mount Allison days with Minister Estabrooks - we won't go there, that's for another introduction.

I would also like to introduce Wanda Hebert who works for our Department of Community Services and she's the coordinator of Community Board Development and works on the development and support of our community welfare boards. I would like to invite everyone to offer a warm welcome to our guests today. (Applause)

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 577**

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

Whereas The Temple Sons of Israel will host Yom Hashoah at the Sydney Synagogue on Sunday, May 1, 2011; and

Whereas this Holocaust Memorial Service will have Herb Goldstein as its guest speaker - Mr. Goldstein will speak about his experience growing up as a Jewish child in Nazi Germany, including his thoughts about family members who perished under Hitler's rule; and

Whereas Mr. Goldstein now lives in Toronto where he is involved with the Holocaust Centre and the Simon Wiesenthal Center, doing volunteer work;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Herb Goldstein on his many years of service to the memory of those who died in the Holocaust and to also thank the Jewish community in Cape Breton for continuing to keep the memory of those who died, because of the Holocaust, by hosting this annual memorial service in Sydney.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 578**

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

Whereas this week Jewish families in Nova Scotia and all over the world are gathering to celebrate the sacred festival of Passover; and

Whereas Passover commemorates the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt; and

Whereas the eight-day festival of Passover is the Festival of Freedom;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House wish members of Nova Scotia's Jewish community a happy and joyous Passover.

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

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

Is it agreed?



It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 579**

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

Whereas the 2011 Robert Merritt Awards were presented on March 28<sup>th</sup> in recognition of excellence in Nova Scotian theatre; and

Whereas Susan Stackhouse portrayed the character of Nat in Neptune Theatre's critically acclaimed 2010 production of *Rabbit Hole*; and

Whereas Susan Stackhouse earned the 2011 Robert Merritt Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly congratulate Susan Stackhouse on winning the Robert Merritt Award and for contributing to the rich tradition of theatre in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Preston.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 580**

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

Whereas retired Chief Petty Officer First Class John Madison was the first African-Canadian working in a submarine in the Canadian Navy, serving 39 years before retiring in 1993, was born and lived in Montreal and now resides in East Preston; and

Whereas in 1964 John was called to England for three years and trained on the submarine HMS Finwhale, and then commissioned and brought the HMCS Onondaga to Halifax in 1967; and

Whereas now retired John works with the archives at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, setting up marine exhibitions and memorabilia, also does a little hunting and fishing, enjoys travelling, and in 2009 went on a 21-day trip touring South Africa with his wife and friends;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize the accomplishments of John Madison in his military career, charting new grounds for African-Canadians, and wish him well in his retirement.

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 Hants West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 581**

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

Whereas since the East Coast Music Awards began in 1989 as the Maritime Music Awards, it has grown from the original five categories to over 25 categories in music and over 10 in the music industry as a whole; and

Whereas the Fed Pennies, consisting of Jake Smith on guitar and vocals, John Matthews on bass, and Paul Gallant on drums, have been playing together since 2004 and have such accomplishments as a Molson Canadian Extreme Band Slam win, a showcase at

the Canadian Music Week, and a 2006 JunoFest showcase opening for Inward Eye and Silverstein at the Marquee Club in Halifax; and

Whereas the Fed Pennies' CD, *Brain Disaster*, was one of six nominees in the Loud Recording of the Year category at the East Coast Music Awards, and the band can now add the ECMA to their portfolio as they captured the award in Charlottetown on April 17, 2011;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jake, John, and Paul on their well-deserved win at the East Coast Music Awards and wish them continued success in their music careers.

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 Truro-Bible Hill.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 582**

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

Whereas Cathy Boudreau is the only carillonneur in the Truro area and plays for services at Saint John's Anglican Church, which is home to a 105-year-old carillon, which consists of 10 bells, some weighing more than 1,000 pounds, and is one of only three carillons east of Montreal; and

Whereas Ms. Boudreau, one of only 20 carillonneurs in Canada, has been playing the carillon at Saint John's Anglican Church for Sunday church services, weddings, funerals and other special events for 29 years; and

Whereas Cathy Boudreau is a member of the Carillon Players Society, has been dedicated to music all of her life, and brings much joy to the people of Truro with the sound of her beautiful bells;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Legislature congratulate Cathy Boudreau on her 29 years of service as a carillonneur, and thank her for her dedication and commitment to providing music to the Truro community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 583**

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

Whereas the First Baptist Girls Choir in Truro is well-known for the beauty, excellence and professionalism of their vocal presentations; and

Whereas the choir recently sang in Ottawa at the Rotunda at the Parliament Buildings; and

Whereas Stevie Gass of Crowes Mills, Colchester North, a choir member for the past three years, has been very grateful for the experiences offered to her;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly extend best wishes to Stevie Gass and the other members of the First Baptist Girls Choir as they sing and work to raise funds for their next trip to New York City.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 584**

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

Whereas the Baddeck Area Business and Tourism Association - or BABTA - held their annual general meeting and election of officers in late March; and

Whereas returning to their positions for 2011-12 are President Glen MacDonald, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Eileen Montgomery, Vice-President Ken MacKinnon, Secretary Verne McIntyre and Treasurer Dick Grub; and

Whereas President MacDonald believes strongly that the association's role in the community remains strong and he looks forward to this year's highlight, the July 4<sup>th</sup> launch at the Bell Museum of a national coffee-table book being published by the Canadian Geographic Society;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly commend the executive and members of the Baddeck Area Business and Tourism Association for their vibrant community spirit and determined drive to make Baddeck an attractive and inviting place for all tourists to stop on their visits to Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Pictou East

**RESOLUTION NO. 585**

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

Whereas Bob Withers, service manager of Herron Pontiac, New Glasgow, became aware of and engaged the participation of his company in a program through the Collision Solution Network; and

Whereas Bob believed that some damaged cars were going to waste when there were people who needed them so he and Atlantic Car Choice Collision worked on a car to be given to a member of the community; and

Whereas the benevolence program was the first for the company and the area, and there is a desire to have the program become an annual program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly congratulate Bob Withers of Herron Pontiac and Atlantic Car Choice Collision on their innovative commitment to community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

**RESOLUTION NO. 586**

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

Whereas Pryor House Hospice in Bedford held a Christmas holiday open house to welcome the community to view the progress on the new palliative care hospice, which opened in the Spring of 2010; and

Whereas the open house was coordinated with the fifth annual fundraising campaign by the Hospice Society of Greater Halifax; and

Whereas the campaign, called Angels in Memory, accepted donations of any amount, thereby entitling the donor to hang an angel on a tree in the house in memory of a loved one;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House commend Pryor House and the Hospice Society on their fundraising efforts, which will help the palliative care facility provide much-needed services in the community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 587**

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

Whereas George Chant was chosen as the Municipality of the County of Inverness Volunteer of the Year for 2011; and

Whereas Mr. Chant is dedicated to bettering his community as president of the Marble Mountain Wharf Preservation Society and as a board member for the North Mountain Cultural and Recreation Association; and

Whereas George is actively involved in his church serving as Clerk of Session for his local United Church while also finding time to care for and maintain the Lime Hill Cemetery;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize George Chant for his contribution to our province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Antigonish.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 588**

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

Whereas Fred Monahan opened a jewellery store in Antigonish in 1922, soon after hiring Zina Cameron who took over the store after Mr. Monahan's death and renamed it Cameron's Jewellery; and

Whereas Cameron's Jewellery worked with the St. Francis Xavier graduating class in 1942 to design a unique class ring, now widely known as the X-ring, that would go on to become a staple of their business; and

Whereas Cameron's Jewellery, owned by the Hawley family since the 1960s, had recently been closed for renovations and had its grand reopening on April 15<sup>th</sup>, once again providing trusted service to the Antigonish community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Cameron's Jewellery on their longevity and wish them all the best in the future.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.



Order, please. Order. There's a little bit of chatter this afternoon in the Chamber. I wonder if the honourable members would like to take those conversations outside. Thank you.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 589**

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

Whereas on April 15<sup>th</sup> the member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville said the NDP Government has "sat more days than any Party in the last 15 to 20 years, during the Fall session 2009, we sat 35 days"; and

Whereas the NDP Government has sat more days than only some sessions in the past 15 to 20 years, particularly most sessions in the years of PC Governments; and

Whereas Liberal Governments routinely sat for more days than any NDP session thus far, including sessions of 52, 57 and 62 days;

Therefore be it resolved that this House of Assembly suggest the member for Hammonds Plains-Upper Sackville not claim success by comparing his Party to the lowest common denominator, the Progressive Conservative Party, and suggest he boasts about putting the Legislature back to work through long sessions when and if the NDP Government sits anywhere close to the length of sessions under previous Liberal Governments.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Thank you Mr. Speaker, and obviously you have to consider the source of some of these. (Laughter)

**RESOLUTION NO. 590**

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

Whereas many young Canadian boys dream of making their dreams come true on a hockey rink; and

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I can't hear the member's resolution.

MR. ALFIE MACLEOD: Whereas 10-year-old Daymon Johnson, son of Derik and Sharon Johnson of Eskasoni began playing organized hockey this year; and

Whereas Daymon's skills and talent have earned him a spot on the 15-member Jr. X-men team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Daymon Johnson for being named to the Jr. X-men and wish him every success and encourage him in his chosen sport, following in the footsteps of Chad Denny.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Guysborough-Sheet Harbour.

**RESOLUTION NO. 591**

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

Whereas the 37<sup>th</sup> Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony and Luncheon was held on April 4, 2011; and

Whereas each year the Province of Nova Scotia recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to their community; and

Whereas in recognition of his contribution to various organizations, Roger Williams is one of the 2011 Representative Volunteer Award recipients for the Municipality of the District of Guysborough; and

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Roger Williams on his 2011 Representative Volunteer Award for the community of the Municipality of the District of Guysborough and wish him success with his future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

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. 592**

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

Whereas Mark Stevens, a member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 61 in Yarmouth has been an outstanding and committed volunteer to the lives of veterans in his community; and

Whereas Mr. Stevens has also selflessly dedicated his time, service and unwavering support to the Maple Grove and Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School Memorial Clubs; and

Whereas on April 16, 2011, Mr. Stevens was one of the first recipients to be awarded the Branch Medal of the Royal Canadian Legion at the Yarmouth Memorial Club's Silver Cross ceremony banquet, an award which recognized Mr. Stevens as an asset, as an outstanding member of the Royal Canadian Legion;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mark Stevens on being a recipient of this prestigious award and recognize his exemplary contributions to his community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hants West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 593**

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

Whereas litter creates an unsightly landscape and is an unnecessary blight on our beautiful province; and

Whereas Olivia Fogarty and Lauren Galbraith, Grade 4 students at Windsor Elementary School, took time away from their play schedule to spend an afternoon collecting trash along the fence of their schoolyard; and

Whereas by involving our youth at a young age in activities such as community cleanups, we are showing them the importance of keeping the community free of litter and teaching them the benefits of a clean environment;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Olivia and Lauren for their dedication and commitment to a cleaner and ultimately more beautiful community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Queens.

MS. VICKI CONRAD: Mr. Speaker, if I may, I'd like to make an introduction to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Most certainly.

MS. CONRAD: Thank you. I'd like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery. Here today I have visiting with us ten Grade 12 students from North Queens Community School. With them are teachers Cameron Strong and Elizabeth Lambe, and retired teacher Robert Chisholm. I'd like the House to give them all a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Queens.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 594**

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

Whereas hunger and starvation are global obstacles to health, education and development; and

Whereas Free the Children is an organization that supports health care, education and sustainable development in Western Africa; and

Whereas North Queens Community School experienced the 30-Hour Famine to raise money for Free the Children and to better understand the plight of hunger and starvation;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize the students of North Queens Community School for their fundraising efforts for the 30-Hour Famine and their awareness of such important global issues.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 595**

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

Whereas the annual Jason Simmons Memorial Scholarship Hockey Tournament will take place this weekend at the BAYPlex and will feature 33 teams, including nine family teams, a total of 540 players and large crowds of Glace Bay's enthusiastic hockey fans; and

Whereas the late Jason Simmons, who died tragically in 1997 at the tender age of 24, was a good athlete and a great person who influenced all who knew him with his leadership, charisma, energy and positive outlook on life; and

Whereas the "Simmons" brings together families, friends and our community for a weekend of hockey, fun and memories, in addition to raising thousands of dollars for scholarships for our local kids;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly join me in congratulating tournament organizers Brian O'Neill, Sonny MacDougall, Cecil MacQueen, the Huff and Puff volunteer committee, and Jason's parents, Jimmy and Tena, and his sister Sherri, for providing a proud and enjoyable weekend for the people of Glace Bay.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 596**

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

Whereas Kendra MacCuspig, a Grade 12 student at Baddeck Academy, was awarded a silver medal for her science fair project entitled Liberation Determination at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Cape Breton Regional Science Fair; and

Whereas Kendra will attend the Nova Scotia showcase at the end of April in Halifax and will represent the Northside-Victoria Regional School Board at the Canada-Wide Science Fair to be held in Toronto in May; and

Whereas Ms. MacCuspig's research project on MS Liberation Therapy has earned her a renewable scholarship of \$1,000 per year amounting to \$4,000 to attend Mount Allison University;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kendra MacCuspig for her innovative research project and wish her continued success at the Canada-Wide Science Fair.

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 Deputy Premier on an introduction.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery is a friend to many in this House, it's Janet Hazelton, the president of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, and one of the nicest people in her family - I call her brother Donnie a friend of mine, but she knows better. Anyway, I digress with that because Father Donnie did an excellent funeral mass

last Thursday for the late Myles Burke and it was very touching and befitting of a person of his stature. So it shows that compassion not only goes in the nursing side of that family but on the religious side. So I wish that we would welcome Janet to the House and give her a warm round of applause. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Kings West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 597**

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

Whereas for 30 years the Tidnish Crossroads and Area Community Association has been responsible for operating and maintaining the local community centre, skating facility, baseball field, playground and hiking trail in Amherst; and

Whereas on a year-round basis, the Tidnish Crossroads and Area Community Association encourages the importance of being active to people of all ages through a variety of activities and sports; and

Whereas on April 14, 2011, Doctors Nova Scotia nominated Tidnish Crossroads and Area Community Association as one of three finalists for its Golden Apple Award, an award which will offer \$5,000 for an organization's efforts in improving the health and well-being of Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly send our appreciation to Doctors Nova Scotia for their efforts in creating healthier communities and congratulate the Tidnish Crossroads and Area Community Association on being nominated and wish them the best of luck when the winner is announced on June 4, 2011.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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



The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Inverness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 598**

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

Whereas Cabot Links Golf Course in Inverness will open this summer on Canada Day; and

Whereas Ben Cowan-Dewar, who brought Cabot Links to Inverness, has created Canada's only true links golf course; and

Whereas the people of Inverness will be proud to welcome people from around the world to their beautiful home along the sandy beaches of the Gulf of St. Lawrence;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge the hard work and dedication of Mr. Cowan-Dewar, the Inverness Development Association, and former MLA Rodney MacDonald, for their hard work to make this vision a reality.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 599**

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

Whereas George Linkletter, a well-known resident of Five Islands, Colchester North, lives with severe arthritis in his legs, hips, and arms; and

Whereas George, born into a musical family, developed a love of music and learned to play the harmonica, steel guitar, and fiddle; and

Whereas the desire to meet and play with other musicians in an informal setting led George, along with three other Masons, to organize the very popular jam sessions held on Sundays at the Great Village Masonic Lodge;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate 84-year-old George Linkletter for his determination to keep active, enjoy life, and bring pleasure and entertainment to others.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Cape Breton West.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 600**

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

Whereas the YMCA was established over 150 years ago as a charity dedicated to the health of individuals and communities; and

Whereas the first YMCA in Canada was formed in Sydney, Nova Scotia, on January 10, 1923, giving the group the distinction of being called “the club that made the Y’s Men international”; and

Whereas the Sydney Y’s Men Club celebrated its 88<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by hosting the Maritime regional convention and the Canada and Caribbean convention, a meeting which was also attended by top Y’s Men leaders from Japan, Norway, India, Thailand, Switzerland, Australia, and the U.S.A.;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate members, past and present, of the Sydney Y's Men Club on 88 years of selfless service to their community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Bedford-Birch Cove.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 601**

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 University of New Brunswick Varsity Reds defeated the McGill Redmen 4 to 0 to claim the 2010-11 CIS men's hockey final; and

Whereas fourth-year defenceman and Bedford native Luke Gallant clinched the title for his team with one goal and two assists in the tournament final; and

Whereas Gallant, who has previously been named a CIS All-Star and a CIS Academic All-Canadian, was named the tournament MVP after leading all players in scoring, with seven points;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House congratulate Luke Gallant for his team's victory at the 2010-11 CIS men's hockey championship and his athletic and academic success.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Yarmouth.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 602**

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

Whereas Eric Charles “Chuck” Smith has been an outstanding and respected leader in Yarmouth’s sports community; and

Whereas in 2000, Mr. Smith was inducted in the Yarmouth Town and County Sports Hall of Fame for his many years as a basketball player, coach, organizer and promoter; and

Whereas Mr. Smith has been an inspirational role model and mentor to countless youth in his community for over 30 years;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly recognize Coach Eric Charles “Chuck” Smith for his generous dedication and invaluable contributions to the youth and rich sports heritage in Yarmouth and Yarmouth County.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Glace Bay.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 603**

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

Whereas for the past seven years Velo Cape Breton has encouraged the use of bicycles as a mode of transportation and recreation throughout Cape Breton; and

Whereas through volunteer efforts, Velo Cape Breton has been an active player when it comes to the development of an active transportation plan within the CBRM; and

Whereas on April 14, 2011, Doctors Nova Scotia nominated Velo Cape Breton as one of three finalists for its Golden Apple Award, an award which will offer \$5,000 for an organization's efforts in improving the health and well-being of Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly extend their appreciation to Doctors Nova Scotia for their efforts in creating healthier communities and congratulate Velo Cape Breton for their nomination and wish them best of luck when the winner is announced on June 4, 2011.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Digby-Annapolis.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 604**

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

Whereas the Digby Dashing Diamonds took part in the Star Skate and Synchro Provincial Championships in Amherst, on March 5<sup>th</sup>; and

Whereas the competition saw the team of nine girls, all under the age of 13, compete on the elementary level; and

Whereas the Digby Dashing Diamonds brought their third consecutive provincial title back home to Digby;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize these nine young skaters on their accomplishment and continued efforts.

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.

Before we begin Oral Question Period, I remind honourable members that use of blackberries, laptops and any other electronic devices is not permitted during Question Period; they are to remain off during that time.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: Question Period will begin at 1:02 p.m. and end at 2:02 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

### **PREM.: SCANWOOD CAN. - DUE DILIGENCE**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. A year ago this government gave out a \$4.75 million loan to Scanwood Canada. Like everything else that comes out of the Industrial Expansion Fund, this money was shrouded in secrecy, no business plan, no financial analyst to evaluate, but now we know the results. Today 235 people are out of work and the taxpayers of Nova Scotia are out \$4 million. So my question to the Premier is, where was the due diligence on this decision?

THE PREMIER: There was considerable due diligence with respect to this matter and I should point out, as he pointed out, there were 235 jobs at stake with that company. What we wanted to do with them was to work with them, modernize their equipment so that they would be in the position to be able to continue to supply, under their four-year contract with IKEA, the furniture that was the main product for that business.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that didn't work out and it's really the Royal Bank who called the security, as the member opposite would know. It is an extraordinarily disappointing and difficult day for the families of those people who work at Scanwood.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, we know that Scanwood has only been able to meet half of its contractual obligations to manufacture 900,000 drawers a year. This closure cast further doubt on the ability of Cabinet to make business decisions, especially ones made in secrecy. My question to the Premier is, in the spirit of openness and transparency, will the Premier make available all of the information that Cabinet used to make this loan?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows, of course, that materials that are supplied to Cabinet are done so on a confidential basis. We looked at this from the very real perspective of the people who were working at that company. In some ways, I guess, the difference would be whether or not they were out of business and therefore unable to continue to employ those people two years ago or whether that happened now. Our hope, of course, and the investment, was to modernize the equipment for exactly the purpose, which the Leader of the Official Opposition points out, in order to allow them to be able to meet their commitments under that contract.

The unfortunate truth is that, for whatever reason, they were not able to come up with additional financing that they needed in order to be able to satisfy the creditors they had. Although this is now before the receiver, my hope would be that someone would look at this as a viable operation and would pick it up as a going concern. Certainly that's my hope for the company and that's my hope for the employees.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, this loan was made one year ago, not two years ago. What we're asking for is the information that Cabinet had to make this loan. In that year Nova Scotians have been asked to pay an additional 2 per cent; they've been asked to pay an increase in over 1,400 user fees. We had word last week that every residential tax bill in the Province of Nova Scotia will be going up because this government has downloaded onto municipalities. Now Nova Scotians woke up this morning to find out that their Premier threw away \$4 million. Nova Scotians have a right to know why he made that decision. My question to the Premier is, will the Premier table all of the information which led to a Cabinet decision costing taxpayers over \$4 million, \$4 million that they will not get back?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as usual, almost everything he said in his preamble is wrong. We have had nothing to do with any downloading to the municipalities. That's simply a fabrication.

There is a receivership process that is currently underway. We have security on the equipment which we financed; we are in the security queue on the other assets of the company. We have personal guarantees on it. The reality is that we took such security as we could get because, ultimately, maintaining and investing in good jobs for the people of Nova Scotia is not a mistake. That is why we are here.

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

**PREM.: INDEPENDENT PHARMACISTS  
- FAIR TARIFF SCHEDULE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Here we go again. We've had woodlot owners come and talk to all MLAs about the way this government is mismanaging the forestry industry. We had Bill No. 100 employers this Fall surround the House about the way this government is mismanaging labour-government relations. Now we are being inundated by calls and visits from independent pharmacists around the province who are concerned about the way the government is proceeding, without working with them in making major change to their industry. My question to the Premier is, when will you get on with the job of establishing a true, proper and fair tariff schedule for our independent pharmacists so they can get on with doing their job and providing an important service to Nova Scotians?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I don't think the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party has really been following this development. The fact of the matter is that we have had very extensive consultations with the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia. We have had an extensive discussion, meetings with them. They have been fully involved with the Fair Drug Pricing Act legislation, so they knew what was coming. Thank you.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, it appears it is the Premier who is not very involved in what's going on with his government because no reasonable person would think that one and a half weeks of consultation of this nature on an industry of this importance would qualify as extensive consultation. That is a farce. Nor is it consultation to invite an NDP activist to come to your own press conference to speak for an entire industry. My question for the Premier is, when will his government get on with the job of negotiating the expanded scope of services that they promised the pharmacists so they can get on with doing their job, which is providing an important service to the people of Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, for the information of the honourable member, I'll table the discussion paper on fair drug prices for Nova Scotia that was distributed in September 2010, I think. It was the basis for the discussions that took place among the Pharmacy Association, the government and other interested parties. It wasn't just the pharmacists; there are a lot of people who are going to be affected by this.

MR. BAILLIE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I sure hope that discussion paper wasn't written by the same people who wrote the discussion paper that only consulted with a few people, when we were dealing with labour issues in Bill No. 100. I sure hope that whoever they are, they finally get on with the job of dealing with the forest strategy that has been promised three times.



My question to the Premier is, why won't you involve pharmacists themselves in actually dealing with the issue of pharmacy services as a complete and comprehensive package and end the piecemeal approach where you deal with their expenses today and promise something generally for the future?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, what I will do is I will table for the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party the Fair Drug Prices for Nova Scotians, Consultation Summary, which includes a summary of all of the people who were consulted, including 16 groups, including the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia, 13 written submissions and more than 50 e-mails that were received in relation to this matter. I think if he has an opportunity to look at it he will see that it was a fair representation of business and communities across the province.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:  
KENTVILLE POLICE CHIEF - MIN. RESPONSE**

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Last week the honourable member for Kings West asked the Minister of Health and Wellness to table her response to Chief Mander's letter regarding prescription drug problems in the Valley. The minister indicated that a response had been sent on February 15, 2010.

The honourable member for Kings West asked for the letter to be tabled last Tuesday and again last Thursday, so my question to the Premier is, will the Premier ensure that the Minister of Health and Wellness tables her response to addressing Chief Mander's concerns by the end of Question Period today?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I believe I was here, as was the member opposite. My recollection was that the Minister of Health and Wellness went through a lengthy list of things that had been done with respect to the issue that Chief Mander had identified, including the monitoring program.

We recognize and take very seriously the issue that has been identified and the Department of Health and Wellness is doing everything they can to work with the district health authorities, with the police and with the other community stakeholders, to ensure that we find a solution or an approach to the problem.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, the question was we were asking the Minister of Health and Wellness to table a letter that she referred to last week that she sent to Chief Mander. The Premier went into government, talking about openness and transparency. What's wrong with allowing the people of Nova Scotia and the people of this House to see that letter? The minister committed to do it, let her do it.

Mr. Speaker, when a respected member of the policing community takes time out of his busy schedule to express concerns to government, they deserve to be addressed. People are losing their lives, families and communities in the Annapolis Valley are looking for answers.

This same letter was also addressed to the Minister of Justice. Surely a letter from the chief of police warrants a response from the minister who is responsible for their organizations. My question to the Premier is, will the Premier ensure that the Minister of Justice tables his response to Chief Mander's letter, before the end of Question Period today?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and Wellness, of course, as is appropriate, responds on behalf of the government. She responded to the chief's letter of concern. All of that that was in the letter was already outlined for the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. MCNEIL: Mr. Speaker, Chief Mander in his letter stated, "If we turn one way and fail to start working together, take up the challenge and have the difficult conversations we need to have, more Nova Scotians will die." He goes on to say, "This letter is addressed to the Ministers of Justice, Health and Social Services for I believe these ministers need to show leadership, courage and conviction to create a venue whereby this challenge can be undertaken."

Mr. Speaker, we've asked twice in this House, and these questions for the Premier to table a response from his government to Chief Mander about a serious issue where Nova Scotians are dying, not only in the Valley but across this province, from using prescription drugs. I want the Premier to stand up and tell Nova Scotians, why is he unwilling to release and table that letter in the House so that Nova Scotians know where his government stands on this serious problem?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, where our government stands is in agreement with the chief. We agree that we need to work together, we need to work with the district health authority and we need to work with the policing officials. As they know, the responses that go out to individuals - we haven't asked the permission of the chief of police to table it. You can perhaps ask him. My understanding is that that response was sent to him.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

**LBR. & ADV. EDUC.: GAMBLING STUDY  
- RELEASE**

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. The minister's refusal to release the socio-economic study on

gambling is very troubling for Nova Scotians. It shows just how secretive this government truly is. By hiding this report, the NDP is saying clearly that the Premier and his government simply do not trust Nova Scotians. The minister should release this report and should do so today. My question to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education is, will the minister table this report in its entirety to the House today?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, as I've mentioned several times in this Chamber, we have 30 days to respond to the recommendation. We're taking our time and making sure that we understand the consequences and we want to protect the best interests of Nova Scotians. Thank you.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to gambling, the province has a Duty of Care obligation. The government has had well over a year to respond to and release this report, yet hasn't. The NDP is failing Nova Scotians on many fronts, not the least of which is transparency and accountability. The review officer has stated that this government should release this report and that they should release it now.

Since the minister is not willing to release this report, my first supplementary will go to the Premier. In the spirit of openness and transparency, will the Premier table this report in its entirety today to the House?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I think the honourable member has already heard from the minister who has received the report. She is reviewing it, as would be appropriate in the circumstances to determine what the department's response will be. I'm sure that when she completes her review, she'll be happy to answer the member's question more fully.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, not only has this government been withholding this report from the public, but they have been obstructing the work of the review officer. I will quote from Page 5 of the report of the FOIPOP Review Office. "There was over a month delay (48 days) before Labour confirmed that it in fact was the Department that retained custody and control of the Record. It has come to light that during this same period of time that the final strategy with respect to gaming in the province was being prepared for public release."

As nothing happens in the government without direction from the Premier's Office, this looks to Nova Scotians like a deliberate effort to yet again evade public scrutiny. This calls into question the validity of the entire gambling strategy that this government released. My question to the Premier is, why did the Premier's Office obstruct the work of the review officer? Who was it in the Premier's office that made this decision?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I reject categorically the assertion that is being made by the member and I think it's inappropriate.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness

**LBR. & ADV. EDUC. - GAMBLING STUDY: RELEASE DELAY  
- EXPLAIN**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, today I ask a question that speaks to the importance of integrity of government in Nova Scotia. The freedom of Information officer said there was considerable delay by this government in releasing the report on the socio-economic impacts of gambling because two departments in government were deciding who owned that report. My question is for the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. Was the government purposely delaying the release of that report so that it would not damage the release of its new Gaming Strategy?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, the answer is simple and clear, no.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, the freedom of information officer told us that the report should not be withheld - and this is the socio-economic report on gambling - from the public because it does not fall within the meaning of advice to the minister. My question through you to the minister is, if you will not release that report, what are you trying to hide?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, as I've made clear to the Chamber, there were serious concerns about the process and the information that was being researched. We stopped the - it was overdue, we expected the advice within 12 months, there had been considerable back and forth under the previous government in terms of concerns about the methodology, there was no response from the researcher - it got to the point where we had to cancel the process and it's not in a finished state. The information is not in a state that can be used. It was not used as the basis for the Gaming Strategy and we are trying to be responsible and make sure that the information that we use to make decisions is accurate, relevant, and valid. That's why we're taking our time and making sure that we understand the implications of any further release of information.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, the government could release it - and if they have a problem with it, why not state it.

My question finally is to the Premier. In Opposition this member called for open discussion on the negative impact on gambling on Nova Scotians and their families. Why not give Nova Scotians the confidence that their Legislature has integrity and table that report here today?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I think the explanation that was given by the minister was full and complete on the question that's asked by the member, but I would also like to add that we did complete the new Gaming Strategy. We have brought it forward; we think it's one that will benefit the people of Nova Scotia. This has been an issue that we, as a province, and I think as a society not just here but generally, have been

grappling with over the last number of years. I would hope that the members opposite would be hoping and considering the fact that this is a strategy that is aimed to make our situation, the gaming report, as responsible as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay.

**COM. SERV.: SCANWOOD/DASC - EFFECT**

MR. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. The Dartmouth Adult Service Centre, DASC, is a non-profit workshop that provides programming opportunities for persons with disabilities. Scanwood contracts DASC workers to package materials, and the Scanwood contract brings in approximately \$10,000 every year for this non-profit to do its very important work. DASC has said this contract is a significant loss of their budget. With Scanwood in financial trouble, what is the minister planning to do to help DASC replace this client?

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, the Dartmouth Adult Service Centre is a wonderful centre that provides many opportunities for individuals with disabilities. They also, in recent media reports with respect to the issues that were taking place with the Scanwood company, were able to include that in their budget, that they knew that this was going to be a possible issue for them, so everything is fine with their budget.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I've spoken with parents across the province who are trying to access day programming for their disabled children. DASC's programming is in very high demand, with a current waiting list of 51 people. In addition to providing meaningful work opportunities for persons with disabilities, DASC offers specialized supports to some of our most vulnerable citizens. Without contracts from companies like Scanwood, DASC has less programming to offer workers and a lower operating budget for specialized supports. Now DASC finds itself as a creditor in a bankruptcy.

My question to the minister is, will the minister ensure that no spaces are lost at DASC for persons with disabilities?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I can certainly tell the member the fact is that this minister and this government have recently made some wonderful announcements with respect to our day programs - \$0.5 million - not something that the former government even considered. I think we deserve to be congratulated for that.

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the minister is aware that DASC plans to expand its services and address its wait lists; 51 individuals are waiting to access DASC's programming and find meaningful work. This expansion will benefit Nova Scotia and the Department of Community Services. What is the minister doing to ensure this financial hit does not negatively impact DASC's plans to address the wait list?

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: First, Mr. Speaker, I have a question because one of the members opposite is telling us not to give money and then, on the other hand, another member is telling us to give money. First, to make sure the issues aren't confused, I think that the questions shouldn't be flip-flopping back and forth.

What I want to say is the fact that we have focused a great deal on persons with disabilities in this province and have made major inroads and are working together with organizations like DASC. I know that they appreciate that. We are monitoring and we are investing in the people of Nova Scotia.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - RURAL PHARMACIES: TARIFF AGREEMENT - NEGOTIATE**

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Last week I received a briefing from the Department of Health and Wellness staff, which included issues surrounding negotiations of the tariff agreement with pharmacists and the province. One of the issues mentioned in the briefing was that there is a plan to mitigate the risk to rural pharmacies in areas of the province where there are unique geographic circumstances. The failure of the minister to mention publicly that this plan would be addressed in tariff negotiations speaks volumes, as it would take the focus of government's message away from saving money and, equally important, it admits that there is a real risk when it comes to the survival of rural pharmacies that government is failing to address publicly.

My question to the minister is, if the minister knows that rural pharmacies are at risk, why don't we as yet have a tariff agreement negotiated that effectively addresses the risks?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, as you know, this government is taking action to get better drug prices for Nova Scotians. We also are doing it in a way that ensures that our Pharmacare Programs will be sustainable and, as well, that our community pharmacies will be sustainable. That's why we undertook extensive consultations with the pharmacy industry and listened to what they had to say with respect to their advice on our plan.

Mr. Speaker, we are currently in tariff negotiations with the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia and we will continue to have a very balanced and fair approach to negotiating with our pharmacies. Thank you.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, this government has chosen to address each of these issues in isolation for reasons that are becoming clearer. Last week departmental staff

mentioned a plan to mitigate risk to rural pharmacies where there are unique geographic circumstances. My question to the minister is, will the minister table the list of rural pharmacies at risk, before the end of Question Period today?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I have absolutely no intention of negotiating a tariff agreement here on the floor of the Legislature.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, we're not asking for that to happen here today. We're asking for the communities that have been identified by the Department of Health and Wellness staff as being isolated or unique, that those communities know that they are being considered. I don't think that in any way impacts the overall negotiations. (Applause) If we don't know where they are, then every community believes that they are uniquely situated, every community is feeling the stress and the uncertainty that surrounds this issue.

I would like to ask the minister, since she so clearly will not provide the list of pharmacies, will the minister please table the criteria that was used to develop that list of pharmacies that are at risk?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, it's a good thing that member is not at the table negotiating with the pharmacies is all I can say. She wants that kind of information tabled in the middle of the negotiation - I don't think it would be much of a negotiation.

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

### **PREM.: FEE INCREASES - REVIEW**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Today we learned that Nova Scotia has the highest rate of inflation of any province in Canada. That means that more Nova Scotians are digging deeper into their pockets for the everyday necessities of life. I know the government does not control the rate of inflation but they do control the level of taxes and fees that they pile on to Nova Scotians. That is within their control.

My question to the Premier is, in light of this new hardship faced by Nova Scotians, will you review your 1,400 fee increases that the current budget imposes or will you turn your back on the hardships that Nova Scotians face today?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party for that question. He's quite right, the new figures did come out today. They also noted that what was driving the inflation numbers up in Nova Scotia was home heating oil. Which of course, Nova Scotia has almost 60 per cent of our homes on home heating oil. When you exempted home heating oil, we were below Ontario and on par with the rest of the country.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure Nova Scotians will be greatly relieved by that answer. On top of the rate of inflation, of course, we have the 2 per cent more HST and as I mentioned 1,400 new fee increases as a result of this government. Nova Scotians are now facing difficult choices like whether to fix their roof or fill their oil tank, among other choices. My question to the Premier is, when will you stop adding to the financial hardship of Nova Scotians, get on with the job of balancing the budget and then give working Nova Scotians the break they deserve?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, in fact, one of the things this government did was it took our portion of the HST off one of the most important commodities to families at this time of the year which is the price of energy. I hope that in his desire to help Nova Scotians, perhaps he would agree that the federal government should take the GST off of home heating oil.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I certainly hope the federal government wouldn't follow the taxing policies of this government where they provide that break and then add 2 per cent on absolutely everything else. That is not a responsible way to deal with the hardships of Nova Scotians – raising taxes and fees is not good economic management. My final question to the Premier is, given his two previous answers, it begs the question, why is your government already so out of touch with the reality of Nova Scotia today?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, in fact, this is a government that is in touch with the needs of the people of this province. That's why we insisted on taking the HST off energy, that's why we put in place the Affordable Living Tax Credit, that's why we put in place the Poverty Reduction Credit, that's why we made the single largest investment in families who are low-income Nova Scotians in the last decade.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

### **EDUC. - CUTS: STUDENTS - EFFECTS**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Education. Over the weekend it was reported by the Halifax Regional School Board that they will cut the Youth Pathways and Transitions program as a result of the Department of Education's budget cuts to that school board. The Youth Pathways program supports the recommendations of the Nunn Report. It provides specialized school programming to help students at risk. The minister, I know, will try to pass the buck to the school boards but Nova Scotians are not easily fooled; they know that the program loss is the direct result of \$17.6 million being cut to public school programs.

So my question to the minister is, is this what the NDP Government means when they say that cuts to education will not affect students?



HON. RAMONA JENNEX: Thank you for the question even though I find it unfortunate the way it was framed. We are in a situation now within our economy that we need to make sure that we rebalance and make sure our system is meeting the needs of our students. But we also need to make sure that our students we have in school today have a Nova Scotia in the future that they are going to be proud of, that they can stay here and they can work. We need to make sure our economy is going to be good for them.

Now the decision that was made by the Halifax Regional School Board, I don't have any information on that. I do know that the Halifax Regional School Board supports their students and will do the very best that they are going to do for their students and I understand very clearly that they are able to meet the needs of the students. (Interruption)

You know, Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to answer this question with the member opposite heckling. But I do know that the Halifax Regional School Board said that they are going to be making sure that the students' needs are met in their schools. The program that was cut was in a very specific place and that they're going to be providing resources in other areas. I will also state that this is decision made by the Halifax Regional School Board and I don't have all the particulars.

MS. CASEY: I find it quite amusing to think that the needs will be met in the school because these kids will not be in any school if they're not in this program. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, the Youth Pathways and Transitions program helps those students who require a different learning environment other than that offered in typical classrooms. The program has had success reaching out to a high number of students; it has helped students with behavioural disorders; it has helped students from low socio-economic backgrounds and it has helped students who for whatever reason have become disengaged in the public classroom.

So, Mr. Speaker, just like Reading Recovery, Youth Pathways helps students who need the help the most when they need it the most. Programs prevent students from falling through the cracks and provide opportunities. My question to the minister (Interruptions)

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

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, will the minister explain why the NDP Government insists on cutting programs that attempt to level the playing field and save our kids?

MS. JENNEX: Mr. Speaker, there are many programs available in the Halifax Regional School Board designed to meet the needs of children who are not well served by schools for whatever reason. Also there are other programs in the schools, we have Options and Opportunities. The Halifax Regional School Board makes these decisions with the best interest of students. Now the one facility that has been cut is providing a very good service

but the Halifax Regional School Board has made their decision based on information and the capabilities within the capacity within the system to meet the needs of our students. There are many programs available.

Mr. Speaker, as you know the Halifax Regional School Board also has SchoolsPlus and sites available around the Halifax Regional School Board to meet the needs, not only of the students, but of the families. There are programs available for our youth and if there any specific questions available for that (Interruptions) I can't answer for the Halifax Regional School Board - that question could be directed - but I do know that the needs of their students are their top priority. Thank you.

MS. CASEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, that was a great list of programs, and I'm very much in favour of those programs, but that is not the program we're talking about. We're talking about students who have needs that cannot be met in the public classrooms. By refusing to take responsibility for the government's actions, the NDP Government's cut to public schools has come when we should be investing in our children's education in order to meet the labour market demands. In order to do that they must be in school and they must graduate.

My question to the minister is, will you commit today to provide the Halifax Regional School Board the funds they need to continue that program on Youth Pathways?

MS. JENNEX: The Halifax Regional School Board has been provided their target budget, and I know that they're working within those parameters and they're doing a very good job.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

#### **ENVIRON. - EXISTING STREET LAMPS: DISPOSAL - DETAILS**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment. The other day - Monday actually - the Premier announced his intention to legislate LED lighting for all highway lamps in Nova Scotia. We said at the time we support that initiative and I certainly hope the Premier has been advised since his press interview that there is no requirement for ratepayers to cover that improvement.

In any case, neither the Premier nor the Minister of Environment on Monday addressed the issue of disposal of the existing high-pressure sodium, mercury vapour and other lamps which will be removed from service. Would the Minister of Environment advise this House how his government plans to address the disposal of a large number of existing street lamps?

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite, we are dealing with this issue. We are dealing with our federal counterparts and we're dealing with the stakeholders and we're moving forward on this issue.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, his government's not dealing with anything - I can't even believe he would give that as an answer. His government in Opposition, these members, committed to deal with the disposal of street lamps and mercury lamps and they haven't done anything. Provinces such as Alberta and Ontario have already implemented programs to recycle light bulbs of this kind, and in Nova Scotia they're simply tossed in the landfill. The Harper Government might be delaying the phase-out of incandescent bulbs but I thought this government might be trying to do something with the LED plan, but it seems that it doesn't want to.

While in Opposition, members of this government, including the Premier, made commitments that this issue would be a priority. It's now 21 months later and there are still no regulations for governing recycling of light bulbs - where are those regulations?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, I can tell you that we are working with this. This is a very serious issue and I want to assure the member opposite that we intend to try to keep these out of the landfill. We're working with our federal counterparts and stakeholders.

I also want to talk about some things that we've accomplished over the last 21 months. We have been recognized by the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen; we have been recognized by the David Suzuki Foundation. We have done more in 21 months than the previous Opposition has done in decades.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, they've done more in 21 months to damage the environment than the Tory Government did in all their years in government - and that's saying something.

We have Nova Scotia entrepreneurs here who are currently sending bulbs out of the province, exporting economic potential and exporting jobs. This is another example of how the jobsHere strategy is quickly becoming "jobs somewhere else." This is an opportunity which is good for business, good for the environment, and good for Nova Scotia. Will the minister commit today to table in this House, this week, the government's plan for the recycling of street lamps that will be replaced by the LED fixtures?

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, again to the member opposite, we are working with our federal government. This is a very serious issue and we want to address this issue of keeping those particular light bulbs out of landfills.

As I mentioned earlier about our being recognized in the last 21 months, the only thing that we need to do is win the Stanley Cup to get recognition for environmental issues in this province.

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

**LBR. & ADV. EDUC.:  
FIREFIGHTERS RETENTION & RECRUITMENT REPT.  
- PLANS**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. Volunteer firefighters are our friends and neighbours, everyday heroes who risk their lives to keep their communities safe. Unfortunately, volunteer fire services across the province are finding it harder to recruit and retain the people they need.

The previous Progressive Conservative Government, through the Nova Scotia Fire Marshal's Office and the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia, struck a recruitment and retention committee to not only recruit volunteer firefighters but also to retain the ones you have. The report was provided to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education in late 2009, early 2010. Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the minister is, what are your government's plans for this report?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, the report is under review at various levels within the department. I'm also in the process of setting up a meeting to meet directly with officials from volunteer fire departments. Certainly we've brought in the Office of Volunteerism and non-profit sector into the Department of Labour and Advanced Education to better align and increase the opportunities for all voluntary sector organizations across this province to build their capacity. The issue that has been raised by the honourable member is one that's common to many community-based organizations and provincial groups, something we take very seriously.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, here we go again. The report was provided to the department in 2009, early 2010, a year later it's still under review. I'm sure it will probably find a shelf somewhere with other reports that have been tabled.

Mr. Speaker, the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia says there's a relatively high turnover rate for volunteer firefighters in this province with volunteers remaining in departments for between three to five years, making it more and more difficult, especially for small departments in small rural communities.

So, Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the minister is, is the minister able to define today any recommendations the Fire Marshal's Office or her government will be following to stay on top of this issue?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I recently had a meeting with officials from Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on this issue. As I've said, this situation is not only

specific to volunteer fire services across the province but it also relates to many other sectors in the voluntary sector that impact - I mean that actually provide the social infrastructure and protection of Nova Scotians. So it is much broader than is being suggested and we need to make sure that we're not only putting in place recognition and supports for volunteer firefighters and their organizations but we recognize the more general issues that impact the whole sector. Certainly as our population ages, this is going to become more and more a topic of interest and will require, you know, responsible and shared actions both on the part of government but also with the organizations and with communities and other levels of government.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, towns across Nova Scotia still have a significant turnover but they remain the most stable areas for volunteer firefighters. The real problem exists in the more rural areas of Nova Scotia where there are a number of homes and buildings but people spend many hours away from their communities to work. So my question through you to the minister is, this is an issue we can't keep ignoring, what incentives is this government providing to existing firefighters and potential firefighters to ensure that our rural communities are safe?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, I can only add that the issues haven't changed with the change of government. Just as the former government took their time to thoroughly understand the impacts and the issues and to understand what practical supports they could put into place, our government is doing the same thing. This is going to be a continuing, continuous issue for a lot of organizations and it's something that deserves a lot of thoughtful reaction and action.

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

**LBR. & ADV. EDUC.: PROF. PROGS.  
- TUITION INCREASES**

MS. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, last week Dalhousie University announced tuition increases for professional programs. Law tuition will increase by 6 per cent in September, medicine by 10 per cent, and dentistry will increase by 14 per cent. Can the Minister of Advanced Education and Labour please explain why she did not place a cap on professional fees?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, certainly the government is attempting to protect students from any unreasonable increases. A letter just went out - it may actually have been early this week or late last week, from the deputy minister - clarifying the notice and the rationale that universities are expected to provide to the department before they announce any increases. As I understand it, these have not been formalized by the board of governors and certainly, I'm sure that the rationale will be forthcoming to me and to the rest of the department. Thank you.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would request that the minister table that letter. Many students in professional programs already have thousands of dollars in debt from an undergraduate degree and they aren't eligible for a debt cap on their second degree. I wonder if the minister has checked any job ads lately because today's labour market often requires a second degree just to get an interview. My question to the minister is, why won't the minister cap student debt on a second degree?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, certainly in this time of government trying to live within its means, I think we have made considerable progress in capping the debt on the first degree. Certainly those may be areas we can look at in the future but we want to make sure that post-secondary education is as affordable as possible. That's why we've invested the \$30 million in the bursary, that's why we have capped tuition increases and that's why we have improved the student assistance package.

We understand and value the importance of a university education and we want to encourage as many Nova Scotians as possible to get their first and second degrees. But I think the citizens of this province have made it quite clear to us that there's a certain range within which they can afford to subsidize post-secondary, so we're trying to take a fair and balanced perspective on this. Thank you.

MS. REGAN: Mr. Speaker, professional programs are fiercely competitive and they require years of specialized training. These students are often forced to leave the province to find work, after they get their degree, so they can pay down their debt. The minister indicated she is prepared to look at this issue in the future. My question to the minister is, will she place a fully-funded cap on professional programs in the next round of the MOU negotiations?

MS. MORE: Mr. Speaker, certainly the government appreciates the suggestion. There will be many issues on the table during the memorandum of understanding negotiations with the university sector. I'm not going to give a list here in the Chamber, we'll see what the outcome of those deliberations are. I'm sure they will be of benefit to Nova Scotian students and certainly our excellent university system. Thank you.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - SMOKE-FREE N.S.: INFO.  
- CORRECT**

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Last Friday, in estimates, I asked the Minister of Health and Wellness to clarify some issues around funding for the Tobacco Control Strategy. During our dialogue the minister questioned some of the facts I presented in the House - facts that were

generated not by myself, but by a very well-respected coalition in our province, Smoke-Free Nova Scotia.

The minister went on to claim that we have the second highest per capita spending on tobacco control in our country and that she had sent a letter to Smoke-Free Nova Scotia correcting them on the information they provided to members of the House. My question through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is, will the minister table the letter sent to Smoke-Free Nova Scotia correcting them on the information that they compiled, before the end of Question Period today?

HON. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, it is the case that Nova Scotia spends the most per capita on tobacco control, second only to the Province of Quebec. I think this is something that we should feel very good about, in terms of our approach.

Indeed I provided that information to the honourable member in estimates and I indicated to her that we had corrected - we had communicated with Smoke-Free Nova Scotia - the error in the information that they were using. I don't think it was outdated, but it failed to take into account the efforts of law enforcement with respect to the amount of expenditure around tobacco control. At no time did I indicate there was a letter, nor did I read from a letter.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I think the minister had told me that they were very happy to hear that their figures were wrong, but when I contacted them, they had not been told that their figures were wrong, or at least they don't all know that, so I thought there should be something in writing that would confirm that.

My question is really that the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit organization prepared the figures that I used and that Smoke-Free Nova Scotia used - I'd be happy to table those figures - and they show that Nova Scotia is at \$2.56 on a per capita spending and that the national average is \$3.54. As I said to the minister, those figures are compiled in 2010, so they're not out of date, and they're based on information that is provided by our own provincial government to Ontario. My question for the minister is, why did the minister question the data produced by the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit, and used by Smoke-Free Nova Scotia, when it was our own government that provided the information in the first place?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the Ontario data includes law enforcement with respect to illegal tobacco. We have a very strong program with respect to law enforcement around illegal tobacco and the information that was provided in the compilation of that data failed to provide that aspect of our initiative and so the data the member is referring to does not accurately reflect the expenditures in this province, in their totality, with respect to tobacco control. I corrected that during the estimates. My understanding is that my staff have communicated this to Smoke-Free Nova Scotia and whoever they spoke with was very pleased to learn that this is the case.

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, in my final supplementary, I would like to ask the minister to look again at the figures she has and to provide them to the House, to provide them to all of us here today. It really is very difficult, and it's certainly not transparent, to have different things included in what you're quoting when you try to boast that we're the second highest in the country. If other provinces are including law enforcement, that's fine. We need to know what figure is being used by Nova Scotia. Our law enforcement officers who are looking at tobacco control, also look at alcohol and gaming so I want to make sure that the figure that's used is actually legitimate and it's the figure that relates purely to the tobacco control efforts of those individuals. Would the minister provide a breakdown of the costs that she's using to determine our per capita spending on tobacco control?

MS. MAUREEN MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, estimates have finished. I think the important point is that this government will be bringing forward a renewed tobacco strategy very shortly. It will tackle the ongoing problem of tobacco use in our province. I'm looking forward to the support of all members of this House in making that renewed tobacco strategy an effective one for the health and well-being of people in this province.

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

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. This year's budget announced several changes to the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Program but there's one issue that was not adequately addressed that has student groups very concerned. That issue is called unmet needs. Unmet needs is the difference between a student's assessed financial need and the funding provided by government financial assistance. According to the Alliance of Nova Scotia Student Associations, there are 2,275 students with unmet needs currently attending universities or college in Nova Scotia. Students believe that the increase of \$340 to the level of maximum assistance will force many students to make some difficult decisions.

My question to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education is, if this government is committed to targeting assistance to those who need it most, how does the minister plan to address the unmet-need gap facing students next year?

HON. MARILYN MORE: Mr. Speaker, certainly one of the main . . .

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

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to draw the members' attention to the west gallery where we are pleased to have with us today one of Nova



Scotia's most illustrious scribes, Mr. Parker Barss Donham. I ask everyone to give him the warm welcome. (Applause)

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

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

### **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House on Supply unto Her Majesty.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure I speak today. I'm again going to talk about the Memorandum of Understanding with the municipalities and the fact that the municipalities are now going to be downloaded upon again. Even though there was an agreement in place, the cap on education spending is going to be removed, ultimately costing the taxpayers of all the municipalities in this province more money.

Also, the agreement to eliminate housing costs over time that the municipalities now are paying, which is truly a provincial cost, is going to be eliminated and capped at 2010-11 levels. The same thing is true with corrections - again, truly a provincial cost and the agreement was signed some time ago but the municipalities are going to have to pay.

What does this mean to a taxpayer in a municipality? A report which I will table here from the regional municipality as soon as I'm finished, indicating over the next four years beginning in 2010-11-12 that the cost to the municipality will be in the first year of 2011-12, \$1.2 million which is not too bad. Then it climbs in 2012-13 to \$9.6 million and in 2013-14 to \$14.4 million and in 2014-15 it goes to \$19.5 million.

This mandatory contribution to the province from the municipalities through the taxpayers, the people who are paying property taxes in our province, will be passed on in the form of a mandatory area rate. In other words, if anyone thinks they're going to escape paying for this because of the cap that is in place, they won't. This increase will, indeed, be

on your property taxes and, indeed, as you look through the rest of the province, there are many more scenarios such as this.

Now, the regional municipality here in Halifax has a lot of resources and a lot of things they can do with the revenues they get. Unfortunately, if you go to the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, there are reports that there have been costs to them annually of \$3.2 million. As pretty well everyone knows in this Chamber who has been watching the regional municipality, they're running large deficits every year and the debt is growing. They cannot afford to download this kind of a cost of \$3.2 million on their property tax owners and their business owners.

If you go further and you look at other municipalities - and we're still waiting for more information back from the smaller municipalities, but even in a small municipality if it's \$50,000 or \$100,000, it's a substantial cost they're going to have and those costs will be reflected downward onto the property tax owners in that area. I stress property tax owners because the honourable minister was kind enough to say there's only one taxpayer in this province, and that's not correct. There are two levels: people who pay income tax and people who pay income tax and property tax. The property tax is only charged to people who own properties, so how can he indicate that there's only one taxpayer? Well, indeed, there is more than one taxpayer. Then if somebody doesn't own a property, indeed, they don't contribute to these costs; these costs are only borne by property owners in our province.

When you look through the process and you see what the property taxes have been in this province over the years, municipalities have a lot of costs and, indeed, they work hard to keep the costs down and still deliver services to their residents. It's very difficult. When you look and see some of the statistics over the years, Statistics Canada has indicated that the people on the lowest incomes pay the most tax usually. When you look at those figures, you realize that over the years people have probably built a beautiful home, spent every cent they've had to acquire that home. They work at the home to make sure it's in good shape and indeed their assessments go up, and all the other costs go up that they would have with that property. Then they look forward to retirement and finally realize that over the time, when their income drops, which the case is usually during retirement, that they may not be able to live in that home.

So what will they do? They'll live there until the municipality takes and sells their property, which no one wants to happen, but you see all kinds of properties for sale for tax sale, all over the province, through the year, every year, and it makes you wonder why people would lose their home for \$4,000 or \$5,000. If they can't raise the money, they'll lose their home, or they chose to sell their property, move into an apartment, and all those years that they've worked and saved and done everything they possibly can, are lost. They're lost. So what can you tell people like that?

Well, it just makes you wonder why you spend the time and the effort to do all those things to your property and make sure you have a nice home to live in and, hopefully, something you can leave to your family when you pass on, and, indeed, that is gone and sold to somebody else and when the money is gone, because your cost of living is higher - it was stated here today - in Nova Scotia than anywhere else in the country, it makes you wonder how people can continue.

If you add this cost on that the municipalities are going to have on your property tax, it's property tax owners only, you add the 2 per cent HST that has gone up already that everybody pays in this province for everything they buy, and then you look at all the fees and services - 1,400 fees and services - just imagine a few things that are costing people more money every day thanks to this government, thanks to the decisions they have made. Unfortunately, as we go through this process, as they indicated - I will table this - this is not going to really happen, to really see a significant increase in your property taxes, until after this government is no longer in government, another three years.

So they'll be able to sit back and say, we really didn't do anything because it's a slow, gradual thing and over that time, property tax owners will get a bill, they'll see it a little bit higher for the mandatory contribution for provincial services that they have to pay, and they won't realize how serious it is until year four and five and years beyond that. So that's what people are going to be facing and it's a serious situation.

At the same time you see more and more costs are put on property owners. As I say, in my area - and I know many areas are the same, the population is getting older, more and more seniors and less and less ability to pay increasing costs, so what do you pay for? So if your property tax bill comes in, it is \$1,000 or \$2,000 or even more, and most of them are a lot more than that today, depending on where you live in the province, do you pay that bill or part of that bill? Do you buy oil this month, which is right through the roof; do you drive your vehicle, which is right through the roof? And that's another thing, we've put a tremendous amount of GST on the fuel we have, there are fees on that to cover regulation - all fees that add up.

All these things don't seem very much one at a time, but when you add them all up and get all these costs in place and see exactly what happens, you soon realize there's a crisis heading our way. It's not going to be a crisis for everybody, somebody who makes a really good income it will bother them a little bit but it's the average, everyday working person, the person who struggles from pay to pay to make sure that their kids can get into hockey, make sure that their kids can play baseball in the summertime and, hopefully, if they're really lucky they can go on a short vacation somewhere within the province or in a neighbouring province.

We're talking about the people who really make our economy go in this province who are going to pay the most. When you see that happen and when you see people who suffer - I hear from every day in my area, hard-working people who cannot survive

anymore. When you add up all these little costs - and again it doesn't seem like much, but you add them all up and see exactly what is happening, it is serious.

Then, if you look at the business environment, we talk about businesses, now a lot of people say, well tax the businesses and do whatever you're going to do and the government says it dropped the small business tax rate a little bit, but, quite frankly, that's not going to do a whole lot to help businesses when they've got a lot more costs that they have got to incur. Indeed, at the end of the time they reduced the small business tax rate a little bit, corporate tax rate, if you don't make the money you can't pay the tax anyway, so it's immaterial.

As you go through this process and as you see their property taxes go up as well for this mandatory area rate they're going to have as a result of this MOU being broken by this government - a law was changed, had to be changed in this Financial Measures (2011) Bill to change that - when you look at that it questions everything else.

The Minister of Labour and Advanced Education just talked about an MOU for universities - will that MOU be thrown away in another year by this government because there's no money? But yet this year they had a surplus of \$400-some million - three-quarters of a billion dollars different than what they estimated. Are their estimates correct? It doesn't appear that they are, so how can they possibly say that they can put an MOU on anything in this province and, indeed, follow through on it? I'm not sure they ever can. Hopefully they can, hopefully they won't have a lot more arrangements they've made and they back out on them - arrangements that people take their word on that will be done, and indeed they're not done and it costs a tremendous amount of money for people as you move forward.

So you look at the other costs that the municipalities have as well, the Property Valuation Services agreement, and you look at that and they've already absorbed the costs for that. That has been significant, very, very significant. When you look at those as well, and that's all part of this original memorandum of understanding, and you also look at the municipal Auditor General that they're talking about, that will still be on the books and still the municipalities are going to have to pay for. So you add those things in that were part of the original memorandum of understanding, they're still there so that's going to be a tax cost to the individual homeowner.

Again, I keep stressing, as you see these small, incremental things change, it may be \$100 here, \$50 there, \$20 here, they all add up and people are generally not making more income from this. The economy is not really good in this province from what I'm hearing. I get calls from people all the time who are finding it difficult finding jobs, and as you go forward, if you can't find a job you can't pay the bills, and if you can't pay the bills you are soon going to be in real serious financial trouble.

It all goes together - you tax a business more, that means they cannot produce a profit. If they can't make a profit, they can't hire new people, they can't invest in new technology, and they cannot invest in new equipment. It is just a vicious circle once it starts. You've got to get this circle broken and you've got to break it in a way that allows businesses to grow and businesses to prosper so indeed they can hire people and pay them better wages and be more competitive in this province.

Again, it's the nickels and dimes that kill the whole economy in the province. This government with their mandatory fee increases and all these services of 1,400 that they did, those are small fees, but you add them up over the year and you just see what happens.

As you go forward with that, you see, indeed, there is going to be some hardship for people in the province. Maybe a better deal for today's families as has been advertised on the radio a little bit today by the government, telling everybody what a good job they're doing. When you review this whole situation and you see where we're headed, it is not very hopeful, not a very bright future for Nova Scotia. I hope I'm wrong, but I don't see anything here today that will convince me I am wrong. I've listened to the minister very carefully saying this will not cost the municipalities anything, it will be neutral.

I've been here since 1993 with a short interruption in between. I have never ever seen in this Legislature a demonstration by mayors and municipal councillors in this province. They are very concerned about this and they have to be worried about this MOU being broken. This is only one thing. What else is coming down the road? They're very concerned. I've received letters from some of the municipal councils expressing their very serious concerns and as time goes on I will table those.

It's a serious situation. I mean, you've got elected members from all councils in the province coming to Province House and saying, this agreement is going to cost us money. I have a hard time believing the government saying it's not going to cost them money. Why would these people be so upset and so alarmed about this thing? This internal report from the Halifax Regional Municipality indicates very clearly exactly what the numbers are. As I stated before, in the final year - this is 2014-15 - which this will continue on past that, this is not just the end of it, \$19.5 million a year. That's approximately \$50 for a home with a \$179,000 assessment. If your assessment is higher, you pay more, if it's lower you pay a little bit less, but a sum of a \$300,000 assessment is about \$100 a year. That's a lot of money for nothing you've gained, no additional service to the municipality and it means that the municipality can no longer tax that extra \$50 that they might have put on for other services, that means the service will be gone. Does that mean they will lay people off? Will they cut services or will they do something else to correct this serious situation? With that, I would like to table this report from the Halifax Regional Municipality, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased and proud to stand in my place today and speak to education in the Province of Nova Scotia and my sincere concerns for

where it's going. I want to speak, in particular, to the information that is being shared and is really causing people to question what is happening in public education and that has to do around declining enrolment. Nova Scotians certainly understand that our population is declining and therefore our enrolment in our schools is declining. Unfortunately, Nova Scotians are being told that justifies a cut to funding for public education. There aren't many educators in the province or there aren't many parents in the province who understand education who would agree that the funding should be cut in accordance with the population decline.

We have tried to ask the questions and help Nova Scotians understand that information and that parallel is not accurate. Part of the reason, as I've said before, that education funding has continued to increase while enrolment has declined, has to do with the very issue that we talked about in Question Period today and that was how we are able to best meet the needs of all of the students in our schools. As you know, parents send the the best they have to our schools and schools do the best they can to respond to the needs and to the abilities of those students. During the last 10, 15 years, there were many opportunities in our public schools to recognize what some of those specific needs were and to respond to them and to respond to them with programs that would allow those students to be successful, that they could feel a part of the school environment, that they could feel success. Because Mr. Speaker, we know that when students do not feel that they're having success, when they are not engaged in what's going on in the public schools, they often become a problem. That problem manifests itself to the point, sometimes, where students are not able to continue in the public schools.

So we have worked really hard to put programs in place that would keep those students engaged. We know that over the last 10 years the graduation rate in our schools has increased, we also know that the drop-out rate has decreased. When you look at that, is that what this government really wants to do, does this government want to continue to keep students in schools so they will graduate and does it want to keep students from dropping out of school? I would suggest that there's not one member in the House who doesn't have that as a goal and that is to keep as many students as possible in school, to see as many students as possible graduate and to keep the numbers of students who drop out to a minimum.

The programs that were put in place to try to respond to those, to make sure that there were programs that would allow those students to be engaged and stay in school were costly. Thus, the very justifiable reason for funding to education to grow in spite of declining enrolment.

In response to the question this afternoon, the minister spoke to the Youth Pathways and Transitions program, questions specific to that program. As some of you may know, that program was designed to do that very thing, to try to keep some of our most troubled, at-risk students engaged so they would be able to stay in public schools and they

would be able to graduate. That program is in direct response to recommendations in the Nunn Report. We know that the Nunn Report was focusing on students and young people at risk.

The Quinpool Education Centre was put together, it responds directly to the needs of students who are at risk and these are junior, senior high school students and these are the very ones we want to keep in our schools, 27, I believe is the capacity, 27 students are allowed to continue at their academic program as a result of that. I think we should be proud of that and I think the decision that the Halifax Regional School Board made, they have stated themselves was a very difficult decision and that board should not have been put in that position. When I asked today if the government would go back and give the board the money they need to hold that program I was not very encouraged by the answer.

So these students who could not survive in a public school classroom but could survive at the Quinpool Education Centre are now going to be forced back into the environment where they could not have success. That's not something that I would be very proud to say that it was my decision that caused that to happen. We're hearing from parents, we're hearing from students who have benefited from that program. It warms your heart and brings a tear to your eye when you hear some of the testimony from those students who could not and were not able to succeed and were not even able to even stay in public schools. They were getting suspended for their inappropriate behaviour, for their lack of attention, for their lack of attending school, for not doing projects. They got further and further behind and they became disruptive and eventually some of them were suspended.

I want to share with this House, Mr. Speaker, if I could, a comment that we received from the parents of a student, and I will table this. This boy had ADD, a Grade 10 student, not very successful in public schools and the parent writes, "The ADD features got in the way of his ability to keep up with the teaching style and rules of the classroom." Any classroom teacher could directly relate to that. We've all had them in our classrooms. "As a result, his behaviour reflected his frustration and the pattern of disruptive behaviour, skipping classes, not completing assignments and poor grades became the norm, in particular once he entered high school." But as parents listen to this statement, the parents are saying, "We continued to believe in him and his abilities . . ."

The parents had not given up and I don't believe that any minister or any government wants to admit that they have given up on these students. So the parents, in working with the staff of the school board, became aware of the Youth Pathways Program and their son was enrolled in that program for his Grade 11. Again, the parents are saying "Almost immediately, we noticed a huge change in [him]. He attended every class, was excited about his learning, his grades went from under 20% average to 86% in June 2010."

But listen to this statement, Mr. Speaker, ". . . he was able to see that teachers believed in him and his abilities." Parents always believe in their own children's abilities but teachers at the centre were believing in his abilities. Kids recognize that and these kids

need to know that somebody sees them as a valuable person who can make a valuable contribution and who can be successful.

So what does that do to the child? It helps them regain the confidence that they've lost. It helps them become successful academically and it helps prepare them for their post-secondary training whether that's community college, whether that's university, or whether that is going out into the workforce, because these students have ability but they need to be recognized. They need additional supports so that they can reach their full potential. So this young man, who now at the end of Grade 11 has regained some confidence in his own ability, has performed, going from a 20 per cent to an 86 per cent average in his academics, has recognized that I don't need to stay in this program anymore, I can go back to regular school, and so he did.

So that one year, Mr. Speaker, saved that young man. He would not have stayed in school, he was suspended, he would not stay. So now he's able to go back, he is having a very successful year in Grade 12 and it's all because he had an opportunity and that opportunity was in the Youth Pathways Program. Twenty-six other students have been given that opportunity and now with the funding cuts that have been imposed on all boards across this province, those 27 students in that one program have lost the opportunity to get what they need so that they can be successful.

I'm only speaking about one program, one situation, one class, one board but, Mr. Speaker, we know this is happening and we will hear continually as boards go through the process of trying to do what they believe they need to do to meet their students' needs with fewer dollars and this is just the tip of the iceberg. We have argued that this decision was wrong. We have argued that in a time of investment in a province, the one place that you need to invest is in education. The one place where we have to hang the hopes for our future is on the students, the young people in our province.

So for a budget, Mr. Speaker, of \$652,000 we have saved 27 students - 27 students who, without success in public schools, will become a cost, in some other way, to our society and not because they don't have the ability, but for some reason they have become disengaged and for some reason they need a little extra support. The Youth Pathways Program was one of those programs that provided that support. To say that cuts to the boards, as far as funding goes, will not have an impact on students, or will not have an impact on classrooms, was a mistake at the time it was made. We recognize that and we are now hearing how big a mistake that was.

We have speech language teachers who are being laid off. We have school boards that have made the decision, based on the limited funds that they have - and they have to choose their priorities, I understand that, but when you don't have enough money to do what you have to do, then you end up making cuts that they don't want to make and that hurts kids and parents and the economy of this province. One board in particular, 50



teacher assistants now gone. Well, a teacher assistant is provided to support a student who has some needs that cannot be met in the regular classroom. They need that other person there. Some of them work individually, one-on-one; some of them work with a small group, but if one board is losing 50, you can be sure that it's more than 50 kids who are having the supports taken away from them.

These students are, again, the people who this government - and I believe this minister understands - need to have her support, need to have the government's support, need to have the funding so they will not fall through the cracks. We've seen it with Reading Recovery; we've seen it with the Youth Pathways; we've seen it with teacher assistants; we've seen it with specialists; we've seen it with math mentors; and the list goes on and on. No one can stand up and say that you can gut an education system the way this particular budget is gutting an education system and still stand up and say, but there will be no impact on the classroom. Anyone who has been in a classroom would argue with that and I will argue. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to stand today and say a few words going into Supply about the Dartmouth Adult Services Centre, which we know was raised in Question Period today by the member for Glace Bay. As many members in this House would know - in fact, there are probably members on all sides of the House who got their political campaign buttons from DASC Industries. Of course, that's one of the services that they provide.

I would like to start by talking about the issues of the past couple of days as they relate to Scanwood. The Minister of Community Services may not have completely understood the issue that the Leader of the Official Opposition was raising nor the member for Glace Bay. The Leader of the Official Opposition was not making the argument whether money should or should not have gone to Scanwood a year ago. He was asking for the government to provide the rationale for that, and table that in this House, on the basis that there seemed to be indications a year ago that that business was, in fact, in trouble. We just wanted to know how that decision making took place to see whether there was, in fact, appropriate due diligence done on that. I think that's a reasonable request.

The member for Glace Bay followed up to point out that the Dartmouth Adult Services Centre would be facing a shortfall for this year and he wanted to know from the minister whether the minister was working with DASC to find a replacement client to fill that gap for the very important services that were provided. The minister, unfortunately, seemed to suggest that the member for Glace Bay was suggesting that we pour more money into Scanwood to keep a \$10,000 contract. Of course, that's just ridiculous.

What we were suggesting is that the minister should be working with the Dartmouth Adult Services Centre to try to ensure that the men and women who work in the vocational and pre-vocational programs there and who had one of the contracts through

Scanwood, in fact, packaging the bolts and so forth for some of the IKEA furniture, would not lose their jobs and that those spaces would not be lost. Of course, losing those spaces would be an additional cost to the Department of Community Services; losing those spaces would, in fact, be an additional cost to government and to the people of Nova Scotia.

As the minister is well aware, the Dartmouth Adult Services Centre currently has a waiting list of 51 people who are looking for these services and there's quite an ambitious fundraising campaign underway. The municipality has provided land for the new building and as you may or may not be aware, a bequest of \$300,000 was made a number of years ago, I believe in 2006, by Joan and Susan Loveridge. That \$300,000 was being used to kick-start the capital campaign for the Dartmouth Adult Services Centre.

This is an important program. We are talking about people who have challenges and disabilities, who have difficulty finding employment otherwise. For more than 40 years the Dartmouth Adult Services Centre has been providing services to clients. They have expanded their services beyond vocational and pre-vocational training to providing job placement services so that many of the people who work at DASC find themselves working through the system there and going out into further gainful employment in the broader employment sector.

It's very important for a number of reasons. It's about breaking the cycle of poverty, especially for a very at-risk group who otherwise would have challenges. As the minister would be aware, the Dartmouth Adult Services Centre is now sought out for advice by adult service agencies across Nova Scotia who go to them to seek programming advice and so forth.

This is also a cost savings to government. Although the government - and we certainly recognize and appreciate the money that the government does put into DASC, that prevents the Department of Community Services from having to pick up a lot of those costs. At the end of the day it's much cheaper to have DASC providing the service than the Department of Community Services and the Department of Health and Wellness having to provide other services that would, arguably, be at a much higher cost. I think the departments have recognized that, which is why they're providing that funding.

The question the member for Glace Bay quite rightly asked is, DASC is on a shoestring budget, they've been to government seeking additional funding to address the needs of the additional clients that are coming there and the additional families. He wanted to know - for that \$10,000 a year that Scanwood contract was worth to the clients of DASC and to DASC, that \$10,000 that will put DASC into a deficit position this year, because they are now a creditor in a bankruptcy proceeding - what is the department willing to do to ensure that those spaces are not lost? I hope, and I think we can all agree, that those spaces are critical spaces that are delivering services at a cost that's less than what government can provide and arguably some of the best services in this province.

I think that's important, that's critical. It's important to understand that we have an organization that for more than 40 years - almost 45 now - has successfully worked to break the cycle of poverty for people who are facing severe disabilities and challenges that otherwise would not have allowed them to get into the workplace. They either end up with employment at DASC or they end up working through DASC and being at job placement services that place them in the wider employment circle. That's important. That's how we address that overall issue of poverty, particularly poverty of those with disabilities.

I know many members will be aware that DASC provides a number of extremely critical and important services. I mentioned the button manufacturing, I know many of the political buttons and campaign buttons, not only in metro but in this province, have been produced by DASC for all political Parties and for other organizations - in fact I wouldn't be surprised if somebody told me that they were the largest button manufacturer in the province.

In 1980 or thereabouts, they picked up the manufacture of communion wafers for the Catholic Church, and they are now the primary supplier of communion wafers for Catholic Churches across Nova Scotia. So of course there's another service that we look at, and you know folks going to church and partaking in communion and the wafers are more than likely coming from the Dartmouth Adult Service Centre, so that's obviously another service; and these are meaningful services.

They also provide packaging and assembly services, and they do large-scale mailings. If you actually have the opportunity, I encourage every member to go for a tour of their facility. You'll see that many of those mailings you get, whether they are government mailings or commercial mailings, they are actually packaged in that facility by clients of DASC. They do those mailings, prepare them for Canada Post standards, and get them out so that they arrive at your doorstep. They do a phenomenal job at that; they do an excellent job and, obviously, they provide a competitive bidding service on that.

As well, on the assembly side, that's exactly the service that they were providing for Scanwood. I think most of us have had the experience of getting a piece of Ikea furniture and the package of bolts - and we all know how important it is that that package of bolts has all the correct items in it, the correct numbers, the right parts to go with the instruction manual that you spend all night putting the bookcase together or whatever. For the items that were manufactured at Scanwood which, as I understand it, in their last days was primarily chests of drawers, those were counted out and packaged and assembled by the clients of DASC. That is very real, very meaningful work, and it is work that affects us in our daily lives. I think it's important to recognize just how valuable a service they are providing.

Then we look forward to where DASC goes from here. I've mentioned that they've acquired land from the municipality at a less than market rate and that was obviously a very exciting point. They managed to get a bequest of \$300,000 to kick-start that capital campaign and I know that they are seeking contributions, not only privately but also from

government, to move forward. That move is so they can address the needs of the 51 clients on their waiting list, as well as the other clients who would probably be on their waiting list if they didn't call and already find there was a waiting list and choose not to sign up.

If we look at the history and we think about where they've come from - this is an organization that started in 1966 in the South Woodside Annex School; they've come a long way from there. At the time they were serving just five adults, in 1966 serving just five adults with intellectual disabilities and they focused on craft-oriented activities. That was a very important part of their activities and something that they continue today.

Within a year they had doubled the number of clients they served and they had to move to a larger facility on Dundas Street, in the riding of the current Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. It was an important move and it maintained that important and strong connection to Dartmouth. Interestingly enough, at the time the work they did, they moved into woodworking and they also packaged the little utensil bags you got at Kentucky Fried Chicken. You can imagine, back in the 1960s going into a Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet - they weren't KFC back then - and ordering the two-piece meal and the little package of utensils was packaged by the clients of DASC.

I think it is critical to understand that from the very first day that DASC began operating, this was not a make-work project. This was real employment, valuable employment providing a service to commercial clients that was required and that was very critical.

Of course by 1972 they were providing the promotional button service which, interestingly enough, has become the item that they are probably best known for. It's the one thing everybody seems to know about and for many years they just did the circular buttons and now, of course, they've expanded into many sizes and square buttons and, without providing too much of a commercial for them, they can provide full-colour buttons at the price of a single colour button - I hope you don't think that's too much of a commercial for them, but I think if any organization deserves a little commercial in the Legislature it's probably the Dartmouth Adult Services Centre because they're trying to export that skill and that belief in helping people break that cycle across the province. So it's not just about Dartmouth, it's about providing services to people in metro but it's also providing service to people in Cape Breton and. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Prescott, Horizon.

MR. YOUNGER: Prescott, Horizon - thank you Mr. Speaker. It's like having cue cards sometimes from the Speaker of the Legislature.

It's so important that these services are provided because I think we all recognize that government would never be able to deliver the kinds of services that these

organizations provide or make the kind of meaningful differences. To see the faces of some of these people - and some of them are people who wouldn't find employment elsewhere. Some of them are people who develop skills there and move on to additional gainful employment elsewhere and I think that that's very important.

Of course over the years they moved on and they provided specialized services working with people and helping people deal with intellectual disabilities. Let's keep in mind how pioneering and groundbreaking this was in the 1960s when people with intellectual disabilities were looked down on in such a horrible and disturbing way. I know it's still an issue to some extent, but I hope we're at the point where that is no longer the front of mind in our society. I think that they've played the leading role in showing that everybody's equal, we're talking about people who are making meaningful contributions. I said it was 1980 that the job sharing program began but it was actually 1993 that that happened.

Mr. Speaker, with my last minute I'll wrap up by just reiterating the fact that what we're seeking from the minister - and I honestly believe that DASC is an organization she cares about - what we're asking for is just to ensure that with the failure of Scanwood that those seats are not lost. The seats that were funded by the work that they did for the Dartmouth Adult Services Center are not lost and that the expansion plans are not put on hold because I think that would be such a loss for this province. It would not only be a loss for DASC and the people they serve but it would be a loss for this entire province, a loss for the efforts of everybody who is trying to help break the cycle of poverty, particularly as it relates to people with intellectual disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, with that I'd thank the House for its time and for listening to my remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

[2:48 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Supply with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[5:58 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Gordon Gosse, resumed the Chair.]

MR. 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 and made progress and begs leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

We have now reached the moment of interruption and the late debate, as was chosen earlier, was submitted by the honourable member for Clare:

“Therefore be it resolved that the government recognize the importance of Nova Scotia’s agricultural industries, invest in local food production and provide sustainable assistance to farmers in our province.”

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

### **AGRIC. - AGRIC. INDUSTRIES: IMPORTANCE - RECOGNIZE**

MR. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I’m very pleased to rise in my place this evening and speak about local food production, the need to expand what we are doing, and I’m pleased to say that the current state does call upon the Department of Agriculture, and perhaps other agencies relating, to work in a stronger fashion with a wide range of stakeholders, none more important than the farmers themselves.

Over the past 15 years, looking at Statistics Canada statistics, nearly 700 family farms have been lost in Nova Scotia during that period of time. I believe, and I certainly want to believe, hopefully that is the bottoming out in the all-important agriculture industry. It plays a role in the economy of every one of our counties, a significant role in our province, and again my belief is that it can be an economic generator providing additional jobs and additional income for the province. We’re really part of a larger Canadian trend, in many ways, because Canada has dropped from the third-largest global exporter of food to seventh place. In a recent Globe and Mail article, it said between 1996 and 2006 food imports increased nearly 22 per cent.

Now, we all know in Canada and our province, sometimes it’s easier to buy an apple from Argentina or Chile than one of our own locally grown apples. We know that speaks to a big problem and, again, it’s the problem of getting it on the store shelf. There’s no problem with production. As the minister and all of us here are well aware, in that particular sector we’ve had some recovery and renewal.

We need to take this on with a real mission to get local food in our homes, in our schools, our universities, our institutions, to a much stronger degree than what we currently are. That’s why, as we started in the very first phase of developing a food policy for Nova Scotia, we decided that in light of what GPI was telling us with their release last summer, we needed to set targets, and that’s why we put forth having 20 per cent of all food

consumed in Nova Scotia grown and produced here, and whatever manufacturing added value to that, of course, would be to our benefit.

That's what the cry of The Globe and Mail article was really saying, that we continue to decline in that percentage. They talk about moving from 17 cents of a 64-item food basket down to just 13 cents of the food dollar, but perhaps even more critical was the fact that overall in our total, we only consume about 8.4 per cent of food grown here in Nova Scotia.

So I think with those kinds of disturbing facts, Mr. Speaker, the call continues. Select Nova Scotia is an initiative to educate, put some projects in place that, in fact, would help Nova Scotians reconnect with the food they consumed, where it is grown but, in my view, where it should be grown - we have the capability here. Again, those of us who have the opportunity to live in a farm community, we know the dedication of our farmers. We know that there is some very good research and development going on, but I think this is still one of the areas that do need good, strong investment. I guess I was hoping that the 10-year strategy would really give specific details around that kind of investment because we do have to connect farmers to marketing, to business, to a way of dealing with their work with crops and the way in which they will get it out there for Nova Scotians to consume.

Food security, food safety, these are all very real issues and I think the food security piece is the one that is going to eventually hit us pretty hard and why we need to take steps now, in incremental ways, to get Nova Scotians tuned back to the fact that we used to provide most of our own food, in previous generations, returning even partway to that reality. Taking the foods that we can grow here - we can produce some on a year-round basis, others are seasonal. Farmers are working industriously to extend the seasons, both with crops that can be early starters and those that can be extended at the other end of the season.

When we come to food security, one of the great revelations this week, which has impacted us at a very quick rate, is inflation. While we know that the cost of a barrel of oil has a direct impact on agriculture, I'm not sure if there are industries that are impacted as strongly as it is on agriculture. In fact, the rate of inflation for the impact on the cost of gasoline, the inflation over the last three months, is 18 per cent, the cost of food has gone up 18.3 per cent, again in that same period. So there's a very strong parallel and it is my belief that as we produce more local food and get away from the transportation costs, or some of those costs, we will be much better off.

We also are very much aware that what we do produce in Nova Scotia is of the highest quality and we have many safeguards built into the safety of what we do produce. I know that the Food Policy Council is making strong overtures to government and to all Nova Scotians as well, to educate ourselves, get ourselves to commit to buying more local food. To that end, on April 28<sup>th</sup>, April Flavours 2011, Tasting Feast & Fundraiser will be held at Wheelock Hall at Acadia.

When I take a look at the number of chefs and the local produce that will be able to be sampled that evening, if more Nova Scotians could really get a sense of what we are currently doing and what we can do in the future, I think we could have a much better day in terms of consuming our own food. With that, Mr. Speaker, I take my place.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JOHN MACDONELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the member for Clare for this resolution. I'm going to stick to script as much as I can, in the hopes that I'll get through this fast enough to address some of the issues raised by the honourable member, and I think he raised some good points. I'm glad that he has an interest in agriculture and I guess it's pretty hard to be an MLA from Kings County and not. Anyway, I say thanks for the opportunity to speak about our government's commitment to undertake the changes necessary to ensure a competitive, profitable and sustainable agricultural sector in Nova Scotia.

I've long believed that if government is going to invest in agriculture, it should be strategic, with a long-term goal and a direction in mind. These goals are to create long-term growth and focus on what makes Nova Scotia agriculture strong. The Department of Agriculture invested millions in agricultural for products for this Strategic Infrastructure Investment Fund over the past few years. These projects focus on improving on farm and processing infrastructure, helping to modernize processes and make it easier for stakeholders throughout the value chain to work together on common areas.

Buy local or Select Nova Scotia - as the member opposite had indicated, we've also made major strategic investments in recent years in buy local infrastructure such as farmers' markets. The Department of Agriculture continues to administer the very successful and popular Select Nova Scotia campaign to promote local sales of local products and tell consumers why buying local agriculture is a great choice.

An annual significant event for the department is the IncrEDIBLE Picnic; it's held in communities across the province every August. These picnics are a chance for producers, chefs and other food vendors to showcase local food and promote greater consumer awareness, knowledge and consumption of local agri-food and seafood products. Nine picnics were held last summer in Halifax, Windsor, Truro, Kings County, Mabou, Musquodoboit Harbour, Hubbards and Annapolis Royal. It's estimated that 10,000 people came out to meet more than 100 producers, wineries, restaurants and farm organizations.

Over the winter months, my staff came up with a great way to promote the wide variety of fresh local food available this time of year - that was Winter Fresh, the IncrEDIBLE February campaign. The winter food campaign extended select Nova Scotia's presence by providing mid-winter community events in the spirit of the



IncrEDIBLE Picnic. Those events reinforce existing grass roots of community interest in local food and supported Nova Scotia producers.

Last February, more than 35 community suppers were held around the province, each featured local ingredients and educational activities that promote the Buy Local concept. Suppers were held in all corners of Nova Scotia, from Bay St. Lawrence, Cape Breton to Yarmouth, and I have to say, I got to attend two in my constituency. I was really pleased that there was some uptake in my own area.

One of the questions people ask me about buying local is, what is the government doing to buy more meats, produce and other foods grown or made in Nova Scotia? That's a great question. I think the government should buy local when it makes sense to support local producers while insuring tax payers' dollars are used wisely and for the maximum possible benefit.

Mr. Speaker, we understand many stakeholders would like more locally produced foods to be used in public institutions like schools and hospitals. I've asked my staff to conduct a survey of food procurement in publically funded institutions that report back to me. They presented some of the results earlier this month at a public forum attended by food producers, wholesalers and distributors and food service managers.

What we learned in every part of the market chain has different expectations, issues and opportunities when it comes to food procurement vary depending on the providers. I was particular interested in the issues faced by our suppliers in their efforts to get more local products into institutions such as hospitals and homes for special care. The school system also has specific needs and I'm keen to know how we can get more local healthy food in the hands of our school children.

I know this is not a simple issue with an easy solution but we will keep working with industry on this important issue. We need to be strategic and we need to think long-term. Since October, the Agri-Commodity Management Association has been coordinating programs and looking for joint ventures in the red meat sector. This management association was born when our province's beef, sheep and pork producers associations decided they wanted to strengthen the agricultural industry and work together to address common challenges and take advantage of opportunities.

We've committed \$300,000 over three years to help our industries be more competitive with the expectation after those three years are up, the organization will sustain itself. I'll give you an example of something that's quite new that we've been investing in now and that's grass-fed beef. As naturally healthy food, grass fed beef presents a significant opportunity to rejuvenate the beef industry in this province. The Department of Agriculture is working with Nova Scotia cattle producers, researchers at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and AgraPoint production specialists to identify best practices for grazing cattle on pasture.

The Cape John Pasture Production Project will help producers by demonstrating the best practices for a rotational grazing management system. This pasture management system has been shown to improve pasture quality and yield, as well as improve cattle health and productivity. It will be introduced into the Cape John pasture project this Spring. The purpose of this initiative is to determine the best practices for intensive pasture management in Nova Scotia to get the most of our natural resource. The Cape John pasture project will utilize applied research methods to capture the full potential of Nova Scotia's pasture system for grazing and finishing cattle.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that we're interested in finishing cattle. Traditionally, Nova Scotia has been a cow/calf industry - it's not competitive and we need to move to the next level on the value chain and that would be to finish cattle.

If the beef industry continues to move in this direction, it will be well positioned to compete in an emerging health and wellness market.

I want to table, for members, our Genetic Enhancement Program. In consultation with the industry we came up with a program that allows for subsidizing the price of bulls and replacement heifers for the beef industry. It's also related to rate of gain, so that you have a base rate of about \$300 a bull, I'll say, a subsidy, and then for how its record of daily gain is you can get another \$100 and so on and so on - a similar program for sheep and goats. Something that's in this program that's unique to Nova Scotia - I wanted a new entrant component so that people who are new to the industry actually could get a greater bump as well, so that's something that we've included.

I see the Speaker is holding up (Interruption) A minute and a half?

Well I won't go on to home-grown success, but I do want to state for the members that quite often if you're looking at Statistics Canada numbers, it's not always for full-time farmers. Lots of people who are part-time farmers put down farming and Statistics Canada would recognize them as farmers, so if there has been a drop of 700, they may not have necessarily been full-time farmers although we'd really like people - if they have money they want to spend on agriculture, we'd like them to do it. The issue for us around buying local is - and it's a comment I've made at many meetings - if every store shelf, if every place that consumers went was local product and farmers were still going broke, that's not good enough. We want farmers making money.

When we consider the amount of food that we produced years ago, even at that we still weren't eating our own tomatoes and lettuce and so on in the wintertime, even though we probably were eating more of our own beef. Anyway, the industry does have its challenges, but I think we've put together some programs that have been deemed helpful, and I look forward to the comments from the member from the Progressive Conservative Party. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to enter into this debate for a few minutes this evening, and I find the comments of both the other speakers of interest certainly.

It's interesting to hear the minister talk about the finished cattle - it would be interesting to see how that goes. Hopefully that would be successful. I agree that it's probably time we got there if we can produce enough, sustain it and make it viable because it certainly is not, and you only need to talk to the farmers very briefly. Anybody who is in that industry - in beef cattle - know that they're just barely surviving and it's almost a hobby versus trying to make a living anymore. Most of them are doing something else, as the minister well knows.

I want to talk about a number of things and I know I don't have much time, but the honourable member for Kings West mentioned about the apple industry being alive and well. Well it is and they are, but they don't know it - most people don't know it. I think it's probably fair to say they're going to Sobeys or wherever and they're buying a product that is local. I'll use Masons, right in my own backyard. You can buy a bag with Mason Apples written right on it, or you can buy a no-name brand with a little number on it, a little code, and if you know the code you know where it comes from and they're coming from Masons, and people are buying that thinking they're buying it from somewhere else.

Now how strange is that? We don't even know what we're buying and it goes very much to the topic at hand this evening, we don't know what we're buying, we don't know where it's coming from. Why is that an issue? Why is it that we have to put that in a no-name bag, with a three or four digit number on it, for people to buy it? It just doesn't seem to make sense.

There's a piece missing, it has been talked about but to me, it is the education piece and I've said this probably before, once or twice. I think that it would be valuable for government, regardless of who is in government, to look at this and go okay, where does it have to start? Well it has to start with our children, I think, and they have to realize that we, as consumers, going to the stores, whether it be - well, it doesn't matter what the store is, wherever we're going to shop - there should be signage up there that is clear. I know that we do have some, you know the Select Nova Scotia program and so on, and I would never say that that's not good but it is probably not enough yet.

There has to be, and I know the labelling issue has been discussed over time but I think there should be things that kids need to know, we, as consumers, need to know, all levels, all ages need to know. First of all, where products are coming from. If you didn't have to pull out that little label and look at it trying to find where this item did come from or that little sticker that says whatever the product is and there's a number, and may or may not say where it came from. If it was right there and said product of the U.S.A., product of Canada, product of Nova Scotia, product of China, I think you'd have people who would

take a second look to say oh, I don't think I want to buy anything from here or there – maybe. It would all depend, I think it is safe to say and realistic to say, that it would all depend on the cost, unfortunately.

The dollar does rule the world and we know that and that's unfortunate in some ways. But I do think people are getting smarter and that some people are spending a little more to know that they are buying a product from this country or perhaps from the United States - we don't know what we are buying from here, we wish we knew what we were buying from here. That still remains an issue unless you're going to a place like Mike Oulton's or – who is the guy down your way? (Interruption) - Jim Lamb, who has a store there as well, or others, there are some of those stores around the province. You know what you are getting, or you think you do. You know it is somewhat local, you maybe don't know exactly where it is coming from but you can ask and they can tell you that this is a product of and from wherever. I think that's very important and I'm surprised that those businesses aren't growing and aren't getting bigger.

I don't know what Jim Lamb's is like, I know Oulton's has been there for my lifetime and I don't know how long Lamb's has been there, a long time as well. We had some conversation with Jim in months past. Those are success stories for a reason and I think there's a consumer base who go there and shop constantly because they know what they're getting. Those people care when they still go into the Sobeys, I think, the Superstores or the Co-ops or wherever they're going - they're looking at products and it does matter where it comes from, so there is a group there.

There's something that says, well, why is this group educated and this group isn't? So there's a huge education piece. We see it in a lot of other things in life. Kids are smarter now, or at least it appears, maybe just because I've got my own and they keep telling me they are smarter than we ever were. They do care about what tomorrow is going to bring and where things do come from.

We spend a lot of time teaching our kids, we take them to the store and we say, where does this come from and they're looking at these little labels. I don't know, it should be easy to say, oh, there's a product from down in the Valley, I should be able to buy them apples because they're just from out home here at Mason's. Where did that fish come from, it was just caught off here, in the bay out here. We don't have that.

I think that's got to be a big selling feature, that's one big piece of it. The farm industry is an incredible industry, in my opinion. It's a huge economic generator, if you want it to be, and lots and lots of room for growth, I really do believe that. We talked to some folks who were looking to get into the business and now I know that the minister has made comments and I'm sure he'll make more with regards to the Farm Investment Fund. There still seems to be folks in the farm community who are confused. They'll tell you, we met with young farmers not so long ago and they said, look, that was a great program. They

went to school and took a course and it cost about \$10,000 to take it but it was value for their industry. Now they're wondering where that has gone, is that still available? Well, maybe, through some other program.

At times young farmers can maybe, if they are lucky, buy land at a fairly decent price but chances are if it is a fairly decent price, or what you might consider cheap, there's probably some work that needs to be done to make that land ready to produce. That costs money. The Farm Investment Fund - they will all tell you when you talk to them, that was a valuable asset for them to go to and to get a few dollars from, to pay it back over time or whatever it might be.

There has to be, and we still don't have all the details and when I talked to the Federation of Agriculture they still don't seem to be totally 100 per cent. I know the minister told me during the estimates he was going to meet with those folks to discuss the rollout of this new strategy and where that money may go. I haven't heard too much more on that but I'm sure I will as there will be questions further on in this House as we move forward in the weeks ahead.

We need good farms, good solid policies around the buying local campaign, as some of the things I touched on here in the last few minutes, not just - the IncrEDIBLE Picnic is good, that's an incentive. That says to people, you know what? This is a bit of education, you see it come out once or twice a year, and I think that's a great program, that's something that has been going on for a while now. We need more of that, but we need to figure out how to get our messaging out. I know it costs money to do communications, but there are a lot of communications, in this case when you're talking about buying local and a campaign like that, I would see there would be great value in spending a little money on trying to do that education.

I'm not sure what that is, I'm not a communications person, but I think there are a lot of smart people out there who could say, this isn't that hard. Also, as I said, there have to be some kind of incentives about why should I buy local? People say, it costs more money. Why should I buy local? Because, instead of just saying because, these incentives have to be there.

I don't know what that is either. It doesn't necessarily have to be a financial incentive, I don't know what it is, but I think there's room to think outside the box. If you talk to the young farmers, they'll say, where am I going to be in a few years, maybe not even here. We want to stay. The young farmers, I have never seen a group so excited in all my life. These guys are smart kids - I say kids, they're 25, 30, whatever they are, that have been in the business, who have grown up in the business, who want to stay in the business, who have a foreseeable future, they're thinking 25, 30, 40 more years, whatever that might be in some cases. But where are they going to end up? They don't know.

They need those - incentives to them are the Farm Investment Fund where they can go and get a little money, do what they need to do, get some more acreage, get it ready,

grow the products, sell the products locally. It all seems like a fairly simple task, but we have missed it somewhere, and I don't know what that is for sure. I do know there are people who I am sure can put this together and figure it out. There are a lot of smart people working, not only in government - but I don't know how much we go back to the farmer.

I always say this and you've probably heard me say it, minister, if there's a problem with your car, you take it to somebody who knows something about your car, a mechanic. When there's a problem in the farming industry, perhaps you should be involving the farmer more. I don't know to what degree. I know as governments we all say we've consulted, we've done this, we've done that, we've talked to the farmers. How far do we go? It's a difficult question. It's not one that's easily answered, I will agree with that as well. I really don't think it's easy.

A long-term plan has to be developed and I know that - thank you, Mr. Speaker, the time goes by quickly. I know you put together a 10-year strategy and I know that I've criticized you for that and I'll criticize you some more as I hold it up. It's not just me, I want to make that clear, minister, it's not just me that's being critical. If you take that to the farm community, they say you know what, Chuck, beautiful pictures in there, a nice shot of the Valley, but we already knew that. There's information in there, pick the page, we already knew that - global trends, environmental, the green advantage, yeah we know about that stuff. They're not telling us anything in that 10-year strategy.

That's why I'm interested to know more about this and you know that you'll get questions from me on this as we move forward with regard to that \$500,000 that was talked about, in the budget, to develop and to put this plan ahead. I think the farmers are anxiously sitting by saying, wow, what does that mean, \$500,000? Then they think, we just lost \$450,000 by way of a Farm Investment Fund that they're confused about, but if they get \$500,000 why wouldn't you just dump it back in there?

I'm sure it's not that simple and I know you're going to probably detail that in the days and weeks ahead as we talk more about it.

I know that my time is passing by, with that I want to say, thanks very much for the opportunity to join in this debate. I can't stress enough the importance of where we're going in the future with regard to eating our own local products. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to thank all the members tonight on an excellent debate.

The honourable Acting Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. MAT WHYNOTT: Mr. Speaker, I move you do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House on Supply unto Her Majesty.

[6:28 p.m. The House resolved itself into CWH on Supply with Deputy Speaker Ms. Becky Kent in the Chair.]

[7:35 p.m. CWH on Supply rose and the House reconvened with Mr. Speaker, Hon. Gordon Gosse in the Chair.]

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Second Reading.

### **PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 17.

#### **Bill No. 17 - Fair Drug Pricing Act.**

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

MS. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise this evening as we get back to the business of bills in the House, having completed our hours of estimates. I know that the members are interested in the bill before us, Bill No. 17, the Fair Drug Pricing Act.

This bill was introduced by the Minister of Health and Wellness yesterday evening. For the benefit of people watching and for the members of the House I'd just like to remind the members that this bill is a bill that's going to lay out a plan and the strength - the government's ability to control the price of generic drugs, in particular. That's where the emphasis has been, that Nova Scotia apparently has a rather high price for generic drugs, higher than the rest of Canada and some of the highest prices in the world.

For that reason, I understand that the government has taken steps to try to rein in those prices and Bill No. 17 is the result of what the minister told us today was a lot of consultation. I think a lot of us are a little concerned because we do believe that there has also been a lot of outcry from the communities who feel their pharmacy may be in danger, and from the pharmacists who feel, basically, that the premise of their work is being changed, the nature of their reimbursement is being changed. A lot of things are coming at them that they perhaps are not prepared for or don't believe the timing is right. There are a lot of issues for us to discuss today as we look at Bill No. 17 and how it's laid out and what the implications are for Nova Scotia.

I think the first thing I would like to say on behalf of our caucus is that we absolutely support the premise that generic drug prices have to be reined in and have to come down. There are savings to the government through our Pharmacare Programs and through Family Pharmacare because through those two - particularly those two big Pharmacare Programs - the government spends roughly \$300 million a year. That is a large number and growing fast at the same time.

Over the last number of years there are more and more drugs being entered on the formulary and there is a lot of pressure for people to remain active and healthy by taking those drugs. It may keep people out of hospital, it may keep them from needing surgery, but the cost is coming back and being borne, to a great extent, by the people of Nova Scotia through the Pharmacare Program.

For that reason, there certainly is a large amount of money at stake and an amount to be saved. The Minister of Health and Wellness indicated she believed it would be about \$6 million, that the savings would be in the first year. I would assume it won't change too much from that. Really, in perspective that is 2 per cent of the budget of our Pharmacare Program. It is a significant amount of money for other programs but still rather modest gains in terms of the savings.

I must say as well that I've certainly clearly said that the Liberal caucus supports the intent of the bill in terms of controlling costs. We do believe that has to happen, but at the same time we are concerned about some of the aspects of the bill. I think the context in which we should be looking at this is that this bill which is trying to rein in the cost of generic drug prices is also happening in isolation of several other points; one of them being that last year a bill was introduced here and it will come back, I'm sure, because if we didn't finish with it through the legislative process, but it was a bill to expand the scope of practice of pharmacists.

We had talked here and have in the past - and recent years especially - talked about making the fullest use of everybody's skills and ability, and that the pharmacists are a key component in delivering health care, advising the people of Nova Scotia when they are ill. In some communities they are the only health care individual or trained person. So often,



when people haven't got access to a family doctor, they are turning to their pharmacist and we know that often you can get an answer and be advised about what is available to treat your condition, by going to the pharmacy and people are doing that.

What we recognized in the scope of practice bill that was before us and that we're waiting to see come back, was that pharmacists could do more, thereby taking some of the burden and effort off of doctors, who will be then able to see more patients. We know that one of the problems is patients are waiting a long time, even if you have a family doctor, you might wait a long time to get in and see them.

There's no question that the idea of expanding scope of practice for pharmacists is welcome, we strongly support it, we believe it's the right direction to go and so do pharmacists. They are very keen to play a bigger role in the delivery of health care in their communities and for their customers and the people that they see on a regular basis. In fact, some of the letters that we have received have pointed out that in some communities they said the best continuity of care that individuals are receiving are from their pharmacist, because the doctors have been coming and going at quite a fast rate, there's a big turnover, there's often gaps in having a family doctor in the community. I'm thinking particularly of a letter that I received from Digby that was saying exactly that, that that pharmacist feels they probably know the person's condition and their needs better than anybody, because there is no doctor who has seen some of these patients consistently.

We know that they can do more; we're asking them to start doing things like providing inoculations, ordering lab tests, interpreting those tests and actually prescribing the drugs, within a defined range. I wouldn't even say narrow range, but defined range of drugs, they will be able to make those prescriptions themselves. So we're asking a lot more of pharmacists and it really is undetermined how we're going to pay those pharmacists for doing that work.

We all support it. I know we all have pharmacies in our area and personally, probably sought their advice as well. I think there's no question it is the right direction to go, but the problem is we don't know how they are going to be reimbursed for those services, what kind of fee schedule will be set up to help the pharmacists, in terms of taking their time away from what they're doing now, which is being responsible for every single prescription that is written and dispensed at the pharmacy.

Remember, a lot of those drugs can create very lethal reactions, people can have allergies. There's an awful lot they need to look at before they dispense that drug, because they are ultimately responsible for the health of the people who are at the counter. They are doing all of that and now we are going to ask them to take time to counsel and sit down and really work with patients, much as a doctor would do. They are going to have to have more people working at the counter if they are going to be off doing more of these other tests and interpreting tests and advising people.

I just want the members of the Legislature to understand that the pressure on the individual pharmacist is going to be much greater as they take on these new roles and have to find people who are going to fill the role at the counter and in the pharmacy.

Now part of that was addressed by the bill we talked about the other day - I think it is Bill No. 15 - which was the Act that was going to allow pharmacy technicians to have a greater scope of practice. So, as you can see, as we add more duties to one of the professional groups, there's a cascading effect where others then need to move up and step into the role that is vacated by the person who is now busy doing something else in this continuum of health care.

The pharmacy technicians, who have about two years training, I think, and go through a prescribed course, are now going to become professionalized. They are going to have the College of Pharmacists that can manage their professional standards. They are going to be given more responsibility, they are now going to be able to actually dispense drugs without a pharmacist doing the final check, looking over their shoulder, making sure everything is all right. So by that token, Mr. Speaker, what's going to happen is that the pharmacists are going to be, or the pharmacies that employ them, are going to have to pay more for the pharmacy technicians, so there's another cost pressure. We have a time pressure and an unknown reimbursement for this expanded work that we want pharmacists to do.

We have the pharmacy technicians coming on board, helping to take on some of that workload and yet requiring more pay. We also have the fact that our tariff that pays for the dispensing, the amount that is negotiated by the province with pharmacists for what they can charge to dispense a drug, has not moved much in about 20 years. One of the letters I received from a pharmacist, I think, said it had moved approximately a dollar in 20 years. It has been more or less fixed and right now it's about \$10.50 - that's not exactly right but it's in the \$10 range.

The pharmacists have told us and they've told all members of the House, I know, in their lobbying efforts, in talking to us about the uncertainty that's surrounding them, they have said that they sat down, worked out the true cost of dispensing a single prescription and it is in the \$15 range, there's about a \$5 shortfall, and that's 50 per cent on top of what they're currently getting that is the shortfall in their dispensing fee. That amount of money has really, over the years, they haven't sought to get higher dispensing fees because really we've been subsidized by commercial rebates that have gone back to the pharmacy from generic drugs.

What we're talking about is a fairly complex set of circumstances around the funds that have actually paid for the operating of our pharmacies. I really do believe that the commercial money that was given back to pharmacies from the generic companies that they would do business with, has gone into paying the salaries of the staff, keeping the

doors open, ensuring that they have the funds they need to do a raft of things that pharmacists do without ever asking for payment.

I'm sure that other members have received a lot of e-mails, as well, from individuals but I received one today which was from a Pharmasave owner in my riding, in which he talked about all of the services that they provide without charging for those. I think that many of us can relate to that. There is often free delivery of the drugs and a lot of people need that, especially seniors or people who might be incapacitated because they've had surgeries or they may have mobility problems. I talked to one pharmacist who said they often go to people who are almost homeless, people they have helped over the years who are really down and out, and yet they will deliver drugs to them to make sure - in the case that I had spoken about to the pharmacist, it was a diabetic that he knew very well. He would go out of his way to find that man and give him the drugs, because without his insulin he would end up in the emergency room at a big cost to our health care system.

In terms of the various services that are provided on a pro bono or free basis, I'll just give you a little rundown on one that was mentioned in an e-mail from a Digby pharmacist. It talks about triage of serious health issues, health assessment of minor ailments such as heartburn and allergies, compliance packaging for seniors - I'm sure members know that means they're put in individual dispensing cases so that seniors don't make mistakes - or anybody, because if they're taking a lot of drugs, it's easy to make mistakes on how they're dispensed. Therefore, that's exactly why they put them in this special compliance packaging.

There's extensive prescription counselling on new and refilled prescriptions, extensive disease management counselling that's especially helpful where there are no physicians around to do that. They profile, review and create a medication list for patients prior to going to physicians. So if you were on a lot of drugs you could go into the pharmacy, at no cost to yourself, and get a list of the prescriptions that you've been taking. There's certainly a sharing of medication files with hospital providers, the home deliveries that I've mentioned.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'm having a hard time hearing the member this evening with all the chatter going on in the Chamber. I'd ask the honourable members to take their conversations outside the Chamber so I can listen to the honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park.

The honourable member for Halifax Clayton Park has the floor.

MS. WHALEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, that's very kind of you to bring the attention back to the subject at hand, which is Bill No. 17.

I think the point is made that a lot of the services we expect from a pharmacy and that we value are provided free of charge to the individual as we go into a pharmacy seeking advice. The point I want to really emphasize is we are at a crossroads here, where a

lot of different changes are coming to this profession at one time. (Interruption) I see exactly what the Speaker was talking about.

The changes for pharmacies are coming at a very fast rate and they may not be in a position to provide these kinds of services to people who perhaps are blind and can't get out to the pharmacy, people who have chronic illnesses or are homebound, so those services are very valuable to sick people and I think that we need to find the right balance. That's really what we need to look at, the balance between all of these changes that are warranted and are coming, but how do we time them and how do we do it fairly so that pharmacists are going to be fully able to understand the impacts of each and every one of those changes?

As I mentioned, we have the pharmacy technicians who are now going to be more professional, requiring more pay, most likely. The scope of practice for the individual pharmacist, again requiring a payment schedule, the lowering of generic drug prices which will create, again, a change to the very model in which the pharmacists do business, and on top of that the new dispensing fee or tariff that we talk about that's being negotiated right now. We understand that the tariff agreement is supposed to be in place by July 1<sup>st</sup> but it has been twice postponed, Mr. Speaker. It has been two times that they have postponed the agreement, with the understanding of the Pharmacy Association that government is in negotiation with, but nevertheless it has been postponed and we don't know what the tariff is going to be, and yet here we are in April looking at the second reading of a bill which is going to affect the generic drug prices as of July 1<sup>st</sup>.

For the benefit of the members who have perhaps not gone through the whole bill, it's a long bill, probably in the generic sense, the key thing that we should keep in mind is that currently our Pharmacare and our other drug plans that are out there are paying roughly 63 per cent of the brand name price for a generic drug. So they're exactly the same molecules, as the pharmacists like to say, they're exactly the same item, but they are 63 per cent of the brand name because they're a generic and they can produce them much more cheaply.

We know that 63 per cent is too high, Mr. Speaker, and the proposal is to go to 45 per cent on July 1<sup>st</sup>. That would be a legislated maximum that could be paid for a generic drug, 45 per cent of its equivalent brand name product. Then only six months later on January 1<sup>st</sup> it's going down to 40 per cent and six months later down to 35 per cent. I'm even surprised that we went with such a fast reduction. I understand starting at 45 per cent, but to try to adjust to that and retool and even calibrate all of your machines and your financial administration will be difficult with a drop like that. It's quite a precipitous drop for the pharmacies and they have to deal with this at the same time as not knowing how that's going to affect the commercial arrangements that they have in place with the generic companies.

It's interesting that the minister has not chosen in this bill or the department, along with the minister, has not chosen to address the rebates that pharmacies are receiving from the generic companies, and it's probably smart not to, because those are going to probably disappear on their own and the Pharmacy Association has said so, because if the generic companies have a great decrease in their profit margins, in the profits they're making, then the arrangements they have with individual pharmacies for stocking their products and for service and so on is going to decline precipitously as well. So that will probably naturally just disappear.

The bill does allow for the government to step in if they find that they are unsure that these have disappeared. They can later ask pharmacists to report the amount of money they're receiving from generic companies and at some point in time could - the legislation is here, the foundation is here - simply eliminate them completely and interfere in that way. But I think the minister chose to sort of set this in motion and see where it goes.

Mr. Speaker, I know we don't have very much time this evening to talk about some of the specifics in the bill, and I do want to go through it in more detail because there's certainly more in the Fair Drug Pricing Act than just the legislation about generics. There is more and I know we would love to stay here for another hour, but my intent this evening would be to adjourn debate so that we can begin again another day.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn the debate.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I would like to turn it over to the Progressive Conservative House Leader, ECNS, to tell us the business and the hours for tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Progressive Conservative House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: It's incredible what a late night will do for anybody. The hours tomorrow will be from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. After the daily routine and Question Period, we'll be calling Private Members' Public Bills for Second Reading, Bill Nos. 3 and 18.

I move that the House do now rise to meet tomorrow between the hours of 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion for adjournment has been made.

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

The motion is carried.

The House will now rise and sit tomorrow between the hours of 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 7:56 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 605**

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas the Minister of Environment stated in the Legislature on April 13<sup>th</sup> that he believes his Party has done something for the environment when, in fact, the NDP legacy is of inaction and poor decisions on many issues including wetland protection, protected areas, mercury recycling, coyote bounties and allowing seismic testing in game sanctuaries; and

Whereas the NDP has proposed to burn an enormous number of trees for electricity before the natural resources strategy is complete and without providing any science to back up their claim of sustainability and carbon neutrality; and

Whereas the NDP relaxed mercury emission requirements for power generation in Nova Scotia, becoming the only province to relax restrictions on this substance dangerous to the environment and human health;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly remind the minister in advance of Earth Day that the legacy of the NDP's 21 months of government so far is of doing more things to damage the environment than to protect the environment.